



ANASTASIA

Vladimir Megre

THE RINGING CEDARS OF RUSSIA

“I exist for those, for whom I exist”

According to Anastasia, special combinations of letters and words are inserted into the text, which influence a man beneficially. You can feel these influences while reading it, when your hearing is not disturbed by sounds produced by artificial things and mechanisms. Natural sounds like: the singing of birds, the sound of rain, the rustling of leaves in the trees help to produce positive influences.

Translator:

Larisa Malgosheva-Bartone
12 Suydam Sfc
New Brunswick, NJ 08901

1(732) 249-8772

E-mail: Larisa 7777@ aol.com

Official Websites

<http://www.ringingcedars.com/>

<http://www.vladirmegre.com/>

<http://www.ringingcedarsofrussia.org/>

"Anastasia" is Book 1 of ***The Ringing Cedars Book Series.***

This series of nine books tells the story of a remarkable woman named Anastasia, discovered in 1995 by a Siberian trader, Vladimir Megré, while he was plying the waters of the remote Ob River. Anastasia was born in the forest in 1969 to parents who died tragically when she was just a baby. Living for the most part without warm clothes, food cultivation or man-made shelter, she has survived on fruit, nuts, berries and mushrooms, brought to her by "wild" animals with which she lives in peaceful harmony. Megré initially spent three days with Anastasia, during which time she displayed such astounding knowledge, power and wisdom that he abandoned his business and, at her request, began writing this series. She told him she would encode the books with an energy that would cause them to sell in the millions. Despite his lack of writing experience, this is exactly what happened. It is Anastasia's ability to strike a chord in the heart of the reader that makes these books so very unusual. The purity and power of her words is provoking an outpouring of joy and hope in people from all walks of life. The series has sold over 11 million copies and has been translated into 20 different languages. This is not the authorized English Edition.

Vladimir Megré

Author of The Ringing Cedars Series



Vladimir Megré, born in 1950, was a well-known entrepreneur from a Siberian city of Novosibirsk.

In 1994, during a stop on a trading trip along the mighty Ob River, a Siberian elder told Vladimir Megré about the existence of "ringing cedars"—sacred trees which can heal bodily diseases and elevate the human spirit. The elder told him of such a cedar growing in the Siberian backwoods.

Intrigued, but committed to his present venture, Vladimir Megré later began to delve into literature on Siberian cedar trees and became one of the first Russian businessmen to rediscover the tremendous folk medicinal, nutritional and commercial value of virgin oil pressed from Siberian cedar nuts. It seemed that knowledge of the secret techniques of pressing the oil had been lost.

In 1995, determined to rediscover this secret and launch a highly lucrative production of cedar nut oil, Vladimir Megré organized a second expedition along the River Ob. On this trip however, an encounter with the elder's granddaughter, named Anastasia, transformed him so deeply that he abandoned his commercial plans, his trading business and temporarily even his family, and instead went to Moscow to fulfill his promise to Anastasia to write a book about what she had shared with him. Anastasia had reassured him that his books would sell in the millions.

True to her promise, Anastasia's messages in the Ringing Cedars Series have spread like a raging wildfire across Russia and Europe, where news reporters are now writing about a "new dawn" unfolding and an "eco-village revolution" taking place, which may change the country's—and the whole world's—destiny.

Vladimir Megré could not have known that his 1994-95 trade trips would change his entire life and affect the whole of humanity. Yet this appears to be the inevitable impact of his discovery of Anastasia and her remarkable messages for the world as chronicled in the Ringing Cedars Series.

Now English readers are excitedly devouring these books—with more than 100,000 copies sold already—and bookstores claiming "these books are flying off the shelves!" A wave of excitement is now sweeping the English-speaking world as everyday 100's more readers discover his books.

Vladimir Megré presently lives near the city of Vladimir, Russia, 240 km (150 miles) east of Moscow. He can be contacted by e-mail at megre@online.sinor.ru (Please note that he doesn't read or speak English.)

Anastasia

Remarkable woman of the Siberian forest.

Anastasia is considered to be a surviving member of an ancient Vedic culture, whose powers and knowledge *far exceed* anything known today. She is the inspiration for the *Ring of Cedars Series*. According to Megré's account, she was born in 1969, in the Western Siberian taiga (boreal forests) not far from the city of Surgut on the river Ob.

Her parents died tragically in a forest accident when she was just a baby. She lives in the wilderness—for the most part without warm clothes, food cultivation or man-made shelter—and survives on fruit, nuts, berries and mushrooms, brought to her by "wild" animals with which she lives in peaceful harmony.

She consistently displays the most developed psychic and mental powers including remote viewing and healing, mind reading and seemingly perfect memory. When challenged to solve some of society's most complex social, health and environmental problems, after only a few minutes lying on her back on the ground, with eyes closed and just her fingertips twitching, she has provided answers in such incredible detail, that witnesses have been left flabbergasted.

She says these powers are natural to Mankind and in these books she describes exactly how they may be regained by any one of us.

Most of all she is a beautiful mystery—one who has changed the landscape of metaphysical thought with her foresight and innate wisdom.

Overview

There is so much mind-blowing material in these books it's almost impossible to give you an overview! What we can tell you is this...

This real-life story begins in 1995...

A trader prepares his ships to embark on the most remarkable trip of his life—a trip that will change the course of millions of human lives. Ahead of him lies the mighty Ob River—winding and snaking for 3,500 miles through the Siberian taiga—the vast boreal forest—that stretches across Northern Europe, Alaska and Canada.

A warning! Nothing you have ever read before can prepare you for the journey you are about to take.

You are about to meet Anastasia—a beautiful young woman—discovered by the author, living alone deep in the remote wild forests of Siberia. She is considered to be a surviving member of an ancient Vedic civilisation whose extraordinary powers and knowledge *far exceed* anything known today.

Anastasia's powerful, myth-shattering messages reveal a profound wisdom grounded in ancient knowledge; they expose suppressed secrets and hidden historical facts that will completely change your understanding of our past, and offer a whole new paradigm for our planet's future.

Anastasia will lift you up and *hurl* you into a future that is... well... everything you imagined life could *and certainly should be!*

The twist is... it's here NOW!

Anastasia will have you dancing with delight and squealing with excitement as you re-discover YOU... in all your glory!

Anastasia's messages will simply blow your mind!

Her soft-spoken words go straight to your heart—like nothing you have ever read!

And the more you read them... the better you'll feel.

Anastasia will restore your hope for the future and re-ignite your passion for life. After reading these books—nothing will be quite the same...

This page intentionally left blank

(Just to piss you off)

ANASTASIA

AND THE RINGING CEDARS OF RUSSIA

Reviews:

reviewed by Donald J. Supkov, PhD, Professional Hydrologist

For uncounted eons of time, humanity has been traveling on a road of exploration, encountering the wonders of Mother Nature while benefiting from the uncounted gifts provided freely by Mother Nature. During this voyage of exploration humanity started out as hunter-gatherers to obtain nourishment to sustain itself along the way. In this phase of the explorative journey, humans had very intimate contact with Mother Nature in order to learn the ways of Mother Nature in order to survive.

In the course of time, humanity developed agriculture and animal husbandry and further reaped the benefits provided by Mother Nature. As agriculturalists, humans became more tied to a specific location because of the requirements needed for agricultural crops which are attached to the ground and thus are not prone to wander around the land as their human caretakers are able to do.

But a blessing provided by Mother Nature to humanity through the gift of agriculture was the ability to provide a surplus of food, far beyond the needs of the people actually remaining fixed in the places of crop production. This allowed the development of civilization a wide diversity of job descriptions, seemingly unconnected to Mother Nature compared to the hunter-gatherers and the agriculturalists.

Because of the bounties provided by Mother Nature through the agriculturalists, some individuals became free to continue the voyage of exploration to view first hand what Mother Nature had to offer in more distant and remote locations. This has given rise to the hero adventurer who travels to distant places and returns to his native land with stories relating his voyage of exploration. These adventure exploration stories frequently have associated with them descriptions of some fabulous gift or treasure provided by Mother Nature. Examples come to mind such as Jason and the Golden Fleece, Ponce de

Leon and the Fountain of Youth, Marco Polo and the stones that burn (coal) from China.

As civilization developed and spawned the industrial revolution, humanity accelerated the exploitation of these gifts from Mother Nature such as coal, oil, natural gas, iron, various minerals, lumber, waterpower, while at the same time becoming detached from the source of these gifts.

While the non-food raising members of agricultural society became more and more dependent on only a few crops as a food supply, such as corn, wheat, and rice, they became afflicted with various ailments that characterize modern society. This condition is contrasted with the Hunzas in northern Pakistan who thrive disease-free to ripe old ages solely by eating organically grown crops and by drinking “glacier milk”, the milky glacial melt water loaded with finely pulverized rock.

The indigenous people from around the world seem to have within each tribe a “medicine man” or shaman, who is most intimately connected with Mother Nature. The shaman collects various herbs from Mother Nature's storehouse and uses them to help heal any member of the tribe who becomes afflicted with some sort of ailment.

Perhaps there is some sort of inner knowledge deep within the human psyche that keeps reminding us that somewhere Mother Nature has provided a gift, hidden in plain view, that will prove to contain a cure for any ailment that afflicts humans. Perhaps this inner knowledge is what makes the game of Easter Egg Hunt so popular among children. Maybe this is why older children and young adults enjoy the game of Treasure Hunt so much. But even though mature adults are no longer tied to the soil in a civilized agrarian society devoted to supporting the growth of industrialization, most of us still can not travel to far and distant places to explore the wonders and gifts of Mother Nature. So we provide the where with all to allow surrogates to do the adventuring for us.

Perhaps the best example is of humans collectively sending a few astronauts to the Moon. What a grand adventure all humanity was able to participate in via the wonders of television! That is big time adventure! These explorer adventurers, who flew to the moon, have taken on hero status along with Marco Polo, Columbus and Magellan who merely made long trips on the surface of the Earth. But there are other explorer adventurers who made very short trips and discovered other gifts from Mother Nature. Consider Loenhoek who made a microscope and then traveled no farther than to the inside of a drop of water and there discovered a whole new world of living organisms. Microbiologists have since explored inside common soil samples and there discovered more gifts from Mother Nature consisting of antibiotics such as penicillin. Biologists are continuing to explore the tropical rainforests for more gifts from Mother Nature, hoping to find more cures for human ailments.

Perhaps one of the least likely places for an adventurer to explore for gifts from Mother Nature from the perspectives of an American reader is Siberia. Now that is a place that could use a little bit of public relations work! What comes to mind at the mention of the name Siberia? Snow, ice, frigid cold, remoteness, desolation, prison camps? Perhaps some frozen mammoths still locked in a deep freeze from the time of the last ice age? I

think you will have a pleasant surprise when you accompany Vladimir Merge in his exploration of Russia and share in his discovery of more wonderful gifts from Mother Nature: the Ringing Cedars of Russia, and Anastasia, a modern day shaman from the wilds of Siberia. When I say wild, it is really an understatement! Learn about the many precious gifts from Mother Nature that are hidden in plain view which Anastasia desires to reveal to the entire world, including the great healing powers of the Ringing Cedars of Russia. If you find that the healing powers of the Ringing Cedars are beyond belief, you may still benefit from reading what Vladimir Megre has to say, since you will find that this is also a very readable love story like none other you have ever read.

Although, the story was originally written in Russian, you will find that the English translation made by Larisa Malgosheva-Bartone reads like any story written in English and shows that humans are basically the same everywhere, no matter where they live and no matter what language they speak.

28 Sefton Circle Piscataway, N.J.

08854, 08854, USA

Phone: (732) 752-3189 Date: February 4, 2001

Maureen Jordan, M. A.
Education, College of New Jersey, USA
Teacher of Art and English

On Larisa Bartone's request I have recently read her translation of Vladimir Megre's Anastasia, The Ringing Cedars of Russia. Larisa has a very good command of English that was why my corrections were very insignificant.

I found the book to be written in fluent everyday English that was quite easy to understand. The story has a nice flow. It held my interest throughout, and I think it would do the same for the general reading public in the USA. I recommend it highly.

Maureen Jordan 52 Linden Lane Plainsboro, NJ 08536, USA Phone: (609) 799-8266

Dr. Fred L. Kingsbury,
Chiropractor

As an American physician who has a natural/ holistic orientation, and a spiritual seeker for over 30 years I found Anastasia — The Ringing Cedars of Russia a grand journey into wonder, mystery, and Truth. A truly fascinating read which I recommend highly to all conscious beings.

I believe that Larisa Bartone has done a great job translating it from Russian into English. The book reads well and requires no comments or explanations.

Fred L. Kingsbury, D. C.

25 Clyde Road, Suite 102

Somerset, N.J. 08873, USA

Phone:(732)873-1020

Fax:732-873-1999

E-mail: dr.fred@worldnet.att.net

Jean Munzer,
Director,
Metaphysical Center of New Jersey, USA

ANASTASIA, THE RINGING CEDARS OF RUSSIA is a mind and spirit-expanding book about Anastasia, a pure soul living in perfect harmony with Nature in the wilds of Siberia. She wishes good to everybody and has much to teach all who are willing and able to learn from her. She says:

“I exist for those for whom I exist”.

Reading about her is an innately rewarding experience for all of us. As people encounter this book their mind and hearts will be opened to the Truth that Anastasia teaches. Larisa Malgosheva-Bartone's translation of the book into English is excellent. I believe it will open Anastasia's teachings to English speaking readers all over the world. Larisa is the right channel to convey the energy, which has been instilled into the Russian variant of this book by Anastasia.

Jean Munzer

10 Pequot Rd.

Oakland, New Jersey

07436, USA

Phone: 1(201)337-6276

DEDICATED TO Anastasia N. L. Briditskaya

From the book I've learned, — in Siberia a girl is living in the woods — Anastasia. She is gathering the forest gifts and brings them to the crowded cities.

In your clean Siberian forests you are a flowing brook. Your loving fire is burning evil down giving us a beam of light thoughts.

Stay in the woods, our precious, don't come out to the bustling world. As it has lots of evil and darkness stay away for your sonny-boy's sake.

You are a sister in our God's image creation of good is your only wish. To save your son and you, our sweetness, is the only problem for us in existence.

In your virgin forest as in the Lord's house You are drinking the morning dew from flowers. Our souls are rejoicing now just because you exist, you are there.

You've come to us, Anastasia,

To open our eyes to the world,

So our souls could shine in the light,

To teach us to create what's good and right!

To live in peace with the entire universe, To let only pure thoughts flow, To find our way in the midst of existence, To let the wings of God's Spirit grow carrying us home.

The only thing we need is love and patience To learn to create the Good! That's why we should ask the blessings from our God-Father in heaven.

To be like you, Anastasia, —

It is not given to all of us.

We are to work hard with a lot of efforts

To find our way into the world of yours.

And let you radiate the warmth with that God's beam of yours. You've come to us filled with love to create only kindness and what is right.

Your beauty is special and unique, you've deserved Our Father's gift. You've become a beloved to everyone. The stroke of darkness will never touch you.

Stay warm and be protected by our love always dwell in our thoughts, may you never suffer from malice Be saved by God and our spirits.

Just loving you is to save you. You are in our hearts and dreams We are with you, our dear, to help you to overcome the darkness. God bless you!

This page intentionally left blank

(Again, just to piss you off!)

Contents

Chapter 1	<i>RINGING CEDAR</i>
Chapter 2	<i>MEETING</i>
Chapter 3	<i>A BEAST OR A HUMAN BEING?</i>
Chapter 4	<i>WHO ARE THEY?</i>
Chapter 5	<i>FOREST BEDROOM</i>
Chapter 6	<i>ANASTASIA'S MORNING</i>
Chapter 7	<i>ANASTASIA'S BEAM</i>
Chapter 8	<i>CONCERT IN TAIGA</i>
Chapter 9	<i>WHO LIGHTS A NEW STAR</i>
Chapter 10	<i>HER FAVORITE DACHNIKS</i>
Chapter 11	<i>DOCTOR SEED</i>
Chapter 12	<i>WHO IS BEING STUNG BY BEES</i>
Chapter 13	<i>HELLO, MORNING!</i>
Chapter 14	<i>EVENING PROCEDURE</i>
Chapter 15	<i>IT WILL PREPARE EVERYTHING BY ITSELF</i>
Chapter 16	<i>SLEEPING UNDER YOUR STAR</i>
Chapter 17	<i>YOUR CHILD'S HELPER AND EDUCATOR</i>
Chapter 18	<i>FOREST GYMNASIA</i>

Chapter 19	<i>ATTENTION TO MAN</i>
Chapter 20	<i>A FLYING SAUCER? NOTHING SPECIAL</i>
Chapter 21	<i>THE BRAIN - SUPER COMPUTER</i>
Chapter 22	<i>“THERE WAS LIFE IN HIM AND THE LIFE WAS THE LIGHT OF PEOPLE”</i>
Chapter 23 <i>OUTLOOK</i>	<i>IT IS NECESSARY TO CHANGE ONE'S OWN WORLD</i>
Chapter 24	<i>MORTAL SIN</i>
Chapter 25	<i>GETTING IN TOUCH WITH PARADISE</i>
Chapter 26	<i>WHO WILL BRING UP OUR SON?</i>
Chapter 27	<i>AFTER A WHILE</i>
Chapter 28	<i>A STRANGE GIRL</i>
Chapter 29	<i>TINY BUGS</i>
Chapter 30	<i>DREAMS - FUTURE CREATION</i>
Chapter 31	<i>ACROSS THE SPACE OF TIME OF THE DARK FORCES</i>
Chapter 32	<i>POWERFUL PEOPLE</i>
Chapter 33	<i>WHO ARE YOU, ANASTASIA?</i>

Chapter 1

RINGING CEDAR

In the spring of 1994 I chartered three river motorboats on which I accomplished a four months expedition up the Siberian river Ob. We started from Novosibirsk, moved up to Salekhard and downwards. The aim of the expedition was to regulate the economic connections with the regions of the Extreme North.

The expedition ran under the name of Merchantman. The largest passenger motorboats was named after Patris Lumumba. (I believe that in the Western Siberian River Steam-Navigation, they give strange names to the ships like: Mariya Ulyanova, Patrice Lumumba, Mikhail Kalinin or some-thing like that, as if there were no other historically prominent personalities in Siberia).

Our headquarters, the exhibition of Siberian entrepreneurs and a store were located on this ship. The caravan was to go to North for about 3,500 kilometers. We were to visit relatively large cities such as: Tomsk, Niznevartovsk, Surgut, Khant-Mansiysk, Salekhard as well as small settlements which are possible to reach with cargo only within a limited period of the navigation season. In the daytime the caravan's ships usually stopped at settlements. We were trading and negotiating establishing permanent economic connections. We moved on at night. When it was rather stormy, we preferred to moor at any settlement and organize evenings of recreation with dancing for the local youths. Such kind of recreation has very rare lately as all kinds of clubs and Houses of Culture have become very dilapidated. Cultural and educational work is almost neglected there. Sometimes we were floating for 24 hours without stopping as there were no settlements, only taiga (virgin forest) all over. The only means of communication for many, many kilometers around was the river. At that time it did not occur to me since it was outside my province, that at one of those kilometers fortune had prepared for me a meeting which would change my life completely. Here at a tiny village consisting of just a couple of small houses, far removed from the nearest big settlement which was hundreds of kilometers away, I ordered the leading ship to be moored to the bank. I planned to dock there for three hours, just to let my people relax while walking around the village. At the same time it was an opportunity for the native population to buy some goods from us and in exchange to purchase fish and wild herbs at a low price. While there, two local old men addressed me as the leader of the caravan with a very strange request. One of them looked older than the other. The older one was quiet and the younger one started to speak. He tried to convince me to lend them at least 50 men from the crew. I should like to mention that our crew consisted of only 65 people. They proposed to lead us into the

taiga, 25 kilometers away from the riverbank where we were docking. They wanted to cut down, what he called, a Ringing Cedar. The cedar, according to his estimations was almost 40 meters high. He suggested that we saw the tree 'into pieces so it would be possible to carry it by hand to the mother ship. Then they wanted us to cut those pieces into smaller ones so each of us could take a piece for ourselves and a few more to give to our relatives, friends and anybody who would like to receive them as a gift. The old man said that the cedar was not an ordinary one. A piece of it was to be carried as a pendant on a string. Moreover, while putting it on the chest it was necessary to stand barefooted on grass, pressing it to one's naked chest with the left palm. In a minute one would feel a very pleasant warmth coming from the cedar piece, then one would experience a sensation of a light flash flowing through the body. On occasion, when one felt the desire, it was recommended to rub it with the finger tips on that side of the cedar piece which was not touching the body. While polishing it, one should hold the piece by pressing the thumbs to the opposite side which does not face the body. In three months the owner of the Ringing Cedar piece will feel considerable improvement in one's health, and may experience healing from many diseases. "Even from AIDS?" I asked, trying to explain the symptoms of this disease, telling them what I knew myself from past reading. The man answered confidently with firm belief, "From any illness!" According to his affirmation that was the least of it. Most important was the fact that the owner of such a piece of cedar would become more kind, more successful and more talented. At that time I did not know much about the healing power of cedar, but its abilities sounded to me absolutely unrealistic. Then I told the old men that over there on "the big land" (the industrial areas with big cities) the women preferred to decorate themselves with gold and silver jewelry to attract the attention of other people. "They are wearing them because they don't realize that gold is dust compared to one piece of this cedar," he responded confidently. Trying to avoid argument and paying respect to their age, I said, "Well, may be... If a great wood carver would apply his skill and create something extraordinarily beautiful..".

"One can carve, of course, but it is better to polish it by oneself, with one's own fingers, when one's soul chooses to do it. Then the piece of cedar will look beautiful outside". While saying this he hurriedly unbuttoned his worn down jacket and shirt and showed something which was hanging on his chest. It was a round, protuberance or, rather, an oval thing. There was a fancy, inconspicuous design on it in violet, crimson and reddish brown. The fibers of wood looked like tiny brooks. I am not an expert on works of art, though I have visited a variety of galleries and museums. The world famous masterpieces did not excite me as much as this fascinating object hanging on the old man's chest. It touched my feelings and emotions much more strongly than my visit to the famous Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow. "How long have you been polishing your piece of cedar?", I asked. "Ninety three years", was the answer. "Well, and how old are you?", I asked again. "One hundred and nineteen", he said. I did not believe his answer at that moment. He looked not more than seventy five or so. He did not pay any attention to my doubts. The old man, being a bit excited, started to convince me that a piece of cedar would look as beautiful on anyone in three years only. Eventually it would get better and better, especially on women. The body of the owner would produce a wonderful aroma, incomparable to any perfume created by man. I was aware that the scent which was emanating from both men was very pleasant indeed. Even though I am a smoker yet I

could smell it. They say that the smoker's sense of smell is usually weaker. I also noticed that his vocabulary differed from those of the native population. The phrases and word combinations he used were certainly not characteristic of the inhabitants of the far North. Some of these are still reverberating in my ears, even the melody and intonation. The old man spoke like this: "God has created the cedar as an accumulator of cosmic energy. A man, when he feels love, is producing radiation. Within a fraction of a second, this radiation comes back to the earth after being reflected from the planets above and gives life to everything living. The sun, one of the heavenly bodies, is reflecting an incomplete spectrum of this radiation. Only light radiation from a man goes to the cosmos and comes back to the Earth again solely as a benevolent, positive one.

A man who possesses malicious feelings emanates only dark radiation. It can't ascend so it goes deep down inside the Earth. Having been reflected from the planet's depths, it comes back to the surface in the form of volcanic eruptions, earthquakes and wars. The highest achievement of reflected dark radiation is its direct influence on man. It increases the malicious feelings in him.

The lifetime of cedar is 550 years. Day and night it catches and accumulates all spectrum of light energy through millions of its needle leaves. During the cedar's lifetime, all kinds of objects are passing over it, reflecting this energy. Even a tiny piece of cedar contains more energy than all manmade energy producing units taken together. Cedar receives the emanation from man's energy through the Cosmos. It preserves and gives the energy back to the Cosmos when its level goes down and accordingly it goes down in man too. This includes everything living and growing on the Earth. It happens, though very seldom, that cedars just accumulate but don't give back the accumulated energy. When such cedars are five hundred years old they start to ring, thus they are trying to communicate. They give a welcome sign, inviting man to use their energy on Earth for good purposes. Such a cedar produces a vibrating ringing sound for three years if it does not come in contact with people. After these three years, if it fails to give its energy accumulated via the Cosmos directly to man, it loses the energy by burning it within itself. The torturous process of burning-dying lasts for twenty seven years. Recently, we have found this kind of cedar. According to our estimation it has been ringing for two years already, it means that only one year is left. It is necessary to cut it and give it to people". The old man had been speaking for a long time, his voice filled with a quiet assurance. When he became excited, he polished his piece of cedar with his finger tips very quickly, as if he were playing a musical instrument. It was pretty cold; a fresh wind was blowing from the river, but his worn jacket and shirt were still unbuttoned. A member of our firm, Lidiya Petrovna, came down and told us that the crew was ready to leave and they were waiting for me. So I had to say "Good bye" to the strange old men and went on board. It was impossible for me to fulfill their request: three days' delay would cost us great losses. Everything I had been told by those men I took as an extreme superstition or as one of the local myths. The next day during our business planning meeting I noticed that Lidiya Petrovna was rubbing a piece of cedar hanging on her chest. Later on she told me that after I had left she saw that the old man I was talking with looked very confused and unhappy while watching me leave. Then he addressed his companion speaking very excitedly, "How come... I absolutely can't speak their language... I have failed to convince them. I could not! I've failed! Nothing has come of it". The one who looked

older told him, "You did not sound convincing, my son. You did not reach their consciousness" "When I was already walking up the steps", Lidiya Petrovna went on, "the old man, the one who was speaking to you, suddenly rushed to me, caught my hand, led me down the steps to the grass, took out of his pocket a string with this piece of cedar wood. He put it on me, pressed it to my chest with my palm by putting his hand on mine. Immediately I felt a trembling sensation all over my body. When I was leaving, he kept saying, "Happy voyage! Be happy, all of you! Come next year. All the best to all of you. We shall be waiting for you. Happy voyage!"

I recalled that when our motor boat was casting off, I could see the old man waving his hand. Then all of a sudden he sat down on the grass. After a while I looked at them again through binoculars. The old man was still sitting on the grass. His shoulders were shuddering... The one who was older was bending over him soothing his head.

On our arrival back to Novosibirsk I felt sick with acute pains. The diagnoses were: duodenal ulcer and osteochondrosis of the thoracic spine, I was admitted to a hospital. While in the hospital I was shielded from the everyday routine of the outer world by the quietness of the hospital room. It was a nice room, deluxe' for one person, which provided me with a nice opportunity to analyze the results of the four month expedition and make a draft of a business plan for the future. Memory was bringing me again and again to my meeting with the strange old men and the subject of our discussion. Upon my request friends and family members supplied me with all kinds of literature on cedar. By comparing all the reading I became more and more amazed. Eventually I started to believe everything the old men had told me. "Maybe they are right to some extent, or, maybe they were one hundred percent right", I thought to myself. The books on folk medicine tell much about the cedar's healing power. Everything, starting with the needle leaves to its bark has highly efficient healing qualities. That was what the books said repeatedly. They reported that the texture of cedar wood looks very beautiful and it is widely used by craftsmen. I learned that it is good for furniture. It is also used for the resonance boards of musical instruments. The cedar's conifer has highly fitocidic properties and the ability to disinfect environmental air. The cedar timber has a special, very pleasant balsamic flavor. If you put a small piece of cedar wood in a house, it will keep moths away.

Popular scientific literature also points out that the quality of cedar growing in Northern areas is much higher than those in the South. Back in 1792 academician P. S. Pallas wrote that the Siberian cedar nuts rejuvenate man's power. They also bring back youthfulness, stimulate the immune system considerably, increasing the physical body's resistance against many diseases. World history knows a great number of historical phenomena directly or indirectly connected with cedar. Here is one of them.

A half literate countryman, Gregory Rasputin, from a remote Siberian village, was from the region where Siberian cedar grows. He came to Moscow in 1907 when he was already 50 years of age. He startled the royal family, where he was heartily welcomed, because of his prophecies; He was sexually involved with many distinguished ladies. Those who were trying to kill him were shocked by the fact that having been hit by many bullets, he was still alive. His vitality was amazing. The secret was that he had been

brought up in the region where cedar grows and he had been fed on cedar nuts.

The journalists of that period summarized his endurance: “At 50 years of age, he could start an orgy at noon, continuing his drunken ordeals till 4 a. m.. After erotic involvement and drinking heavily he went right to church for morning services where he prayed till 8 a.m.. After returning home, he drank a lot of tea as if nothing had happened before, Grishka received visitors till 2 p.m. Then accompanied by a group of ladies, he went to a Russian bathhouse with a steamer and then went directly to a suburban restaurant. There he repeated the previous night's performance. No ordinary man could possibly stand up to that kind of routine”.

Today, the several times world and Olympic champion in wrestling Alexander Karelin, currently unbeatable, is also a Siberian, again from the region where Siberian cedar grows. The strong man has eaten cedar nuts all his life. Is this by chance? In Russia people usually wish you a “Siberian health”. I am just giving you the facts which one can find in press issues or popular science literature or what living witnesses can prove. One such witness is the previously mentioned Lidiya Petrovna, who had received the piece of Ringing Cedar wood from the old man. She is thirty six now, married, a mother of two children. Her colleagues who are in touch with her have noticed the great changes which have happened to her. She has become more benevolent and smiles more often. Her husband, whom I know also, has told me that lately they have more mutual understandings. By the way, he mentioned that his wife had even become younger looking and has stimulated more feelings in him, and, to add to it, more respect and even love had appeared in their relationship.

Yet, all these facts and proofs are nothing in comparison to the most important ones which anyone can find in the Bible. After reading the Holy Scripture all my doubts disappeared like morning fog. The third book of Moses in the Old Testament teaches how to heal people and disinfect houses with cedar, “... the priest shall order that two ritually clean birds be brought, along with a piece of cedar wood, a red cord, and a sprig of hyssop” (Leviticus 14,4).

When I compared all the facts and information collected from different sources, the world's wonders fade compared to this one. Namely that the great mysteries which keep exciting human minds seem insignificant compared to the mystery of a Ringing Cedar.

Now there are no doubts for me as far as its existence is concerned. Popular science literature and ancient scripts have scattered all doubts. The Bible mentions cedar forty two times in the Old Testament. Moses from the Old Testament, evidently knew about cedar much more even than the Old Testament records.

We are used to the fact that Mother Nature provides us with different plants capable of healing different human diseases. Popular science literature proves the healing abilities of cedar. In addition, many serious and authoritative explorers such as the academician P. S. Pallas concur. At the same time they all agree with what the Old Testament says.

Now, I would like you to pay attention to the following facts:

The Old Testament, pointing out cedar and only cedar, does not mention any other trees but cedar alone. Doesn't this mean that cedar is the most powerful of plants existing in the realm of Mother Nature? What is it? Is it a medicinal organic unit?

Yet, that is not all. The following story from the Old Testament reveals much more enigmatic things. King Solomon was building a temple of cedar which had been transported from Lebanon. He asked King Hiram a favor: "... So send your men to Lebanon to cut down cedars for me. My men will work with them, and I will pay your men whatever you decide. As you well know, my men don't know how to cut down trees as well as yours do..... So Hiram supplied Solomon with all the cedar and pine logs that he wanted, and Solomon provided Hiram with 100,000 bushels of wheat and 110,000 gallons of pure olive oil every year to feed his men" (1 Kings 5; 6,7,9,10).

What kind of people were they? What kind of secrets did they know? I've heard that even now in the remote villages, deep in the taiga there are old men who somehow can choose cedar trees for construction purposes. But at that time, more than two thousand years ago, I believe, everybody must have known this.

However, even at that time very special people were required for construction work with cedar. The temple was constructed; they started inauguration services and see what happened: "... when all the leaders had gathered, the priests lifted the covenant box and carried it to the Temple... and put it in the Most Holy Place... There was nothing inside the covenant box except the two stone tablets which Moses had placed there at Mount Sinai, when the Lord made a covenant with the people of Israel.... As the priests were leaving the Temple, it was suddenly filled with a cloud shining with the dazzling light of the Lord's presence and they could not go back in to perform their duties..." (1 Kings 8,5,6,9,10,11).

What kind of a cloud was it? How and from where did it enter the temple? What did it represent? Was it an energy? A spirit? What kind of phenomenon was it and how was it interconnected with cedar?

The old man spoke about a Ringing Cedar as an accumulator of some kind of energy... What kind of energy? What cedar is more powerful: a Lebanese or a Siberian one? Academician P. S. Pallas has told us that the healing qualities of cedar increase as one moves closer to the border of forest tundra. This means that the Siberian one is more powerful. The Bible reads: "... judge it accordingly to the fruit". Which means, that the Siberian one wins again! Why is this not more widely known? The Old Testament, the science of the previous century and modern texts are of the same opinion about cedar, no contradictions exist!

The Mother of Agni Yoga Teaching or Living Ethics, Helena Roerich, has said: "... At the kings' inauguration rituals of ancient Khora-Sana a cedar tar chalice was always present. Druids called a chalice of cedar tar a "Chalice of Life" and only later on, when they had lost their spiritual consciousness was it replaced by blood. The Zoroastrian Fire came as a result of burning down the cedar tar in the chalice".

Specifically what did our forefathers know about cedar? Has its properties and actions been hidden till now? Could it be nothing? Does it belong to so called “lost knowledge”? What do the old people know about it? Then suddenly something came to the surface of my memory, the age old event which produced shivering all over my body, though, at that time, I did not give any meaning to it.

At the beginning of our perestroyka (the period which followed the crash of communism) I, being a president of the association of entrepreneurs of Siberia, got a call from Novosibirsk oblispolkom (the regional executive committee). At that time the executive committees and regional committees of CPSU still existed. So I was asked to come to the meeting with a highly recognized western businessman. He had a letter of recommendation from our government. Some of the entrepreneurs and the members of the staff from the regional executive committee were present at the meeting. The western businessman looked like “a white shark”. He had oriental features. He was wearing a turban, his fingers were decorated with expensive rings.

We were speaking, as usual, during these meetings about possibilities of cooperation in different fields. Then all of a sudden he said, “We could buy cedar nuts from you”. While he was saying it, some kind of tension overwhelmed him, his sharp eyes stared, examining the reaction of those present. I have remembered this situation very well because even at that time I was surprised, thinking to myself, “Why has he changed like this? What does it mean?” After the meeting was over the lady interpreter from Moscow who was accompanying him came up to me and told me that he would like to talk to me.

The businessman said confidentially that if I organized absolutely fresh cedar nut delivery, I could have, besides the official price, considerable personal benefits. It would be necessary to deliver the nuts to Turkey, where they produce some kind of oil from them. I promised him to think the proposition over.

Now, I've made up my mind to investigate this issue and find out what kind of oil it was. I've managed to discover that at the London Stock Market, which is a world price standard, cedar nut oil costs, up to five hundred American dollars per kilogram. We were asked to deliver cedar nuts approximately at a price of two to three dollars per kilogram for cedar nuts.

I called one of my colleagues in Warsaw and asked him to investigate whether it was possible to reach the consumer directly as well as to get the technology of its production. In a month I got the answer that it was impossible either to reach the consumer or to get any information about the technology. Generally speaking, in this field the Western forces that were involved would rather stay away from it and forget about it. After that I turned to a good friend of mine who works at the Novosibirsk Institute of Potrebooperatsiya (consumer cooperation) K. Rakunov. I purchased cedar nuts, financed the labor expenses and in the institute laboratory they produced one hundred kilograms of cedar nut oil. I also hired people who have discovered some interesting papers in the archive documents, which revealed that in pre-Revolutionary Russia and for a while after, there was an organization in Siberia under the name of Siberian Cooperator. The members of this coop

were trading all kinds of oil including cedar nut oil. They had representatives in Khabarovsk, London and New York. They had a lot of money in Western banks. After the revolution the organization fell apart and many of its former members left Russia.

Krasin, a member of the Bolshevik government, had a meeting with the former chief of this organization and suggested to him to come back to Russia. But he answered that he would help Russia even more if he was out of the country.

The archive materials read that the cedar oil was produced with the help of wooden presses (no metal should be involved) in many remote Siberian villages. These were located deep inside the taiga. Its quality depended on the time of harvesting and nut processing. However, we failed to determine the particular time of harvesting: neither the archive nor research institutions could find out this information. The secret has been lost. The cedar oil's healing properties have no comparison. But could it be possible that the secret has been sold somewhere in the West by somebody who immigrated from Russia?

How do they explain the fact that the greatest healing remedy, the cedar nut which is growing in Siberia, and the unit which is producing its oil is situated in Turkey?

And what kind of forces in the West did my colleague from Warsaw mention? Why is it impossible to touch this issue? Aren't these forces pulling from the Russian Siberian taiga the healing remedy of unbelievable power? Why, having such healing wealth of the cedar products, which is so powerful and has been proved by centuries, even millenniums, are we instead spending millions or even billions of dollars buying Western medications and swallowing them like crazy? Why are we losing the knowledge which belonged to our quite recent ancestors, those who lived in our century?

Do we need to speak about the Bible's precious readings which describe the events of ages long ago? What kind of strange forces are trying so hard to erase from our memory the knowledge of our forefathers? Moreover, they recommended to us “not even to stick our nose in it” as if it is not our business. They are trying to erase these things from our memory... and they have managed to do it! Somehow this realization made me so angry. “Well” I told myself, “whatever it will cost me, eventually I will fry to find out something”. I decided to repeat the expedition along the Ob river to the North, using for this purpose only the leading motor boat Patrice Lumumba. I loaded the holds with different goods. The movie hall was modified as a store. I had to employ new people. For some reason I did not want to take people from our company. While I was distracted from my regular business, the financial situation got worse.

Within two weeks after our departure from Novosibirsk my security guards reported to me that the talks about Ringing Cedar had been overheard. According to the security service guys, among the newly employed staff there were speaking intelligently “strange people”. I started to call to my office some of the people from the crew, talked to them about the forthcoming campaign into the taiga. Some of them were ready to go even for free. Others asked big amounts of money as the journey into the taiga had not been commissioned by the agreement which they had signed. Of course there was a great difference between staying at the comfortable motor boat and hiking into the taiga for 25

kilometers and carrying luggage on one's back.

By that time I was completely short financially. I was not going to sell cedar, as the old man had said that it was necessary to give it as a gift. Moreover, the most important thing for me was not the Ringing Cedar itself but the secret of producing not just cedar oil but the healing one from regular cedar. Generally speaking, I was interested in any kind of information on this issue. Eventually, with the help of information from the security guards I became convinced that somebody was watching me. Especially when I came off board, though their goal was uncertain. Who was behind those who were watching me? I thought hard and decided to avoid doubts and mistakes. The best way was to outwit all of them.

Chapter 2

MEETING

Giving no explanation to anybody, I ordered the crew to moor the motor boat not far from the place where a year ago I had had a meeting with the old men. I got to the village by a small motorboat. I gave orders to the captain of the motor boat to proceed with the commercial route further on up the river.

My hope was to find those old men with the help of local people, to see the Ringing Cedar with my own eyes and discuss the manner of its delivery to the motor ship. Having fastened my motorboat to a stone, I planned to walk to the nearest house. However, I noticed a lonely woman standing on a hillside and I made up my mind to talk to her. The woman was wearing an old quilted jacket and a long skirt. High rubber galoshes were on her feet. They were the kind the great majority of the local population wear in the far Northern regions. She wore a shawl that covered her forehead and neck. It was difficult to tell her age.

I said “Hello”, and asked her about the two men I had met there the previous year.

“You were talking to my grandpa and great grandpa last year, Vladimir”, answered the woman.

I was astonished: her voice was young, her articulation was very distinct, she was on familiar terms with me, using “thou” instead of “you”. Moreover, she had called me by my name. I could not remember the names of the old men and the bottom line was that I was not sure whether I had ever heard their name or told them mine. I thought for a while and then concluded that evidently, I had told them my name if she knew it. Therefore, I decided to follow her example and be on familiar terms with her too.

“And what is your name?”, I asked.

“Anastasia”, was the answer. She stretched out her hand, the palm facing down, as if waiting for a kiss. This kind of gesture for a village woman dressed in a quilted jacket and galoshes, standing on a deserted bank and trying to behave as if she was a lady of society, made me laugh. I shook her hand but I did not kiss it. Anastasia gave an embarrassed smile and suggested I go with her to the taiga where her family lived.

“Although, you know, it is necessary to walk for twenty five kilometers. Does that disturb you?”

“Well, sure it's pretty far away. Will you be able to show me the Ringing Cedar?”

“I shall”.

“Do you know everything about it? Will you tell me?”

“I'll tell you what I know”.

“Well, then let's go”.

While we were walking Anastasia told me that their family lived in the cedar forest for many generations. According to her, her forefathers had been living there for thousands and thousands of years. They don't get in direct contact with the people of our civilization very often. These contacts take place far away from the places of their own dwelling but happen when they come to where larger settlements pretend to be hunters or residents of other

villages.

Anastasia herself has visited two large cities: Tomsk and Moscow. She stayed there only for a day. She did not even spend a night there. The aim of the other trips was to see with her own eyes whether her visualizations about the way of life of modern city dwellers were correct. By selling berries and dry mushrooms she managed to get clothes and money for her trips. One local woman gave Anastasia her own passport for this purpose.

She did not share her granddads' idea of giving the Ringing cedar to many people. When I asked her “Why?”, she said that its pieces could get to good as well as to bad people and, as she believed, the greater portion of it would get to negative persons. She believes that finally it would bring more harm than good. The main thing to do, according to her, would be to help good people who are leading society towards the light, not into a dead end. If one were to try to help everybody, the imbalance between good and evil would remain the same or it could even get worse. After my meeting with the old men, I had managed to look through popular science literature and some historical and scientific works, which related the unusual properties of the cedar tree. That was why I was trying to get to the root of the matter Anastasia was talking about. I wanted to learn more about the way of life of the people of the cedar forest. I was thinking it over again and again, then I tried to visualize it. I tried to compare them with the Lykovs, the family well known to many readers of Komsomolskaya pravda. V. Peskova, a reporter on this newspaper published a series of articles under the headline: Taiga's Dead End. It was about the family which lived for a long time in the taiga. My impression about the Likovs was that they knew how to live in peace with nature but they were absolutely ignorant in their knowledge and understanding of modern civilized life and it actually ruined them when they got in contact with it.

In this case the situation was quite different. Anastasia impressed me with her perfect knowledge of our civilized life and even more, with something else which was not quite clear to me yet! She was discussing with ease our urban life as if she knew it perfectly well.

We had walked deep into the forest for about five kilometers, when she suddenly took off her quilted jacket, shawl, long skirt and put it into a hollow tree and only a short light dress was left on her. I was astonished by what I saw. If I believed in miracles I would categorize it as a miraculous transformation, a kind of metamorphosis. I was facing a very young woman with long golden hair and a splendid shape. Her beauty was extraordinary. She was an exceptional model. It was hard to imagine anybody who could possibly compete with her among the winners of the most prestigious beauty contests. Also, as it was revealed later on, her intellect was extremely sharp, too. Absolutely everything was appealing about her and she was full of charm. "Are you tired?", she said, "Do you want to have a rest?"

We sat down right on the grass and I had an opportunity to examine her face closer: no cosmetics at all, very regular features, well treated, perfect skin. These had nothing in common with the skin of common people of the Siberian remote places. She had large, kind gray eyes and smiling lips. Though she was wearing a light short dress, it looked rather like a night-dress.

There was the impression that she did not feel cold and it was not higher than 12-15 degrees Celsius. I decided to have a snack and took a sandwich and a flat bottle of cognac out of my bag. I offered a drink to Anastasia but she refused it. While I was enjoying my meal she stretched out on the grass as if exposing herself to the caressing sun rays. These being reflected from her turned up palms, were illuminating golden light. She was almost half naked. That woman was delightful!

I examined her thinking to myself: "Well, why do women through out history always try to strip themselves without limitations. They show their legs, then breasts, then all of them together using low cut and mini dresses? Do they try their best to attract everybody's attention? "Hello! Look at me! Look how wonderful I am, how open and accessible" What else can a man do? If he resists the temptation of the flesh it appears that he is holding a woman in low esteem. If he is attracted to her it appears that he is breaking the law given by God".

I asked her how she was not afraid to be alone in the forest. "I have nothing to be afraid of here", was the answer.

"I wonder, how would you defend yourself if you happen to come across two or three men, let's say geologists or hunters?", I asked. She did not say a word, just smiled back.

I thought to myself, "How could this young beauty, with extraordinary seductive abilities not feel scared of anything or anybody?" Then, you would never imagine what happened next! Even the memory of it brings back uncomfortable feelings. I put my arms around her shoulders and pulled her to me gently, giving her a hug. She did not resist much though one could feel that her resilient body was very strong. I did nothing else. The last thing I remember, before losing consciousness, were her words: "Don't do it, calm down". And yet before I did it, I remember perfectly well that I was terror-stricken. It was an unrealized fear, the kind one can experience in childhood when home alone and

everything scares you.

When I regained my consciousness, she was in front of me standing on her knees. Her hand was on my chest and with another one she was waving to somebody, who was somewhere above, as if expressing a negative answer. Who surrounded us invisibly? She was trying to show someone that nothing wrong had happened to her. Anastasia looked into my eyes.

“Calm down, everything is over already”.

“But what was it?”, I asked.

“Harmony's unreceptiveness of your attitude regarding me, I mean the desire which came to you for me. Later on you will make it out yourself”. “What does it have to do with some kind of harmony? It was you who started to resist”.

“That's right, me too. I did not welcome it It was not pleasant for me”.

I sat down, pulled my bag closer to me.

“Unbelievable! Look at her! "She did not welcome it Unpleasant..." Ha! You, women, the only thing you are all after is to seduce a man. You show your legs, expose your breasts, walk on spiked heels, though they are uncomfortable but still you wear them. You twist all of your private parts and as soon as it comes too close to the point... You start to talk like this: "Ah! I don't need it, I am not that kind of woman. What do you take me for?" Hypocrites! That's what you are! Now, look at yourself why have you taken your upper clothes off? It is not hot at all. Then you stretched yourself, got quiet and even more, you were smiling that way...”.

“First of all I am not comfortable wearing any kind of clothes. I put it on only when I come out of the forest to meet people, just to look like everybody. And I laid down in the sun to rest not to disturb you while you were enjoying your meal”, she said.

“Oh, yeah! You did not want to disturb me... But you did disturb me!”

“Of course, any woman would like to attract a man's attention, but not only to her legs and breasts. It is desirable that the right one, who is the only one in the world for her, could see much more than her physical body and would not pass her by”.

“But right now, right here nobody was passing by! Or what is that "much more" that one has to see if right in the foreground the legs are sticking out? Somehow you women are illogical!”

“Yes, you are right, to my great regret, it comes out exactly as you say... Shall we go, Vladimir? Have you finished your meal? Have you had a rest?” A thought crossed my mind, “Should I go further on with such kind of a lady philosopher?” Though I said, “All right, let's go”.

Chapter 3

A BEAST OR A HUMAN BEING?

We proceeded on our way to Anastasia's house. Her clothes were left in a tree trunk as well as her galoshes. Only a short light dress was left on. She offered her help carrying my bag. Being bare footed, she was walking with an extraordinary ease and graciousness taking the lead, swinging my bag with such ease as if it were empty.

We were talking all the way. It was fun to talk to her on different subjects. Sometimes Anastasia spun around while walking, then she would turn and walk backwards facing me. Being very much involved in our discussions, she did not watch her steps; it was unbelievable, but she never stumbled. She never pricked her bare feet from a knot of a dry twig. Sometimes she touched or gave a quick stroke to a leaf or a shrub twig. Now and then she bent down picked some blade of grass and ate it. "Just like the young of a wild animal", I thought to myself. When she came across some berries, she offered them to me, I snacked together with her. Her body did not show any particular muscular system.

Generally speaking, she was of medium build, neither skinny, nor stout. Her body was well nourished, resilient and very beautiful. Though I could tell that she was rather strong and her reactions were good too. When I stumbled, stretching my arms forward, she turned around with lightning speed, stretched her unoccupied arm and I fell down. My chest was right on her palm with widely spread fingers, so I did not even touch the ground with my hands. While doing it, she did not even interrupt herself from telling me something. When she helped me back on my feet, we moved on as if nothing had happened. At that time a thought crossed my mind about a gas pistol, which I had in my bag-While talking we had already covered a pretty good distance. Suddenly Anastasia stopped, put my bag under a tree and announced with joy, "Here we are! We are home".

I looked around. It was not a big well shaped clearing. There were flowers amidst majestic cedar trees but no hint of any constructions, I could not see even a shelter of branches.

"Well, and where is your house? Where can we sleep, eat, get protection from rain?..". I tried to clarify the situation.

"This is my home. Everything is available here". I was seized by a vague feeling of uneasiness.

“Where is it all? Will you give me a kettle, at least, to boil some water over a campfire and an axe?”

“Sorry, there is no kettle and there is no axe. We would manage better without starting a campfire...”. She replied.

“What do you mean? How do you like that? She does not even have a kettle! I have run out of bottled water and you know it perfectly well. Do you remember, when I had finished my snack, I threw away the empty bottle? Now I have just two sips of cognac left. It will take a day to get to a river or the nearest settlement. I am awfully tired and thirsty. Well, can you tell me, where do you get drinking water?”

On watching me getting nervous Anastasia got anxious too. She took me by my hand, pulling me across the clearing into the forest and tried to calm me down by saying, “Calm down, just don't worry, Vladimir! Please, don't get upset. I shall take care of everything. I'll do everything. You will have a rest, a nice sleep, you will not be cold. Do you want to drink? It is all right. There is no problem at all, I'll take care of it”. Ten or fifteen meters away from the clearing, behind the shrubs, right before my eyes I could see a small lake. Anastasia quickly scooped some water with her cupped hands and brought it to my Lips. “Here is water. Please, drink it”, she said.

“What's the matter with you? Are you crazy? How is it possible to drink unboiled water from a forest puddle? Did you not see that I was drinking Borjomi, bottled mineral water? On our motorboat we use only filtered river water then we chlorinate and oxygenize it not only for drinking but for washing purposes too”.

“It is not a puddle, first of all. This is clean and alive water. It is not the half dead one which you use. You can drink it. Look”. She moved her hands to her mouth and drank some water from it. And I don't know how the phrase had escaped my lips: “Anastasia, you are a beast”.

“But why "a beast"? Because my bed is not like yours? Because I don't have a car and all the kinds of equipment that you use?”

“Because you live in the forest like a beast, you have nothing but yet you seem to be happy”.

“Yes, I enjoy living here”.

“You see, you are not denying it”. I tried to behave reasonably.

“Do you believe that the main distinction of a man from anything living on the Earth is the availability for him of artificially made articles?”, She asked.

“Yes, I do believe that. To be more precise, that is the civilized mode of life”. “Do you consider your way of life more civilized? Oh, of course, you do! You do believe it. But I am not a beast. I am a human”.

Chapter 4

WHO ARE THEY?

Later on after I had spent three days in her company, I understood something about her way of life. At the same time some vexing questions occurred to me concerning our own way of life. Especially one question, which stayed in my mind relentlessly.

“Well”, I thought to myself, we have created a vast and complicated educational system. Being guided by the system, we are teaching our children and one another: at kindergartens, schools, colleges and postgraduate study. This system gives us an opportunity to create, invent, fly to the cosmos and investigate. On following the system, we are, accordingly, creating our way of life. We are striving to get to know the cosmos, the atom, and all kinds of abnormal phenomena which we enjoy discussing and describing in sensational articles and popular science publications. Yet there is one phenomenon which, somehow, we are trying to evade. It looks as if we are afraid to speak about it. Maybe, we are afraid to do it simply because, it can easily break our system of education and scientific conclusions. Because it laughs at the objective reality of our existence. We are trying hard to pretend that this phenomenon does not exist. Though it does and will exist, no matter how hard we try to ignore it by turning our backs or trying to bypass it. Isn't it high time to take a closer and more attentive look at it. Who knows, maybe, by joining the efforts of the human mind as a whole, we'll manage to answer the question: Why have all, without exception, great thinkers of all times who have created different religious teachings, before creating these teachings had to go away from the civilized life to forests or deserts and live as hermits?

"Put a mind to it, please, - they did not go to a | world famous library or a super academy, ---just to a forest! Now the great majority of humankind follows or tries to follow these teachings. Why did Moses from the Old Testament go to Mount Sinai to write the famous Ten Commandments.

Why did Jesus Christ seclude himself even from his disciples, when he left for the desert?

Why did Siddhartha Gautama (later on they started to call him Buddha), the man who lived in India in the middle of the 6-th century B. C., seclude himself in a forest for seven years and after that came out and brought to the people his great Teaching? Hence it became stimulating, opening and extending human minds and is known as Buddhism.

Or why not take our close predecessors who lived not long ago, prominent historical personalities: Serafim Sarovsky or Serge Radonezsky?

They also went to a forest and shortly after that they managed to perceive such depths of universal wisdom that the mundane Tsars had to take the impassable roads just to get a piece of good advice from them.

After a while at the place of their hermitages people constructed cloisters and majestic cathedrals. For example, the Troyitse-Serguievskaya Lavra in the city of Sergiev Posad in the Moscow region keeps attracting throngs of people. Can you believe it that everything had started just from a hermit?!

Why? What or who was helping those people to get wisdom, giving them knowledge and pushing them closer to comprehension on the essence of existence? How did they live there? What were they doing? What were they thinking about staying alone, far away from human society?"

These questions continued to bother me like an obsession soon after my contact with Anastasia. Therefore after I left the forest, I started to read everything I could find about hermits, though I have failed to get any answer. Strange as it may seem, nothing is available about their lives as hermits.

This is my story, but now I am trying my best to describe the events of my three days stay in the forest at Anastasia's. I am describing my feelings and impressions which were influenced by my communication with her since I hope that some of my readers will manage to comprehend the essence of this phenomenon.

Right now, after having drawn a bottom line under everything I had seen and heard, one thing is beyond any doubt. The people who are living a lonely life in the forest, as hermits, including Anastasia, can see everything which is taking place in our everyday life from an absolutely different perspective.

Some of her notions and affirmations are diametrically opposed to those which we call "universally acknowledged" ones. Who is closer to the truth? Who can be a judge? My duty is just to describe everything exactly the way I had seen and heard it. By doing so I hope to give an opportunity to others to determine the answers on their own.

Anastasia lives in the forest absolutely all by herself. She does not have any dwelling, she hardly wears any clothes and does not store any food to nourish herself. She is a descendant of those who have been living there for thousands and thousands of years and it looks like a different civilization. Anastasia was born there and is an inseparable part of Mother Nature.

The phenomenon which looks extraordinary at first sight (remember, when I was overwhelmed by strong fears while I was trying to take possession of Anastasia and lost my consciousness) happens becomes very simple later on. For instance, a man tames a cat, a dog, an elephant, a tiger, an eagle and what not. In this particular case EVERYTHING around is tamed. And this "EVERYTHING" can't allow anything bad to happen to her. Anastasia told me that when she was quite a little baby her mother could

leave her all by herself just on grass under a tree.

“Why didn't you die of starvation?” I asked. The response was just a snap of her fingers. A squirrel appeared by her side and jumped right on her hand. Anastasia moved her hand with the animal close to her mouth and the squirrel passed a kernel of a cedar nut from its mouth right into Anastasia's. I did not take it as a miracle, because I remembered that in Novosibirsk Academy Township I saw a lot of squirrels. They are not afraid of people and even beg food from passers by, moreover they even get angry when they are not treated. Though in this case I had an opportunity to watch a radically opposite process.

We know of numerous cases from fiction, press and TV programs in which babies were brought up by wild animals like wolves, for instance. In this particular case we can see that generation after generation are living permanently in close contact with Mother Nature and their relationship with the wild world differs from ours or any other known native tribes on Earth.

“Why don't you feel cold while I need to wear a jacket?” I asked her. “Because”, she answered, the people who are covering themselves with clothes, hiding themselves from heat and cold in shelters eventually lose more and more of their abilities to adapt to environmental fluctuations. I have not lost this ability, that's why I don't need much clothing”.

Chapter 5

FOREST BEDROOM

I was not prepared at all to sleep outdoors in a wild forest. Anastasia had put me to bed in a spaciouly dugout. When I woke up, I had a feeling of felicity and comfort as if I were on a wonderful, cozy bed.

The den was rather spaciouly paved with small, fluffy cedar twigs and dry herbs producing a very pleasant aroma. When stretching myself out I touched some fluffy fur and noted to myself that Anastasia was, evidently, hunting somehow. I moved closer to the fur, pressed my back against its warmth and decided to doze for a bit longer.

Anastasia was standing at the entrance and when she saw me awaken, told me right away, "Please, don't get scared". Then she clapped her hands and the "fur" moved... Being terribly horrified I realized that it was not a fur. A wild bear started to crawl very cautiously out of the den. After receiving an encouraging pat from Anastasia the beast left. It turned out that she had put some sleeping herbs in the den and then made the bear lie by my side to keep me warm during the night. She, herself, was sleeping outside rolled up into a ball.

"How could you do it to me? The he-bear could kill or press me down!" "It is not a "he", it is a she-bear. She could do nothing wrong to you", answered Anastasia, "she is very obedient. The greatest fun for her is to get a job and fulfill it in the best way. She even did not move during the whole night long. She pressed her nose to my feet and stood still in a great bliss. She only startled a bit when you in your dreams were stretching your arms giving her slaps on the back".

Chapter 6

ANASTASIA'S MORNING

Anastasia goes to bed at one of her shelters as soon as it gets dark. More often she spends a night in her den. When it is warm she sleeps outside right on the grass. The first thing that she does on awakening is the rising sun salutation which is exceptionally joyous. Then she welcomes newly born sprouts and shoots which are appearing on the branches and coming out from the ground. She touches them with her hands, sometimes fixing something. Then she runs up to small trees and claps and taps on their trunks, producing a wonderful shower of pollen. These are mixed with early morning dew which falls on her from the shaking crowns of the trees. After that she lies down on grass and for about five minutes stretches and twists herself in the state of blissful happiness. All her skin gets covered with a kind of moistening cream. Then, having taken a run, she jumps into a small lake where she splashes and dives.

The problems of food or clothes don't exist for her at all; most of the time she is naked or half-naked. She lives on cedar nuts, different kinds of herbs, berries and mushrooms. By the way, she eats only dry mushrooms. She never bothers herself harvesting mushrooms or nuts, or laying in store any kind of provision even for winter. The numerous squirrels living nearby take care of these problems. It is not extraordinary or unnatural that squirrels make their stocks for winter. It is instinctive behavior. I was astonished by the fact that the squirrels which happen to be around, on Anastasia's sign (snapping of her fingers), run right towards her and racing one another try to jump on her stretched out hand and give her a peeled kernel of nut.

When Anastasia slaps her bent knee, the squirrels produce a peculiar sound, as if calling or informing their comrades. They start to bring and put before her dry mushrooms and other provisions. They are doing it with great joy. I thought that Anastasia was training them, but she told me that their behavior was instinctive. The mother squirrel by doing it was teaching her children: "Watch me, follow me, behave like me".

"Maybe, they were trained by some of my ancestors long, long ago, but to my mind, most likely, it is their predestination. Each squirrel usually lays in store several times more than it could use itself". Anastasia commented on the behavior of her adorable providers.

Answering my question, how she manages not to get frozen in winter without proper clothes, Anastasia asked me, "Don't you know any examples which demonstrate the

ability of a human body to withstand cold without any clothes, in your world?"

I recalled a book titled Detka (a child), by Porfiry Ivanov, who wore only shorts and was always barefooted in all seasons. The book also relates that during the World War the fascists decided to test his great endurance by pouring water over him. The outside temperature was 20 degrees Celsius below zero and that after that they drove him in a motorcycle. No need to say that the man was absolutely naked...

In her childhood Anastasia was fed not only on her mother's breast milk but also on the milk of different animals. They freely let her suck their milk. She does not make any ritual out of the meals procedure as she never sits down to eat. She merely picks a berry or a plant sprout without interrupting herself from her main occupation of whatever she is doing at that time.

By the end of my stay there I could not help changing my attitude towards the woman, from what it was at the very beginning of our meeting. After everything I had seen and learned, Anastasia had turned into a different being but never a beast. Her intellect was extremely superb. Sometimes it seemed to me that it was beyond the understanding of an ordinary person.

In contrast to many well recognized personalities with extraordinary abilities who surround themselves with a mysterious halo, assuming a secretive look, Anastasia tried to explain the mechanics of her abilities and proved that there was nothing mysterious or supernatural about it or her. She always affirmed that she was a human being, a woman. She constantly reminded me about that again and again, asking me to realize it. I did try to realize it, doing my best to find explanations for all those extraordinary phenomena. A human mind in our civilized world is working in one direction: using all possible and impossible ways to build one's mode of living, to provide oneself and one's family with food and to satisfy sexual instincts. Anastasia doesn't waste time bothering herself with all this stuff. The people who happen to get in a similar situation, as the Lykovs family (above mentioned), for example, have to watch constantly that their life supporting provisions, dwellings and what not are taken care of. Mother Nature doesn't help them the way it does in Anastasia's case. All kinds of native tribes living apart of our civilized world, as far as I know, lack this kind of contact and harmony with Nature. Anastasia explains it as follows:

Their thoughts and intentions are not pure enough. Nature and the animal world can feel it.

Chapter 7

ANASTASIA'S BEAM

The most unusual and mysterious thing for me while staying at Anastasia's seemed to be her ability to see some people at a great distance and watch their lives. Maybe other hermits also have this kind of ability. She did it with the help of an invisible beam. She claims that everybody has it at their disposal but people don't know about its existence and they can't use it.

She affirms that till now man has invented nothing | at all which doesn't exist in nature. The technique, S which makes television work, is just a poor similarity to the great potential of this beam.

Just because the beam is invisible, I refused to believe in it, in spite of the fact that she was trying repeatedly to demonstrate how it worked. She tried hard to explain the principle of its operation and to find intelligible explanations.

“Now, tell me, Vladimir, what is your definition of a waking dream? Are many people able to dream?”

“I believe, many people can dream. A dream is when a man imagines himself in the desirable future”.

“All right. So you don't deny that a man has an ability to model his future and different situations?”

“No, I don't”.

“Well, what's an intuition?”

“Well, intuition... Probably, it's a feeling when a person is thinking without analyzing how and why something could happen, just goes with a flow. Some kind of feeling tells him the right way to act”.

“So, you don't deny the existence of something inside a man which helps him besides common analytical reasoning to define his own as well as somebody else's actions?”

“Supposedly I don't”.

“Perfect,” exclaimed Anastasia, “now a dream! What are dreams, which almost all people have?”

“Well, a dream is ... To tell the truth, I don't know what it is. A dream is just a dream”.

“All right, all right. Let it be "just a dream". Anyhow, you don't deny its existence. You and others know that when a person is sleeping, when his body is almost out of control of his consciousness, he can see people and different events?”

“Well, nobody will deny it”.

“Yet, in a dream people can communicate, talk, go through emotional experiences”

“Yes, they can”.

“Well, what do you think, can a man control his dreams, provoke desirable images and events which he/she would like to see?”

“I don't think so. A dream comes somehow by itself”.

“You are wrong. A man can control everything. A man has been created to control everything”

“The beam I am talking about consists, precisely, of existing information, imagination, intuition, soul feelings and, as a result of it visions, just like a dream.

These are consciously controlled by a man's will power”.

“How is it possible to control a dream while you are sleeping?”

“ Not only while sleeping. One can do it while being wide awake. You see, it is as if you are programming in advance and without failure. With people like you it occurs while sleeping and chaotically. Man has lost his ability to control it. That's why he decided that a dream is just an unnecessary product of a tired brain. In reality... Well, do you want me to try to help you to see anything at a distance right now?”

“Well, sure I do”, I answered eagerly.

“Lie down on the grass and relax, so your body would use less energy. It is necessary that you feel comfortable. Does anything disturb you? All right. Now think about a person you know well enough. Let's say, your wife. Recall her habits, her way of walking, her clothes, the place you think she could be right now and in general, try to imagine everything possible, using the power of your imaginations.

I recalled my wife, bearing in mind that at that moment she could be at our country

house. I visualized the house, some things and furniture. Then many things came to my mind in details but I could see nothing... I told Anastasia about it and she answered, "Because you can't relax completely. Try to relax as if you are falling asleep. All right. Don't worry. I'll help you. Close your eyes. Put your arms aside".

Then I felt the touch of other fingers on mine and I started to fall asleep or into a kind of drowsiness...

...My wife was standing in the kitchen of our country house. She had a knitted jacket over her house coat. "It means that it is cool in the house", I thought to myself, "again there are problems with the heater". My wife was cooking coffee on the gas stove and something else was boiling in the dog's pot.

Her face looked sad and unhappy. Her movements were slack and slow. All of a sudden she raised her head and moving lightly and easily she went to the window. She looked through it at falling rain and smiled. The coffee on the stove came over the edges, she seized the coffee pot with the spilling coffee but she did not frown and was not irritated by it, as she usually would be in such a case. She took off her jacket..

I was wide awake.

"Well, did you see?", asked Anastasia.

"Yes, I did. But maybe it was a regular dream?"

"Why "regular"? You had planned exactly to see her!"

"Yes, I did, and I have seen. Where is the proof that she was exactly there, I mean at the kitchen at the very moment I was watching her?"

"Will you memorize this day and time. When you come back, ask her. That's all. Didn't you notice anything else which looked unusual about her?"

"Well, nothing else, I guess".

"Didn't you see her smile, when she came to the window and the fact that she was not irritated by the spilt coffee?"

"Oh, yes. I did notice that but maybe she saw something good through the window and she liked it".

"She could see only rain. Rain, which she never enjoyed. Right?"

"Then, why did she smile, according to you?"

“Well, because I was looking at your wife with my beam and warmed her”.

“So, it means that your beam had warmed her and what about mine? Was it cold?”

“You were just watching her with interest, you did not put your feelings into your beam”.

“Does it mean that your beam can warm a person at a distance?”

“Exactly”.

“What else?”

“It can get and send information, try to improve a mood and partially heal some sicknesses. The beam can do many other different things, it depends on the available energy, power of feelings, will power and desire”.

“Can you see the future and the past, Anastasia?”

“Of course, I can! The future and the past, they are almost the same. The only difference is in outside details. The main thing always remains unchangeable”

“How come? What can be "unchangeable"?”

“For example, one thousand years ago the people were wearing different clothes. They were using different equipment in their everyday life. Also one thousand years ago the people had exactly the same feelings and emotions as now. Feelings are timeless: fear, joy, love... Yaroslav the Wise, Ivan the Terrible or a pharaoh could love a woman with the same feelings as you or anybody else today”.

“Well, it's quite interesting but not completely comprehensible. What does it mean? You claim that everyone could have such a beam?”

“Sure, Vladimir. Everyone. Even now people still have feelings and intuition, the ability to dream, assume, program and design certain situations, to watch dreams. They did not absolutely lose their abilities, only that these processes have become chaotic and uncontrolled”

“Maybe it is necessary to train people somehow, to develop some kind of exercises?”, I asked.

Anastasia's world outlook is very unusual and amazing:

“What is God, Anastasia? Does He exist? If He does, then why has nobody ever seen Him?”

“God is Interplanetary Mind or Intellect. He is not a single whole mass. One of His halves is out of the material world of the Universe. He is a complexity of all kinds of

energies. His second half is spread all over the Earth in the form of small particles as well as in every human being”.

“What do you think about the future of our society?”

“In perspective the realization of all the destructive nature of the technocratic way of your development will come and you will start to move back towards the Origins, the Primary Source”.

“Do you mean that all our scientists are undeveloped creatures who are leading us into a dead end?”

“I would like to say that through them the process is being accelerated and, accordingly, the realization of the wrong way is coming true”.

“Does it mean that all the machines and buildings we are creating are just in vain?”, “Yes, it is”.

“Isn't it boring for you to live here all by yourself without television and telephone?”

“Such primitive things you have mentioned, Vladimir! All these things man had from the very beginning, only in a much more perfect way. I have it at my disposal too”.

“Do you mean a television set and a telephone?”

“Well, what is a television set? — It's an instrument with the help of which some information gets to the human atrophied imagination where the pictures and plots are being arranged. With the help of my imagination I can draw upon any plot or any picture, arrange the most unbelievable situations. Even more to that, I can also take part in them myself and even influence the plot on my own. Oh, sorry! I have expressed myself incomprehensibly, I suppose, haven't I?”

“All right and what about the telephone?”

“A man can communicate with anybody without a telephone. The only required things are:

Willpower the wish of both parties and a developed imagination.

Chapter 8

CONCERT IN TAIGA

I suggested her that she should go to Moscow and present herself on television.

“Just imagine, Anastasia, being such a beauty, you could become a cover girl, a world famous model”. I said. That was it! It was at exactly that point, when I realized that she was an earthly woman and, like any woman, she was happy to be a beauty. Anastasia started laughing.

“The most beautiful, is it? Do you really mean it?” She asked me to repeat it and walked along the clearing as if she were a model putting one foot in front of the other while walking and demonstrating imaginary finery. I made an announcement,

“Now, ladies and gentlemen, highly respected audience, you are going to see a second to none, a wonderful gymnast, the incomparable beauty A-n-a-s-t-a-s-i-y-a!”

My announcement made her cheer up even more. She ran into the center of the clearing and produced an incredible somersault forward and then backward. Then to the left and to the right, then she jumped up very high, caught at a bough of a tree, swung herself for a couple of times and found herself in another tree. Then she repeated her acrobatic feat with somersaults, ran into the center of the clearing again and started bowing before the imaginary audience being accompanied by my loud cheers. Then she ran away from the stage clearing and having hidden herself behind the imaginary wings. She was peeping out smiling waiting impatiently for another announcement.

Then the idea of my favorite collection of pop singers crossed my mind. Once in a while in the evenings being alone in my cabin I enjoyed watching video tapes with my favorite songs. One of those tapes came to me. So, without a shade of doubt, that she could do it, I announced, “Dear ladies and gentlemen, to much respected audience, now you are going to meet the best modern variety performers who will perform their best songs. Let's warmly welcome them!”

Oh, how wrong I was to doubt her abilities! Later on ... it was absolutely something unbelievable and unpredictable!... Anastasia, on having hardly taken one step from behind the “wings”, started to sing. It was the voice of a famous modern singer Alla Pugachova. Don't take me wrong, she was not imitating Alla's voice. She was singing with such an ease reproducing not only the voice itself but its specific timbre. The

manners, the way she was expressing her feelings and emotions were astonishing. It was great!

Though the most exciting thing was something else. It was when Anastasia was accentuating some particular words and phrases, adding to the song some new meaning. Alla Pugachova's performance of this song, which had been recognized by the great majority of people as a perfect one, now, in Anastasia's interpretation, was turning to produce a whole scale of new emotions. She was giving more light to the images. For instance, in the perfect lines of the song:

“Once there was an artist,

He had a small house and canvases

But he was in love with an actress,

The one who loved flowers.

And he sold his house,

Sold his pictures and canvases

And he spent all his money

On a great sea of flowers-Millions, millions of scarlet roses...” she had accentuated the word “canvases”. She had screamed out this word, putting into it inexplicable emotions which were a mixture of astonishment and fright. Yes, canvases! Exactly! As they are the most precious things for an artist. Without them it is impossible to create. The artist gives away his most valuable treasure for his beloved's sake... Then, when Anastasia was pronouncing the following words:

“... the train took her away” she expressed the artist's feelings, the pain of a man who was deeply in love. She also expressed his despair and confusion watching the departing train which was taking away his beloved forever. Oh, it was great!

Being under the influence of everything I had seen, heard and experienced, I did not applaud when the song was over. Anastasia bowed, waited for a while for the appreciation of the “audience”. Then without any invitation and announcement, she started another song and this time she was trying even harder than before. She was performing all my favorites one after another, everything which was recorded for me in my order on my video tape.

Each song, which I used to enjoy many times before, sounded in her reproduction brighter, containing much more meaning, provoking more emotions.

The last song was over. Anastasia waited in vain for the cheering. So, she went away behind her “wings”. I was still in a state of a shock. I sat for a while, being under the

influence of that extraordinary impression. Then I jumped up and started to applaud shouting out, "Great, Anastasia! Bravo! Encore! All the performers, welcome on the stage, please!" Anastasia came out cautiously and bowed slowly. I could not help yelling all the way, "Bravo! Encore!", I was clapping and stamping with my feet. She also got excited, started clapping and asked, " "Bravo", does it mean "more"?"

"Yes, more! And more! And more!"

Then I became quiet and started to take an all around view of Anastasia and a thought crossed my mind: how amazingly many sided her soul was, as she had managed to bring into the performance such amount of novelty, brightness and beauty! She was quietly looking at me inquiringly. Then I asked her, "Well, Anastasia, do you have a song of your own? Could you perform anything which belongs only to you?"

"Yes, I could. But my song is wordless. Would you like it?"

"Oh, please, Anastasia, will you sing your song?"

"All right".

So, Anastasia started her unusual song. At first she screamed out as a newly born baby, then her voice became very soft, delicate and affectionate. She was standing under a tree, pressing her hands against her chest, her head being bent a bit as if she was rocking a baby to sleep, singing a lullaby song. She was caressing the baby with her voice and was telling something loving to it. Because of that soft, amazingly clear voice, everything stood still even the birds and the chirring in the grass. Then she became very happy watching her baby waking up. New sounds of exaltation appeared in her voice, unbelievably high sounds now were flying over the earth and then flushing up into the heights of eternity. Now Anastasia's voice was pleading to somebody, then it was fighting and then it was again caressing a baby, giving the gift of joy to everything around.

The feeling of joy embraced me too and when the song was over I screamed joyously, "And now, ladies and gentlemen, my dear friends, you will watch a unique, inimitable performance of the world famous, the most skilful, brave and charming lady trainer who is capable of taming any beast. Welcome her, watch

and be thrilled!" Anastasia even squealed in exaltation, jumped up clapping her hands rhythmically, gave a cry and whistled. Something unbelievable started happening in the clearing A she-wolf was the first to appear. It jumped out from behind the bushes and stood still by the edge of the clearing, looking around incomprehensibly. The squirrels were skimming up the trees jumping from branch to branch. Two eagles were flying very low in circles. Some kind of small wild animals were moving in the shrubs, then a sound of the snapping of dry twigs came to us. A huge bear was making its way through the bushes moving them apart and pressing them. It ran out on the clearing, came very close to Anastasia and stood as if rooted to the spot. The she wolf grumbled at the bear disapprovingly. Evidently, the bear had approached their lady too close without getting a special invitation.

Anastasia ran towards the bear, patted its muzzle, gripped its front paws and made the bear stand on its back paws vertically. One could tell that while doing it she did not apply any efforts at all as the animal was fulfilling her commands willingly. This was done in accordance with its own interpretation and understanding of them. The beast was standing motionless, trying hard to understand what she wanted it to do. Anastasia took a run, jumped up high, gripped the bear by its paw and started bending herself backward. She was pulling the bear trying to show that she was going to throw the beast over herself.

This kind of trick would be impossible if the bear did not do it willingly by itself and Anastasia was just directing its actions. Evidently, the bear was doing its best trying not to cause any harm to its mistress by supporting itself on its paws. The she-wolf was getting more and more restless so it could not help but rush from side to side growling and snarling. A couple of other wolves appeared in the clearing and Anastasia repeated the trick with the bear again and again throwing it over herself. She even tried to make the beast accomplish a somersault and the poor thing suddenly tumbled down on its side and stood still.

Being overexcited and baring its teeth in anger, the she-wolf made a jump towards the bear. With the speed of lightning Anastasia blocked the wolf's way and the latter, slowing down with its four paws, made a somersault over its back and hurt itself against Anastasia's legs. Anastasia took a very quick grip on the wolf's mane making the beast press itself to the ground obediently. With the other hand she waved exactly the way she did in my case, when I had tried to give her a hug without her permission.

The forest around us was murmuring excitedly but not threateningly. One could sense of excitement in the behavior of big and small wild animals. Some of them were jumping or running, some were becoming quiet. Anastasia started to reduce the agitation: first of all she flattered the she-wolf then patted its mane and sent the beast away from the clearing by giving it a smack as people usually do to a dog. The bear was still lying on its side in a very uncomfortable position. Evidently it was waiting for another "job". Anastasia came to the bear, made it rise, stroked its muzzle and in the same way as she did with the she-wolf, sent it away from the clearing.

Anastasia blushing sat down next to me, took a deep breath and slowly breathed out. I noted that her breathing normalized very quickly and became as smooth and regular as if she had never done all her incredible exercises.

"They don't understand theatrical performance and they don't need to understand it because it's not very good for them", remarked Anastasia and then asked, "Well, what about me? Can I get any place in your world? I mean, can I find a job".

"It was great! But all of these have already existed. The trainers in the circus show many interesting tricks with all kinds of animals, so you will not be able to force your way into such a job because of bureaucratic red tape. There are a great number of conventions and intrigues. You are not well versed to stand them".

We proceeded with our game trying all kinds of versions whereby Anastasia could find a job in our world and how she would overcome the existing formalities. Although we had failed to find an easy solution as Anastasia did not have papers to prove her education, an identification or the right of permanent residence. Nobody would believe her stories about her origin without a birth certificate. Her wonderful skills and abilities would not count much.

Anastasia got more serious and said, "Of course I would like to visit, at least once again, one of your large cities, let's say Moscow, just to get more proof concerning the exactness of my modelling of some situations from people's lives. For example, I can't understand how the dark forces manage to fool women to such an extent that they, without even realizing it, are trying to attract men with the help of their physical charms. By doing so they don't give the men an opportunity of making the right choice, the one which is right for the soul. Then they are both suffering because of this as they can't create a proper family". Then she started her amazing reasoning about sex, family, bringing up children, and I thought to myself, "The most incredible of all that I've seen and heard was her ability to speak about our way of life, her precise and detailed knowledge of it".

Chapter 9

WHO LIGHTS ANEW STAR

The second night, being afraid that Anastasia would again put into my “bedroom” her favorite she-bear to keep me warm or some other foolish things and I refused categorically to go to bed. I told her that I would not do it if she did not lie down by my side. I had figured it out that if she was close to me, she would not play any tricks.

“That's what you call having a guest staying at your home? I was sure that here there would be at least some construction. You don't even let me make a campfire and on top of this you are slipping in all kinds of beasts in on me! If you don't have a decent house you should not invite guests to stay there”.

“All right, Vladimir, don't worry, please and don't get scared. Nothing bad will happen to you. If you wish, I shall lie down near you and keep you warm”.

This time there were even more cedar twigs scattered in the den dugout; the bunches of herbs were put very neatly. The walls were also decorated with twigs. I took off my clothes, put my pants and sweater under my head, lay down and covered myself with my jacket. The cedar twigs were producing the phytoncideoous aroma about which popular science literature tells us how whereby it disinfects the surrounding air. Although in the taiga the air is clean, anyhow. I could breathe with ease. The dry herbs and flowers added some kind of extraordinarily delicate flavor.

Anastasia kept her promise and lay down with me. Honestly, I could tell that the aroma which her body was producing exceeded all other scents. It was much more pleasant than the most delicate perfume which I had ever smelled while being close to a woman. However, it never came to my mind to take possession of her. After my attempt to hug her when we were on our way to her place of dwelling, after that fear which I had experienced and the losing of my consciousness, I did not imagine any kind of sexual or romantic feelings towards her. That was true even when I saw her absolutely naked.

I was dreaming quietly about a son whom my wife had never given birth to: “It would be great if my son could be born from Anastasia! She is such a beauty. She is healthy and is capable of great endurance. That means that the baby would also be healthy and in my likeness. Of course, my son may look like her though he still should be much more like me. He would become a strong and smart personality. He would be happy, talented and intelligent”

I imagined my baby son clinging to the nipples of her breast and involuntarily I put my hand on Anastasia's resilient breast. At that very moment a quiver ran all over my body and in a moment it was gone. Though it was not a fearful shivering, it was a different, extraordinary and pleasant one. I did not draw my hand back but only held my breath waiting for what would follow. The next moment I felt her soft palm on my hand. She did not push my hand away. I raised myself a bit and started looking at her gorgeous face. The white northern night was making it even more beautiful and attractive. I could not move my eyes away from her face.

Her caressing gray bluish eyes were looking at me. I just could not help bending and touching slightly, quickly and carefully with my lips her half opened mouth. Again the same pleasant quiver occurred! My face was getting shrouded in the aroma of her breath. Her lips did not utter her regular: "Don't do it, calm down". There were no fearful feelings. The thoughts about my son did not leave me. When Anastasia embraced me gently, caressed my hair and moved herself towards me, I felt something unbelievable!..

Only in the morning on awakening did I realize that never in my life had I experienced these kinds of feelings, — absolute bliss, exaltation and satisfaction. Then there was another thing which seemed very strange: usually a physical tiredness comes after a night with a woman. In this case everything was quite the opposite and, moreover, there was a feeling of a great accomplishment. There was a feeling that something great had been created. The satisfaction was not just a physical one. There was something more to it, something still unrealized, unknown, never experienced before, extraordinarily wonderful and joyous!

An idea flashed across my mind: "Just because of a moment like this one life is worth living". I knew, I had never experienced anything like that, even close to it! However, I had met different women in my life who were beautiful, some of whom were rather experienced in love affairs and I had loved them.

Anastasia was a virgin, a timid and tender girl. Still there was something in her that none, among those I knew, had possessed.

"What? Where is she now?", I wondered. I moved towards the trap door of the cozy den and sticking myself out. I looked around. The clearing was situated a little bit below my wonderful night dwelling place. It was covered with a layer of the morning fog. It was about two feet thick. In that fog having stretched her arms with her palms opened, Anastasia was spinning around. She was creating a small cloud of fog around herself. When it was wrapping all over her, Anastasia jumped up easily, stretching her legs into splits like a ballerina. She flew over the fog layer, landed in a new spot and started spinning again and while doing it she was laughing, rolling herself into another piece of cloud. The rising sun rays were making then-way trying to penetrate through the fog and comfort her. I tell you, it was something! It was charming and exciting and I yelled at the top of my voice being overwhelmed with emotions:

"A-a-n-a-a-st-a-a-s-i-i-ya-a! Good morning, to the fairy

of the forest! Anastasia-a-a!”

“Good morning, Vladimir!”, She shouted back gaily. “It is so nice, so beautiful now! Why do I feel like this?”, I was shouting at the top of my voice putting in it all my power.

Anastasia raised her arms greeting the rising sun, laughed with her happy, alluring laughter and shouted back to me and to somebody else above in a singing voice.

“Only for a man the only one out of all living beings in the entire Universe it has been given to experience something like this! Only for a man and a woman, who had wished sincerely to have a baby together! Only a man who is experiencing this kind of feeling can light a new star in the sky! Only-y f-o-o-r a m-a -a-n striving towards creation! Thank you-u-u!” Then she turned to me and added addressing only me: “Only for a man, who is striving for a creation and not for satisfaction of his flesh needs”.

She had an outburst of laughter again with her catchy laughter, jumping up, stretching herself into the splits, she started to hover over the fog. Then she ran up to me and took a seat next to me at the entrance of the den She started to comb her golden hair with her fingers.

“So, you don't believe that sex is a kind of sin?”, I asked her. Anastasia was quiet for a while then looked at me with surprise and replied, “Do you think that it was the kind of sex they mean when using precisely this word in your world? If not, then what is more sinful: to give in and let a man come into this world or abstain from it and don't let a man be born into the material world? A real man?”

Well, well, I went deep into thinking. Really, that night's intimacy with Anastasia was impossible to classify by a habitual word “sex”. What was it then? What is the proper word to use? I asked her again, “Why has nothing of the kind ever happened to me before and, I guess, to many other people?”

“Well, you see, Vladimir, the dark forces are trying hard to develop in man vile, mean motives and lust of flesh just to prevent him from experiencing the divine grace, the gift of God. They are trying hard using all possible ways to make him/her believe, by suggesting the idea of effortlessly getting satisfaction, just thinking of satisfaction. By doing it they are leading a man away from the Truth. The poor, deceived women, who not even realizing it, for all their lives are getting only suffering, trying to find their lost grace and bliss. They are looking for it in the wrong direction. No woman will be able to keep a man from lechery if she gave herself up to him only to satisfy his carnal desires. If something like this happened, their joint life will never be a happy one. Their union, a poor illusion of togetherness, is a lie. It is a falsehood though widely recognized by conventional society.

As for the woman herself, she turns into a loose one right away, no matter whether she is married to the man or not. Oh, humankind has invented so many kinds of laws and conventions trying to strengthen this false union by artificial reanimation: ecclesiastic and

secular ones, but they don't help! They just make a man play, to get adjusted to them, trying to make a show of the existence of a union and create an imitation of a marriage. The inner intentions were always unchangeable and never depended on anybody or anything. Jesus Christ had realized it. Then he tried to emphasize it by saying that anyone who was looking at a woman with lust is already committing adultery with her in his heart. Then all of you, taken together recently tried to hold up to shame the one who had left a family... Although nothing in any kind of situation could stop man from searching intuitively for this grace, once experienced. He/she is looking persistently for this great satisfaction in spite of all kinds of obstacles.

A false union is horrible because children are involved! Do you understand, Vladimir? Children! They feel artificiality, the mendacity of such a union. Children start to doubt everything their parents say to them. Children can sense a lie subconsciously when they are still in their conceptual stage. Because of it they feel bad things.

Tell me, and who would not? What kind of a man would like to appear in this world as a result of carnal pleasures? Everyone would like to be created by a great impulse of love striving for a real creation.

Those who joined a false union later on will seek a real satisfaction secretly, away from one another. They will be longing for possession of new bodies all the time or use only their own bodies ordinarily and they are doomed. Only intuitively being aware that the real grace of the real union is moving away from them farther and farther”.

“Anastasia, wait a minute. Could it really be true that men and women are doomed to such an extent if they happened to have just regular sex at first? Is it possible that there would not be any way out, no opportunity left to correct the situation?”

“Why, there is an opportunity. Now I know for sure what to do. Where and what kind of words should I find to express it, to put it into words? I am searching for such kinds of words all the time. I was looking for them in the past and in the future but I've failed to find them. Maybe they are quite near, somewhere here? They are about to appear, new words are ready to be born with the ability to reach the heart and mind. The new words to express the ancient truth of the Original Sources”.

“Well, don't get frustrated, Anastasia. Try to tell me using those words which are available at least approximately. What else is necessary for real satisfaction besides two bodies?”

“Awareness! Mutual striving for creation. Sincerity and purity of striving”.

“Where do you get all this knowledge from, Anastasia?”

“I am not the only one who knows it. The enlightened souls like Vales, Krishna, Rama, Shiva, Christ, Allah, Buddha were trying to explain to people the essence of all existence”

“Now, what's that? Did you read about them? Where? When?”

“I did not read about them. I just know what they have said, what they were thinking about and what was their mission, what they wanted to accomplish” “So, according to you, is it bad just to enjoy sex?” “Very bad! It leads a man away from the truth, destroys a family and a huge amount of energy goes nowhere”. “Then why do they publish such a great number of magazines with naked women in erotic poses and produce movies with sensuality and sex? They are a great success and in great demand. The demand gives rise to supply. What do you mean? Do you want to say that our humankind is absolutely wicked?”

“Humankind is not wicked but the mechanism of the dark forces, eclipsing the spirituality provoking carnality, is very strong. It brings a lot of troubles and suffering to people. It works through women using their beauty, the destination of which is to awake and support the spirit of a poet, an artist and a creator in man. Because of this very purpose a woman herself should be pure. If there is no purity of feeling, then an attempt of attracting a man with the help other sexual charms comes forward. The purpose of it is just to get a man with the outside beauty of an empty vessel. By doing this she tricks a man. It is inevitable that she is going to suffer for this trickery all her life”.

“How come? Couldn't mankind manage to overcome this "mechanism" of dark forces through the millennia of its existence? It has failed to overcome this in spite of all the calls of "the enlightened souls"? Does it mean that it is just impossible to overcome them? Maybe, there just is no need to do it?”

“It is possible and necessary by all means!”

“Then how could it be done?”

“Women again! Those who have managed to realize the truth and their predestination will get changed and eventually men will change too”.

“No way, Anastasia, I doubt it. A normal man will always be excited by a beautiful woman's legs and breasts... Especially when on a business trip or on vacation he happens to be far away from his woman. That is the way. It just happens. Nobody can change anything in this case. So it's one way traffic”.

“But I have already done it for you”.

“What have you done?” “From now on you will not be able to be involved with pernicious sex”. A horrifying thought struck me like lightning and started to reverse the wonderful feeling which was born inside me the previous night. “What have you done to me, Anastasia? Tell me! What? I am now... What am I now... Impotent?”, I uttered.

“On the contrary, you have become a real man now. Just regular sex will be repulsive to you. It will not bring you the feeling you have experienced that night as this kind of feeling could be possible only in the case of a desire to have a baby. The woman should

have the same desire too. She should really love to desire a baby from you”.

“Love me? Well, under such conditions... During a life time it could happen only a couple of times. That's it...”.

“It is quite sufficient to be happy within your entire life, trust me. You will realize it”.

Anastasia stretched her arms towards me and tried to move closer. I jumped quickly away from her into the den's corner and shouted out, “Stay away from the exit, please. I ask you nicely!”, She stood up. I crawled out and backed up from her a couple of steps.

“You have deprived me maybe of the main pleasure in my life. Everybody is longing for it, everybody is thinking of it, even if they don't speak aloud about it”.

“It is just an illusion, Vladimir, all these so-called pleasures you are talking about. I've helped you to get rid of a terrible, pernicious, sinful attraction

“Whether it is illusion or not, who knows? Anyhow, it is a pleasure universally acknowledged. Don't you dare make me rid of it just because you take it as a "pernicious" inclination. Otherwise when I get out of here, I will forget about any relationship with a woman. No drinking! Having a nice snack! No smoking! Thank you! The great majority of people in everyday life are absolutely unaccustomed to these conditions”

“Well, what is good in hard drinking, smoking, senseless and pernicious digesting of a great amount of animal meat since there has been plenty of vegetation created especially for man to live on?”

“Now look here, why don't you live on your "vegetation" if you like it and leave me alone. For many of us it's a pleasure to smoke, to drink liquor, to enjoy a nice meal. It is recognized and accepted by everybody. Do you understand it? Accepted! This is the bottom line! That's it!”

“Look, Vladimir, everything you've mentioned is bad and pernicious”.

“"Bad"? "Pernicious"? All right! What if my invited guests come to my house to celebrate some special occasion. They sit down at the table and I would tell them, "My dear friends, will you help yourselves to some nuts, have a bite of an apple, enjoy a glass of water and no smoking." Then it will be really bad!”

“When you invite your friends and as soon as they come, is it the most important thing to do right away to invite them to sit down at the table and start drinking, eating and smoking?”

“It does not really matter whether it is the most important or not. It is just universally acknowledged all over the world, by all people. In some countries there is even a special traditional dish like a roast turkey for a certain holiday or occasions

“It is not recognized by everybody in your world”. “Well, maybe not by everybody but as for me, I am live among normal people”.

“Why do you believe that your surroundings consist of the most normal people?” “Just because they are the majority”. “It is not a weighty reasoning”. “It is not a "weighty" one for you because it is impossible trying to explain anything to you”. My anger towards Anastasia was vanishing. I recalled everything I had heard about new medical remedies. I remembered about doctors sexopathologists and a comforting thought came to my mind:

“If she has done something which somehow caused me any damage, the doctors would be able to help correct my problem”. So, I said, “All right, Anastasia, let's make a bargain, I am not angry any more. Thank you very much for the wonderful night! Only in future you had better not try to get rid of my habits and addictions. As far as sex is concerned, I'll fix it with the help of our doctors and modern medicine. All right? Now let's go bathing”.

I walked to the lake, enjoying the morning forest.

A good mood was returning to me again and as for her... It's unbelievable! Can you imagine?! — She followed me and said all of a sudden. “Medicine and doctors will not help you. To change you back, the -a- way it was before, first of all they would need to erase from your memory file everything that had happened and the memory of experienced feelings”. Being shocked by this news I stopped and screamed at the top of my voice, “What? Then why don't you undo it?”

“Sorry, I can't undo it either”.

And again the feeling of blind fury overwhelmed me. “You... You are an insolent woman! You are interfering in and messing my life! Here you are! You are ready to make dirty tricks but correct them by deleting them, "I can't! Isn't it something?!”

“But I haven't done any dirty trick. Didn't you want to have a son of yours so much? Although many years have passed by and here you are, you still don't have a son. There is no woman in your life who could give birth to your long awaited son. A desire to have a child from you also a son, has come to me too. Even more to it, I can... Then why do you think beforehand that you will not be well? How do you know? Maybe you will realize it sooner or later... Don't be afraid of me, please, Vladimir. I am not interfering into your psyche. It happened all by itself. You have got what you had wished for. Your wish has come into the material. If there is one thing which I would like to help you with very much, it is to get rid of, at least, one mortal sin”.

“Now again! What kind of sin, I wonder?”

“Pride”.

“Well, I tell you! You are a strange woman! Your philosophy and way of life are inhuman”.

“What do you see in me which is not human, that scares you?”

“First of all, you are living in this forest all by yourself, communicating with plants and animals. There is nobody in our world whose life can come even close to yours”.

“How come, Vladimir, why...”, Anastasia started to speak excitedly, What about dachniks! They also communicate with plants and animals but yet they do it unconsciously, without being aware of it. Later on they will realize it. The process of realization has already started with many of them”.

“Well, and here we go! She is already a dachnitsa, and this beam of yours... You don't read books but you know a lot. It is a kind of mysticism”.

“Just a minute, I'll explain to you everything but take your time, not all of a sudden. It takes time, you know. I am trying hard but I can't find the proper words, the understandable ones. Please, trust me. Everything I do is quite absolutely human in distinctive features. It was given to humans long, long ago. It is their primordial bond. It is in our primordial source files. Everybody can do it. Well, anyhow, sooner or later people inevitably will return to it again. The process will slowly take place when the Light Forces overcomes

“What about your concert? You were singing with different voices, imitating my favorite singers and, moreover, it was done in exactly the same consecutive order that is recorded in my video tape”.

“It just happened, Vladimir. Once I saw the tape, listened to the songs. I'll tell you later on how it happened. All right?”

“And what do you mean, did you memorize right away the words and the melodies of all those songs?”

“Yes, I did. What is complicated about it or mystic? Oh, what have I said and showed you! You got scared of me, didn't you? I guess, evidently, I am a muddle-headed chatterbox. I don't know how to restrain myself. Once my grandpa called me this name. I thought that he had done it just because of his love for me. Now I believe that I am really a muddle-head. Please... Vladimir...”.

Anastasia was talking excitedly and evidently it was the reason why my fear of her was almost gone. The thoughts of my son filled up all my feelings.

“Well, I am all right, I am not afraid any more-Only, please, do restrain yourself a little bit. You see, even your grandpa has told you about it”.

“Yes, he has. My great-grandpa... and I am talking on and on... You know, I can't help it because there is so much to say and I want to say it all! Am I a chatterbox? Yes, sure I

am. I'll try to do my best. I'll try to say only the things which are understandable”

“So, you mean that you will give birth, Anastasia?”

“Of course! Only it will not be in prime time”.

“What do you mean by saying "not in prime time"?”“You see, it is necessary to do it in summer, it is an indispensable condition, when nature helps to bring a baby up”.

“Then why did you make the decision if it is so risky for you and the baby?”

“Don't worry, anyhow, the son will live”.

“And you?” “And me too. I'll try to stay till spring comes and then everything will come its way”.

She said that without a shade of sadness or fear for her own life. Anastasia took a run and jumped into the water of the small lake. A shaft of sprays sparkling in the sun raised like fireworks and descended on the clean and smooth surface of the lake. In about thirty seconds her body slowly started coming up to the surface. She was lying on the water with her arms wide apart and smiling. I was standing on the bank watching her and thinking: “Will the squirrel hear the snaps of her fingers when she is lying together with her baby in other shelters? Will any of her four-footed friends help her? Will there be enough warmth in her body to give to the baby?”

“If my body is getting cold and the baby needs food, it will cry”, said Anastasia in a low voice on coming out of the water. Its dissatisfied cry will wake up the pre-spring nature or at least a part of it and then everything will be fine. They will bring the baby up”.

“Did you read my mind?” “No, I just assumed that you were thinking about it. It is quite natural”.

“Anastasia, you have told me that your relatives live near by. Could they help you?”

“They are pretty much occupied and they could not be bothered”.

“What is it that they are so occupied with? What are you doing all day long if practically the whole surrounding nature is serving you?”

“Well, I am occupied with... And I am also trying to help the people of your world, those whom they call "dachniks" or gardeners”.

Chapter 10

HER FAVORITE DACHNIKS

Dacha: a small piece of land about 0.04-0.12 hectares (sometimes bigger) with a hut or a summer house surrounded by a kitchen garden, flower beds and fruit trees; it is usually outside of a city; people go there for weekends or vacations. Some people have luxurious residences with a big property but Anastasia does not mean them. A dachnik is the owner of a dacha. (Comment by the translator).

She told me a lot very excitedly about the possibilities which could be opened for people who communicate with plants. In general Anastasia usually speaks on two subjects with special excitement and even some feeling of love. These are children and dachniks. If I tell you everything she says about dachniks and what kind of meaning she puts into them then everybody would kneel before each dachnik. Can you believe it? She thinks that they have saved everybody from disaster and starvation. They are sowing Good in our souls, and they are bringing up our future society... I tell you, it's almost impossible to enumerate all the credits she gives them. It would be necessary to write a special book on this subject. Moreover, she proves all in her argument.

“You know today the society you live in can comprehend a lot through communication with plants which they grow at their dachas. Only at the dachas, where you know every plant of your small plot but not in the depersonalized vast fields, where machines are crawling like stupid monsters. The people who work at dachas feel much better and to many of them this is the way to prolong their life and be healed from many sicknesses. They become more kind. It is the dachniks who are capable of stimulating society's awareness of the fatal consequences of the technocratic ways of our developments

“Well, Anastasia, whether you are right or wrong, it does not really matter right now. What do you have to do with all these things? What are you helping with?”

She gripped me by my hand pulling me down on the grass. We were lying on our backs with arms aside each other and palms up.

“Close your eyes, relax and try to imagine everything I am going to speak about. Now I'll find with my little beam and watch from a distance somebody from the people whom you call "dachniks".

She was silent for a while, then she started to speak in a low voice: “An elderly woman is unrolling a cheesecloth in which she was soaking cucumber seeds. The seeds have

already sprouted a lot, one can see tiny sprouts. She took one seed in her hand. Well, right now I've prompted her that it is not good to soak seeds this way as the sprouts are becoming deformed while planting. This kind of water is not good enough for nourishing a seed and it will get sick. She believes that she has guessed about it on her own, just by herself. Though, to some extent she is right, as I've tried only a little bit to help her to understand, to reach awareness. Now she will share her new idea with other people. Well, that's it. A small business has been done”.

Anastasia told me that usually she was modelling in her consciousness all kinds of situations concerning people's labor, rest and relationship with each other as well as with plants. When the situation she modelled was the closest to reality, the contact had been installed whereby she could see a person, feel his/ her sickness and sense their feelings.

It looks as if she gets into someone's consciousness and shares her knowledge with the person. Anastasia said that plants respond to man, they can love him/ her or hate and influence his/ her health positively or negatively.

“In this field I've a lot of work to do. I am busy handling the dachniks' plots. The dachniks go to their plots, to their plantations as if they are visiting their children but unfortunately their attitudes are only intuitive now. They are not supported by the purity of awareness of the real purpose of this interconnection. Absolutely everything on Earth, every herb, every insect has been created for man. They have their special tasks and predestination to be at man's service. The great variety of medicinal herbs are the best proof of it. Although a man of your world knows very few in order to use the given opportunity to the fullest

extent”.

I asked Anastasia to show the usefulness of realized communication by certain examples and, moreover, the way that it could be possible to verify, to see and test it scientifically. Anastasia became thoughtful for a while and then she beamed with joy and exclaimed, “Dachniks! But of course! My favorite dachniks! They will prove and show everything and make your science puzzled. How did it not come to me before? Why couldn't I understand, I wonder?”

Any newly born idea provoked a stormy joy in her. Generally speaking, I've never seen Anastasia sad. She can be serious, thoughtful, concentrated but most of the time she is joyous. This time she was expressing a stormy joy. She jumped up, then started clapping and it looked to me as if it became much brighter in the forest and the forest started moving. It responded to her by the rustling of the tree tops and a very special chattering of birds. She was spinning as if in a dance and then, shining and illuminated all over. Then she took her seat next to me again and said, “Now they will believe. Here they are, my dear dachniks. They will explain the world; she still seemed to be an unreal being, though she was sitting next to me and I could reach and touch her easily. My consciousness, having been used to operate with different criteria of evaluation?” rejected taking her as the one who is existing in reality. Although, at the beginning of our meeting I was attracted to her but later on I did not experience former emotions towards her. I

asked, “So, it means you think that the new feelings which appeared in you were occasional

“They are longed for”, answered Anastasia, “they are even pleasant but in return, I would like you to love me the same way I do. Though I have realized that on learning about me and about my world better, you would not be able to perceive me as a regular person. Maybe you could even get scared of me sometimes... You know, actually it has happened that way. It is all my fault. I have made a lot of mistakes. I don't know why but all the time I got nervous. I was rushing, trying to explain and failed to do it. Everything looks foolish, doesn't it? I need to correct myself”.

While saying those words she was smiling with a shade of sorrow. She pressed her hand against her breast and I recalled right away something that had happened one morning while I stayed at Anastasia s.

Chapter 11

DOCTOR SEED

Anastasia stated:

“Every seed planted by someone contains within itself a great amount of cosmic information. Its volume is incomparable to anything manmade. Thanks to this information the seed knows exactly, up to milliseconds, the time when it is supposed to return to life. It knows when to sprout, what kinds of juices to extract from the ground, how to use the energy generated by cosmic bodies like the sun, moon and stars. It also knows what specific type of plant to become and what kind of fruit to bear. The various fruits are meant for man's life-support. These fruits can fight and resist any disease of a human physical body very effectively and even more powerfully than the best manmade medications existing now and those which will be in the nearest future. In order to fulfill this job a seed has to know everything it could saturate the fruit with and bring them into proper correlation with the necessary substances for the healing process. It has to know precisely for a certain person concerning his specific sicknesses in case they have them or there is a pre-disposition towards sickness.

To load this kind of information into a cucumber, tomato or any other kind of seed which is supposed to grow in a certain piece of land it is necessary to act as follows:

Before planting or sowing a dry seed (don't soak it) it should be taken into the mouth and kept not less than nine minutes. Then take it in your hands (in-between your palms), hold it for thirty seconds. While doing it one should stand barefooted on the very plot where the seed is supposed to be planted. After that open your palms, bring your hands close to your mouth, exhale the air out of your lungs right on the seed (or seeds). After that keep it in the open air in the sun for thirty seconds. Now the seed is ready to be planted, so put it into the ground. Never water it right away after planting! You can water it only three days after planting.

Of course don't forget about the proper time for planting or sowing. The day should be chosen in accordance with the well known moon calendar. Every gardener knows that there are especially preferable days for each kind of crop. It is advisable to plant early without watering when the ground has enough moisture in it. A late planting could be fatal for the seed. Don't destroy around this plant all the weeds when it is developing and growing. It is necessary to leave at least one kind of each weed. You can cut the weeds

without pulling them out so you will not disturb the roots of your plant”.

According to Anastasia, this is the only way for a seed to accumulate, file and process the information about a person. In the process of bringing up its fruit the plant will be getting the most out of the required energy from the Cosmos and the Earth specially for that person. You can't remove all the weeds around the plant because they are playing their special role as well. Some of them are protecting the plants from sicknesses. Others are supplying them with additional information. While the plant is growing it is necessary to communicate with it and at least once, approach it when the moon is full and touch it. Anastasia confirmed that the fruits, which had been grown that way from a seed and consumed by the person taking care of it, are capable of healing him/her absolutely from any kind of disease. It decreases to a great extent, the process of ageing, gets rid of pernicious habits and addictions, greatly increasing mental abilities and bringing peace to the soul. This kind of fruit will give the most beneficial effect if consumed within three days after harvesting, not later. All the procedure described above can be done with any kind of crop which you grow on your plot. There is no need to sow or plant the whole bed of cucumbers or tomatoes this way. It is quite sufficient to have only a couple of plants for healing purposes.

Before you plant a sapling it is necessary to crumple the soil in the hole with your fingers and the toes of your bare feet and after that spit into it.

On answering my question, “Why with toes?” Anastasia explained that toxic substances are coming out of a human body through the feet sweating. These are containing the information about an organism which had been sick. The young plant would get this information and process it to the fruit, which would be able to fight the sickness. Anastasia strongly recommended walking on the plot bare footed at least once in a while.

“What kind of crop is it preferable to grow?”, I asked. “It is quite sufficient to grow the variety which the great majority of the gardeners do: raspberry, black currant, gooseberry canes, cucumbers, tomatoes, strawberries and any kind of apple tree. It is advisable to have a cherry or sour cherry tree and flowers. The quantity of the crops or the area they occupy does not really matter.

There are compulsory crops without which it is hard to imagine a complete energetic microclimate at a plot. They are: sunflower (at least one), cereals should occupy an area of about 1.5-2 square meters, then rye and wheat. It is absolutely necessary to leave a space not less than 2 square meters for various grasses. This island of motley grass should be only natural. It should not be artificially sown and if you, for some reason have failed to preserve a piece of earth with motley grass in your plot, then it is necessary to bring some turf from a forest. This way you would be able to create a kind of a tiny wild, nature

island”.

I asked Anastasia whether it was necessary to plant the compulsory crops if your next-door neighbor had already had those crops at his/ her plot. If right behind your fence

there was a motley grass island or even a whole field of it and her answer was, “It is important not only to create a variety of plantings but it is very important the way they were planted and direct communication with them is advisable. Because through it a saturation of information is taking place. I've already told you about one way of planting and it is the main one. The most important thing to do is to saturate the surrounding piece of nature with information about oneself.

Only in that case the healing effect and the life support of your physical body would be much higher than just fruit growing. In "wild nature", as you call it, though it is not "wild" at all, it is just strange and unknown to you. There are a great many plants which are able to heal all kinds of existing diseases. They exist only for this purpose! Man has lost or almost forfeited the ability to recognize and determine them”.

I directed her attention to the fact that we had many specialized pharmacies which are dealing with medicinal herbs. There were doctors, quack-doctors or even witch — doctors who were healing with herbs, but...

“There is only one main doctor and it is your own organism!”, replied Anastasia. “From the very beginning it has been given to man to know exactly what kind of herb to use and when. Anyone was able to do it subconsciously. Nobody else can substitute you as your private doctor. This ability has been given to you by God. I am telling you the way to bring it back. A well organized interrelationship with the plants' organic complex at your plot will heal you. It will take great care of you. The plants will diagnose your condition very precisely on their own and produce the most effective remedy specially destined for you”.

Chapter 12

WHO IS BEING STUNG BY BEES

“At each plot it is necessary to have one bee family”, said Anastasia. I was trying to tell her that only a few people managed to communicate with bees. Some people joined special schools to learn how to take care of bees and even they did not always manage to handle that matter properly.

“A lot of that which you are doing for a bee family's life sustenance only leads you away from success. Within the last thousand years only two men on Earth have managed to get closer to understanding and realizing this unique life mechanism”, she replied.

“Who were they?”, “They were two monks and they have been canonized. Anyone can read.

“They were two monks and they have been canonized. Anyone can read about them in the books which are being preserved in the monastic depositories”

“Well, all right, and what is the right way to maintain

bees at a plot?”

“It is simply necessary to make a nest for them, exactly the same one they have in natural conditions. That's it! Then the only job is to take a part of their honey, beeswax and other substances produced by them”.

“But they can sting people, can't they? What kind of peace would there be if man is going to be in a constant state of fear?”

“Bees sting only when man abuses them and behaves aggressively, waving hands, and, in general, if a person is full of aggressive feelings and it is not necessarily towards bees but just for anybody. They feel or, rather, they don't accept radiation of any dark feelings. Those of anger, irritation, frustration, etc. are not accepted. Also they can bite at those parts of the body where there are endings which are connected and lead towards the internal organs. They dislike any kind of disharmony, as well as those areas where the protective coat is broken. Also if there is some kind of disorder. It is well known how effectively bees can heal the illness which they call radiculitis but it is still far from being the only thing they are capable of doing.

If I start telling you about everything and, moreover, try to prove it the way you want me to, then you would have to stay here not for three days but for many weeks.

A lot has been said about bees in your world, I've just tried to make some corrections concerning their maintenance and believe me, please, they are quite substantial. It is very easy to put a bee family into a beehive. It is just necessary to pour out a swarm of bees into it. I've forgotten to say that before, one should put a piece of beeswax and melliferous herb into the beehive. All kinds of home made frames and honeycombs are not required. Later on, when bee families appear at neighboring plots, bees will start swarming by themselves and after they have swarmed they will occupy vacant blocks”.

“How would you take honey from them?” “Just open the bottom cover, fracture the hanging combs and withdraw some of the packed honey and pollen. Only man should not be greedy as it is necessary to leave a certain portion of honey for the bees to survive the winter”.

Chapter 13

HELLO, MORNING!

Anastasia tried to adapt to the conditions of a dacha plot with her own morning procedure and it has come out as follows:

“In the morning, preferably at sunrise, one should go out to the plot bare footed, come to the plants of one's own choice, at random. You may touch them and there is no need to follow any stereotyped patterns or strictly repeat a certain ritual day after day. Just follow your own gut feeling. One should do it before washing oneself. So, don't touch water. This is very important as the plants are able to sense the smell of the substances which are being excreted from a body while man is sleeping. They are coming to the surface through the skin pores. If it is warm and there is a small space covered with grass (it is very important to have such), you should lie down and enjoy stretching yourself for three or four minutes...

If any insects crawl over your body don't push them off. Many insects can do a wonderful job of unplugging the pores of the human body and cleaning them. As a rule, those pores are getting plugged through with toxins. They are coming out bringing to the skin surface all kinds of internal sicknesses and in this way giving man an opportunity to wash them off.

If there is any pool at the plot it is necessary to dip into it. If it is not available you can just pour a bucket of fresh water over yourself. While doing it one should be bare footed standing near the beds of plants. It is even better to stand in between the beds or, for example, one morning you can stand near a raspberry cane and next time it could be a blackberry bush and so on. After the bath in the open air you should not wipe yourself with a towel right away. Wait! It is necessary to shake off the drops of water from your palms on the nearby plants. The drops of water from the rest of your body should be shaken off with your hands exactly the same way. Only after that can you proceed with your regular morning procedures which you are used to”.

Chapter 14

EVENING PROCEDURE

“In the evening, before you go to bed, it is absolutely necessary to wash your feet. Add to the water some drops of goose-foot or stinging nettle juice. Though you can use both of them but no soap or shampoo should be present. As for the water in which you have washed your feet, pour it out on the beds of your plot. After that, if it is necessary, you may wash your feet with soap. This kind of evening procedure is very important for two reasons. First of all, as it has been mentioned above, through your feet sweating, the toxins are getting out bringing all kinds of internal diseases. That's why it is absolutely necessary to wash them off, to cleanse the pores. The juice of goose-foot and stinging-nettle helps and stimulates the process. By pouring the water on the beds of your plot you are providing the micro-organisms of the environment and plants with additional information about your state of health now. Even more than that, which is also very important, the visible and invisible surrounding world can manufacture everything required for your organism to function properly. It will select these from the Cosmos and the Earth”.

Chapter 15

IT WILL PREPARE EVERYTHING BY ITSELF

I was very interested in one thing, “What would she say about nutrition”, I wondered. She herself was eating rather peculiarly. I asked her, “Anastasia, tell me, please, what do you think about man's nutrition? What should one eat. When, how often and in what quantities should he eat? Lately, everybody is very fascinated about this subject. All kinds of literature have been written advertising different formulas of medical nutrition and giving recommendations on weight loss”.

“Well, it is difficult even to imagine that the life of man in the technocratic world could be different. This world has been given to man from the very beginning but the dark forces have been always trying to change this healthy, natural mechanism into their very complicated, bulky, artificial systems which are contradicting human nature”.

I asked Anastasia to be more specific and speak more understandingly avoiding her philosophical fabrications and she proceeded:

“You see, nothing but your own organism itself is able to give you a better answer to your questions:

"what, when and how much food is man supposed to eat?" The senses of hunger and thirst have been given to man by nature exactly for this purpose. These signal to each human being, in particular, what is the right time for him/ her to have food. This exact moment is the most favorable for him/her. The technocratic world can't provide a man with an opportunity to satisfy his/ her sense of hunger and thirst at the very moment when the organism requires it. That was the reason why man started to push his/her own organism into the pattern which has been conditioned by his own helplessness. Moreover, trying to justify it by a certain advisability is what man needs.

Just imagine, somebody is sitting idly, almost sleeping and of course he is saving his energy. Another one is working hard physically or simply running, sweating, losing, dozens of times more energy and they must have their meal at the same time.

Well, man must eat at that time when the physical body tells him/her to do it and the second advisor does not exist. I understand that in the conditions of your existence it is almost impossible to accomplish all my suggestions but for those who have their dacha

plots such a possibility does exist! Why not use this wonderful opportunity, putting aside all those unnatural, artificial directives!

I am going to tell you exactly the same thing while answering your question, "what is necessary to eat"? Anything, at hand at the very moment you feel hunger. Your organism will choose by itself what is necessary for it. I can give you some untraditional advice:

If you have a pet in your house (a cat or a dog) try to watch it carefully as you can learn something from it. From time to time the animals choose a certain kind of herb from a great multitude and eat it. It is advisable to take at least a couple of them and add them to your meal. Not necessarily everyday. It is quite sufficient to do it once or twice a week. It is also necessary to harvest grains of cereals, thrash them, mill, make flour and bake bread. It is extremely important! A person who eats such bread only once or twice a year gets the reserve of energy which is capable of activating not only one's inner forces but also influencing the internal state of health. It also effects mood and bring peace to the mind and soul. You can give this bread to your relatives or close friends. It will also influence them beneficially. It is very useful for man's good health, at least once, in summer time to eat only the fruit and vegetation from your plot. Although you can add to it bread, sunflower oil and a minimum quantity of salt".

I have already mentioned how Anastasia eats. While speaking, for example, on the subject of nourishment she, just by the way, picked up a blade of grass then another one, started chewing and gave me one. I decided to try it. It's taste was not impressive though it was not disgusting either. The process of nourishment and life sustenance of Anastasia's organism makes the impression that it just relies upon nature. It never prevents her from her thoughts or actions and her mind is always preoccupied by different kinds of problems, that's for sure.

As a matter of fact, her health is an inseparable part of her extraordinary external beauty. According to Anastasia, the human organism, since it has established such a relationship with the vegetable kingdom and the Earth, has an opportunity to get rid of all kinds of sicknesses. This shows up right away.

Disease itself occurs because Man is moving away from the natural mechanisms which have been designed to watch his/ her health and life-sustenance. It is no problem at all for these mechanisms to fight any disease just because it is namely the essence of their existence. The benefits which man can enjoy once he creates informational contact with a small space of Mother Nature is much greater than just a help in the struggle against diseases.

Chapter 16

SLEEPING UNDER YOUR STAR

I have already mentioned the way Anastasia becomes inspired when she speaks about plants and people who are communicating with them. I thought that she, living in a natural environment, had studied perfectly only nature. However she also acquired information about planetary structure. It looks as if she has a feeling for it. Dear readers, it is up to you to judge the idea of sleeping in the open air under the starry sky and the way she speaks about it.

The plants, having received the information about a certain person, enter the information exchange with cosmic forces, but they are only intermediaries. They are fulfilling strictly specialized tasks. These are pertaining to the flesh only and never touch complicated processes which are only characteristic of man's brain out of all the animal and vegetable kingdoms on the planet. Once being established, the information exchange allows a man to do something which he alone is empowered to do. That is to get in touch with Cosmic Intellect and, to be more precise, to exchange their information. A very simple procedure makes it possible to do and experience the solitary effect of such an influence. Anastasia sets it forth as follows:

“On one summer night when the weather is nice, arrange your lodging for the night outdoors, right under the starry sky. It is recommended to make up your bed not far from raspberry or black currant canes or a space with cereals. You must be alone. Lie down on your back facing the stars and keep your eyes open. Just gaze for a while mentally along with the cosmic bodies. Relax, don't strain yourself while thinking about them. The thoughts should be light, free and peaceful. Get into a silent gap.

First of all, try to think about those celestial objects which are easily visible. Then you may dream for a while of something which is for you the innermost:

About your loved ones and those to whom you wish all the best. Don't ever try to think about any kind of vengeance or bear somebody ill will at that very moment. Otherwise the effect could be unpredictable, a very unfavorable one for you. This simple procedure will bring back to life some cells of the great multitudes of sleeping ones in your brain. The great majority of which never wake up during man's life time.

Cosmic forces will join and help you to accomplish the most inconceivable light dreams, to find peace of mind, regulate favorable relationships with loved ones and your dearest.

It will increase or call forth their love towards you. It is very wholesome to carry out this procedure several times. Though it will be effective only at the places of your constant contact with Mother Nature. You will feel the effect the very next morning. It is especially important to do such kinds of procedures every time on your birthday eve. It would take a lot of time to explain how the whole mechanism works and, to be completely honest, there is no use in doing that right now. First of all, you will not believe a certain part of my explanations and, secondly, some of them you will not simply be able to understand. It could be much easier with no time to speak about this subject to those who had tried and experienced this influence by themselves. The information they could get would favor the perception of subsequent experiences.

Chapter 17

YOUR CHILD'S HELPER AND EDUCATOR

I inquired into how a piece of land with plantings, if it were planted in a special way, being in contact with man could benefit the education of children. I expected to hear from Anastasia something like: "It is necessary to cultivate in children a love for nature and so on...". Although I'd been mistaken. I was shocked by the simplicity of her argument as well as the depth of her philosophical sense.

"Nature and the universal mind created us such that each newly born man comes into the world as a master, a king. He is just like an angel in his purity and innocence. The top of the head, being still open, is receiving a huge flow of universal information and the abilities of each newly born allow him to become the wisest being in the Universe, created in God's likeness. The baby needs a very short period of time to present its parents with a gift of happiness and bliss. This is the time within which it realizes the essence of the Universe, the reason for man's existence. This happens within only nine years of earthly life. Everything he needs already exists", says Anastasia.

"The only thing the parents should do, is not to distort the natural cosmic creation, but the techno-cratic world does not allow this. What does a baby see with its first intelligent look? — It can see only a ceiling, an edge of its cradle, some rags, walls and other treasures of an artificial world created by modern technology. In this world its mother and her breasts exist. "Evidently, this is the way it should be," the baby thinks.

The smiling parents are presenting the baby with clanging and squeaking things. The toys are presented in such a way as if they are the greatest treasures in this world. Why? What for?... The baby will be clanging and peeping with them for a long time trying to realize everything with its subconscious.

Then again the same smiling parents will swaddle it with rags and it feels terribly uncomfortable. The baby will try to get rid of these; fighting for its freedom but everything is just in vain! The only way to resist is to cry! Here comes the cry of protest and indignation, asking for help. From that very moment an angel and master turns into a beggar, a slave begging for charity.

They present the child with all kinds of attributes of the artificial world without a break, one after another. Every new toy, new clothes is given as a proper thing, almost like a

blessing. They are lisping the baby and in that way involuntarily treat the baby man as an imperfect being and even at those establishments which are meant, as everybody believes, to be for educational purposes, the children are being taught the merits of the same artificial world.

And only by the age of nine do they tell him/ her, just by the way, about the existence of Nature as an appendix for something else, something very important and again bearing in mind the same handmade stuff.

The great majority of people are not able to realize the Truth to the end of their lifetime. One would think of the question as being a rather simple one: "What is the meaning of life?" Still, this dilemma has never been solved. The whole point is: in Truth, Joy and Love. A nine year old child, having been educated by the natural world, has more opportunities for realizing the Cosmic Creation than the best educational establishments can provide in your world".

"Stop, Anastasia! Evidently you mean "the knowledge of nature" bearing in mind that a child's life would pass by just like yours? Sorry, I can't take it. I believe that a modern man has to live one's life right there where he is, in our technocratic world, as you call it. Whether it is good or bad there is no way out and this is the bottom line. One will know and feel nature but as far as other things are concerned, he is going to be an absolute profanity. There are such kinds of sciences as mathematics, physics, chemistry and it is absolutely necessary to know life with its social phenomena".

"Everything you've mentioned are just trifles for the one who has once got to know the essence of Cosmic Creation. If one shows interest for something and manifests oneself in a certain field of science then it will be easy for him to surpass other people".

"Just like that?"

"A man of the technocratic world has not till now invented anything that does not exist in Mother Nature".

"Fine! Let everything be as it is. Remember, you have promised to explain how a child could be educated in our conditions, how to develop his skills and abilities. While speaking on this subject, please express yourself clearly and try to give specific examples, will you?"

"I'll try to do my best", answered Anastasia, "I've already modelled such kind of situations and tried to prompt one family with what exactly was necessary to do. They had a problem in realizing the key moment and asking their child the right questions. The parents go with their three year old child to their dacha and they carry with them his favorite toys to keep him busy. They should not do it. The child could be involved and preoccupied with something more interesting instead of the senseless and even harmful communication with handmade items.

First of all you can ask him to help you. Only you should do it for real, without kidding

and lisping and, believe me, he will really help. If you are going to sow ask him to hold the seeds or rake aside the ground on the bed or put a seed into a hole. While doing it try to comment on your actions explaining to him what you are doing. For example, you may do it this way: "We are going to put the seed into the hole and then cover it with earth. When the sun shines and warms the ground the seed will get warm and start growing, it will wish to see the sun and a green sprout will come out, just like this one," and at that moment you should show him any new sprout. "If the tiny sprout likes, it will become bigger and bigger and eventually it can grow into a tree, just

like that or a smaller one. I would like it to bring us a tasty fruit and if you like it you will enjoy eating it".

Any time when you come to your plot with your child or, in case you are staying there, in the morning when he wakes up, the first thing you should do is suggest that the child check up whether a new sprout has come out. When you see a newly born sprout express a real joy, get happy. When you are planting tomato seedlings let your child fetch you stems one by one. If by chance he breaks any of them, take the broken one and say: "I think, this one is not going to live, it will not bring us any fruit, it is broken, but, nevertheless, let's try and we'll see. Then plant at least one broken sprout together with the healthy ones.

In a couple of days when you come to the tomato bed again, he will see the healthy stems which had become stronger and the broken one which is fading. Remind the child that it had been broken while planting. Mind, please, at that moment you should not speak to the child in a didactic tone of voice. Speak and treat him as your equal. You should realize on the level of your consciousness that in a certain way he is superior to you. For instance, he is superior in purity of thoughts. A child is an angel and if you manage to comprehend this then later on you would be able to act intuitively. No doubt, he will be the very person who will bring you happiness.

When you are going to sleep under a starry sky, take your child with you, put him by your side, let him see the starry sky. Don't try to tell him the names of the planets or to explain their origin and destination the way you understand it Because in reality you don't know it yourself.

The dogma which exists in your mind will only mislead him away from the truth. His subconscious mind knows the truth and it will get into the child's consciousness automatically, by itself. The only thing you can do is just to tell him that you like to watch the shining stars and ask your child which of the stars he likes best of all. In general it is very important to know how to ask a child questions.

The following year you should suggest to your child to take care of a small piece of your plot, let him do whatever he likes. You can help, but before you do, ask the child's permission to work together with him. When you sow cereals let him sow seeds too".

"All right", I said, "really this way a child will develop an interest in the vegetable kingdom and he could become a good agronomist. How would he gain knowledge in

other fields?"

“Well, what do you mean by saying "where from"? The point is not only what he will know and feel about how everything is growing. The bottom line is he will start to think, analyze and in his brain the cells will wake up which are going to work during his total life time. These cells will make the child smarter, more talented than those people whose cells are still sleeping.

As far as your existence is concerned (that which you call "progress"), your child could become second to none in any field of knowledge and his purity of thoughts, being greater than those others have, will make him more happy as well. The adjustment with his planets will give him the possibility not only to receive new information, permanently again and again but to exchange it also. His subconscious will receive all of these and pass it to the consciousness as new thoughts and discoveries. Outwardly he will be a regular man but inwardly.. You would call such people "geniuses"“.

Chapter 18

FOREST GYMNASIA

“Please, tell me, Anastasia, was your upbringing exactly the way you are describing everything now?”

She answered only after a short pause evidently trying to recall her childhood.

“You know, to tell the truth, I almost completely don't remember my daddy and mummy. I was brought up by my grandfather and great-grandfather approximately the way I've just described to you. "The point is that somehow I was feeling nature and the animal world surrounding me very well. Maybe I was not realizing all its mechanisms up to the end but it is not important when one feels it. Granddaddy and great-granddaddy used to visit me from time to time and asked questions and asked me to answer them. It is a rule with us that the elders treat babies and little children as a divine being and through a child's answers they are checking their own purity”.

I asked Anastasia to recollect any specific question she was asked and the answers she gave to it. She smiled and told me this story:

“Once I was playing with a snake, the next moment I turned around and saw them standing watching me and smiling. I was very happy to see them because it was usually fun to spend time with them. Only they could ask me questions and, moreover, their hearts were beating at the same rhythm as mine and the animals' heartbeats were absolutely different. I ran up to them, great-granddaddy bowed to me and granddaddy took me on his lap. I was listening to the beating of his heart and while doing it I was running my fingers over of his beard examining it. We were silent for a while. Everyone was thinking to himself and I felt so good. Then my granddaddy asked me a question:

“"Now, tell me, Anastasia, why does my hair grow here?" He pointed to his head and beard. "But why don't they grow here?", pointing to his forehead and nose.

I touched his forehead, then his nose but no answer came to my mind. I could not speak hastily. It was necessary for me to comprehend the subject by myself. When they came the next time granddad started again:

"Well, you see, the same problem is bothering me. I am still thinking about it. Why do I have hair growing right here and not here?" Then again he pointed to his forehead and

nose.

My granddaddy was looking at me very intently and seriously. Then I thought, that evidently it was really the most serious problem for him and asked him in return:

"Well, granddaddy, do you really want so much hair to grow all over you including your forehead and nose?"

My great-granddaddy became very thoughtful and granddaddy answered:

"No, I don't want it to".

"There you are, that's why they don't grow, because you just don't want them to". Then he asked thoughtfully stroking his beard as if he was asking himself:

"All right, do you think that right here they grow just because I like it?" Then I confirmed saying:

"Of course, grandpa, you and me and the one who has invented you". At that very moment great grandpa became very excited and asked:

"Can you tell me who? Who has invented him?"

"The one who has thought of everything", I answered.

"All right, and where is he, can you show him to me?", asked my grandpa bowing before me.

I could not answer right away at that moment but the question stayed inside me and I started thinking about it since that time".

"Did you find the answer later?", I asked her.

"I answered it in about a year and then received new questions. You see, they did not ask me a new question before I gave them the answer to the previous one. Believe me, I was having a very hard time as it was bothering me".

Chapter 19

ATTENTION TO MAN

I asked Anastasia who had taught her to speak if she almost could not remember her mother and father. Her grandfather and great-grandfather visited her very seldom. I was astonished by the answers I got and I believe that only qualified people should try to find the meaning and essence in them. That's why I'll try my best to reproduce the issue the best way I can. As for me, the essence of it started to clarify only later on. Instead of answering my question she asked me in return:

“Do you mean the ability to speak the languages of different peoples?”

“What does it mean "different"? You can speak different languages, can't you?”

“Yes, I can”, answered Anastasia.

“Can you speak German, French, English, Japanese, Chinese?”

“Yes, I can”, repeated she and added, “Don't you see I am speaking your language?”

“Do you mean Russian?”

“Well, it is generalized greatly. I am speaking, at least, trying to speak, using the words and word combinations which you are using in your speech. It was a little bit difficult for me at the beginning as your vocabulary is poor and you repeat very often the same speech patterns. Your senses are also feebly expressed. It is rather difficult for me to express precisely enough everything I would like in using this kind of languages

“Wait a minute, Anastasia, now I am going to ask you something in a foreign language and you will answer me if you can”. So, I said “How do you do” in English then in French. She responded immediately. To my great regret I don't know foreign languages. I was taught German at school and I had only a satisfactory mark. A whole German phrase came to my mind which we had to learn by heart and I reproduced it for Anastasia. She stretched her hand and replied in German:

“I am giving my hand to you”. I was so surprised that I could not believe my ears and I asked her:

“So, what of that? Do you mean that any man could be taught all kinds of languages?”

Intuitively I felt that there was a very simple explanation to this extraordinary phenomenon and I just had to realize it and to bring it to people of our world.

“Go ahead, Anastasia, tell me in my language and, please, try to bring understandable examples”, I asked her getting a little bit excited.

“All right, all right only you should calm down. Relax or otherwise you will fail to comprehend. Let me teach you first of all how to write”.

“I can write. You would better tell me about teaching foreign languages, will you?”

“It is not just how to write. I'll teach you how to become a writer, a talented one. You will write a book”.

“Oh, no, it's impossible”.

“Quite possible, it's so simple”.

Anastasia took a stick and drew on the ground all the letters of the Russian alphabet together with punctuation marks and asked me how many letters

there were.

“Thirty three”, I answered.

“Well, you see, there are quite a few letters. Can you call my drawing a book?”

“No”, I answered, “it is a regular ABC, that's it.

Just regular letters”.

“But all books in Russian consist of these letters”, noted Anastasia. Do you agree with this? Do you understand how simple everything is?”

“Yes, but in the books they are placed in different ways”.

“That's right, all books consist of multitudes of these letters' combinations. Man puts them in order automatically being guided by his feelings. It means that, first of all, not just combinations of letters are being born but feelings, being depicted by his imagination. The one, who is going to read it will experience approximately the same feelings and they will stay in memory files for a long time. Can you recall any image or situation from the books you have read?”

“Well, I hope I can”, I answered after pondering for a while. A Hero of Our Time, by M. Lermontov came to my mind somehow and I started to describe it to Anastasia.

She interrupted me saying:

“Well, you see, you can describe the characters of this book, speak about their feelings though it was long ago since you had read it. If I ask you to tell me

the order of the 33 letters of which the combinations were arranged, could you reproduce them for me?” “No, I can't. It is impossible”

“It is really very difficult to do. So, it means that the feelings of one person have been transmitted to another with the help of all kinds of combinations of these thirty three letters. You were looking at those combinations and forgetting them right away but the feelings and images have remained and been memorized in your long-term memory...

So, it turns out that if a soul's feelings are connected directly with these symbols without thinking about all kinds of conditional characters, the soul will arrange the symbols by changing their combinations. It does this sequence and later on the reader would be able to feel the soul of the writers

“Wait a minute, Anastasia, please, speak simply, more understandably. Will you specify and give me any example of a method of teaching foreign languages. You will try to make a writer of me later on, all right. Go ahead, tell me who and how they were teaching you to understand different languages?”

“My granddad”, replied Anastasia.

“Can you give me an example”, I asked trying my best to realize and comprehend everything as soon as possible.

“All right, but you should not worry, somehow I'll find the way to make you understand and if it is so important for you I'll also try to teach you all languages. It's so simple”.

“"Simple" for you but for us, it's unbelievable, Anastasia, that's why, please try to explain. By the way, will you tell me how long it will take for you to teach me a foreign language?”

For a while she was looking at me thoughtfully and then said: “Your memory has already become poor, all kinds of everyday problems have weakened it It will take more time with you”.

“How much?”, I was impatient as I was anxious to get the answer.

“Well, for everyday essentials, the phrases like:

"How do you do", "Hello", "Goodbye" and so on I think it will take not less than four or, maybe, even six months”, answered Anastasia.

“Only? Now, Anastasia, go ahead, tell me how todo it”.

“He played with me”.

“How did he play? Tell me”.

“You just calm down and relax. Honestly, I can't, for the life of me, understand why you are agitated so much?” She continued quietly: “My great-grandpa used to play with me as if he was making fun. When he came to visit me alone without granddaddy, he used to approach me making a deep bow. He would stretch his hand and I stretched mine. He would shake my hand then stand on one knee, kiss it and say: "How do you do, Anastasia". Once he came, performed his regular ritual and, as usual, his eyes were looking at me tenderly but his lips were speaking a kind of abracadabra. I was looking at him with surprise. He started to speak something different and again there was absolutely no sense in his speech at all. I could not stand it any longer so I asked him: "What's the matter with you, did you forget what is necessary to say?" My great-grandpa answered: "Yes, I did." Then he moved away for a couple of steps then came to me again, stretched his hand, I did exactly the same. He kneeled before me on one knee and kissed my hand. His look was very tender and sweet. His lips were moving but he did not utter a word, nothing at all! I tell you, I even got scared and tried to help him:

"How do you do, Anastasia".

"That's right", affirmed my great-grandpa smiling and I realized that it was just a game. We were playing previously something like that. At the beginning it was easy but later the game started to get more complicated though it was becoming more interesting to play. This game starts at the age of three and is over by the age of eleven. That is the time for a kind of examination. The essence of it is that while watching attentively one should understand him without words and it doesn't matter what language one is speaking, trying to express oneself.

Such kind of dialogue is more perfect than a vocal one and moreover the speed is higher. You call this phenomenon "transmission of thoughts at a distance," considering it almost unreal. This belongs to the realm of fantasy but this is just an attentive attitude towards a person, highly developed imagination and good memory. Behind it stands simply a more perfect means of information exchange.

Although it is much more a cognition of a human soul, the vegetable kingdom and animal world and, generally speaking, the whole Cosmic Creation”.

“Come on, Anastasia! What does it have to do with a plant growing in a plot?”

“Well, what do you mean by "what does it have to do?" Simultaneously a child is getting to know the vegetable kingdom as a particle of the Universal mechanism. With their help it gets into contact with the parents, and then with the help of the parents the child gets to know the truth fast, very fast. At the same time the child is developing intensively in the field of psychology, philosophy and the natural sciences. All kinds of sciences of your world have been developed. While this kind of game is being carried out, any kind of handmade object of the artificial world, even as an example, should not be used. It will

mess a child up and no help from the forces of nature or the cosmos could be given to him”.

“I’ve already told you before, Anastasia, that after all, this child can become an agronomist, and where is he going to get knowledge in other fields of the sciences?”

Anastasia started to confirm that if a person had been educated exactly that way he would acquire the abilities for quick knowledge in any sphere of our sciences.

Chapter 20

A FLYING SAUCER? NOTHING SPECIAL

When I asked Anastasia to demonstrate her knowledge in the field of engineering she asked:

“What do you want me to do? Shall I tell you how all kinds of mechanisms work in your world?”

“Will you tell me about something involving what our greatest scientists are only getting some hints at or just approaching. Well, let's say on which they are trying to make some kind of discovery”.

“That is exactly the thing I am doing for you all the time”.

“Please, don't try to do it for me. Do it for our scientific world, so that they would be able to recognize this discovery. Do it in the field of engineering, outer space flights, atomic study, machine fuel or rocket propellant since you keep saying that "everything is very simple"“.

“These fields you've mentioned in comparison with those ones I am trying to explain to you, well, how to be more precise, they could be compared to those in a stone age or something like that”.

“Fine! In your opinion, they are very primitive but on the other hand, at least it would be understandable. You will be able to prove your righteousness and confirm that your intellect is superior to mine. Tell me, for instance, what do you think: our air and space crafts are perfect mechanisms or not?”

“They are extremely primitive and, moreover, they are a confirmation of the primitivism of the technocratic way of developments

I tell you, such kind of answer pricked up my ears because I realized that she knew for sure immeasurably more than I could possibly imagine by my ordinary consciousness. Although, I was persistent:

“What exactly is so primitive about our rockets and aircrafts?”, Anastasia replied after making a short pause, as if she was trying to give me an opportunity to realize what she had said before:

“The motion of your mechanisms, absolutely all of them, is based on explosive energy. Just because you don't know more perfect natural sources of energy, you are using this primitive and bulky one with unbelievable obstinacy. Even the consequences of its usage can't stop you. Your aircrafts and rockets have absolutely ridiculous ranges of flight. They manage to rise over the earth only a little bit on a universal scale, meanwhile, this method, perhaps, has already reached its absolute limit. This is ridiculous! Just think, an explosive or burning substance is pushing some bulky construction, the one which you call a "spacecraft". The largest part of this spacecraft is preoccupied only with the problem of pushing it”.

“Could other principles of moving in space exist?”

“Sure, for example the one which a flying saucer possesses,” she answered.

“What!!! Do you know about flying saucers and the principle of their motion?”

“Of course I do. It is a very simple and rational one”. I tell you, even my throat became dry, I started pressing her for an answer, “Go ahead, Anastasia, tell me everything quickly and clearly”.

“All right but you should not worry, while being excited it is difficult for you to perceive anything. The principle of a flying saucer motion is based on the energy of vacuum generation”

“What? Please, speak more plainly”. “Sorry, Vladimir, your vocabulary is poor but in order to make myself clear I have to use it”.

“Just a minute, I'll add to it”. Being very excited I started to burst out the words: “ajar, a cover, a tablet, air...” trying to name quickly all the words which were coming to my mind at that moment and even harsh words came out of my lips.

Anastasia interrupted me by saying, “Stop it. It's enough. I don't need it. I know all the words with which you can express yourself, but the bottom line is that there are other words. In general, a different form of information transmission exists. By using it I can explain everything within a minute. Otherwise it would take me two hours to do it. It is too much for you. So, I would rather speak about something else, which I believe is even more significant”

“Oh, no way, Anastasia, speak about flying a saucer, the principle of its motion and energy supply sources. I am not going to listen to anything else till I grasp it”.

“All right”, she proceeded. “An explosion is a state when a hard substance turns very fast into a gaseous state under some kind of influence or during some

kind of reaction. It occurs when two denser substances are changing into lighter ones. "Is it clear to you?", she asked?

"Yes, it is", I replied, "Gun powder, if you set it on fire, will turn into smoke and gasoline changes into gas".

"Yes, something like that. If you or anybody else of your world would have pure aspirations and intentions and based on the knowledge of natural mechanisms then you would have realized long ago that if such kind of substance, which is capable to expand greatly within a moment, does exist. It explodes turning into another state, so then a reverse process should also exist! It's inevitable. In Nature these are live micro-organisms which are changing gaseous substances into hard ones. Generally speaking, all plants are doing it only at a different speed, degree of hardness, density and solidarity.

Just look around, everything is drinking the earth juice, breathing the air and then creating from it a hard and solid body. Let's take wood or, even a more solid and hard thing, a nut or a plum pit. Invisible to the regular eye a micro-organism is doing it at an extremely great speed and it looks as if it is being fed only by air.

These very micro-organisms are the motion power of a flying saucer. They look like brain micro cells. Only functionally, they are narrowly directed. Their only function is a motive one. They perform it to the peak of perfection. They are under the outside layer of a flying saucer's cover and occupy the space in between its double walls. The space between the walls is approximately three centimeters. The upper and bottom surfaces of the outer walls are porous, with micro holes. Through these holes the microorganisms absorb air and in this way they create a vacuum around a saucer.

The tiny air jets become solid before they get in touch with a saucer's surface. As soon as they go through these micro-organisms they turn into tiny balls. Then these balls start to grow, getting enlarged and reach approximately 0.5 centimeter in diameter. After that they get softer and roll from the space they had occupied in-between the walls down into the bottom part of a saucer and there they get changed again into gaseous substances. One can eat them before they get decay".

"What are these bacteria eating up in the vacuum?"

"In the Universe an absolute vacuum doesn't exist".

"What are a flying saucer's walls made of?"

"They are grown".

"How come?", I asked suspiciously.

"Why are you getting astonished at it instead of thinking more carefully. Many people grow a special kind of mushroom keeping them in different vessels. You know, the one

which gives the water a special sour taste. This mushroom takes the shape of the vessel. By the way, this mushroom looks very much like a flying saucer and it also creates double walls. If they put into its water one microorganism more, the process of hardening will take place. This, so-called, micro-organism could be produced or, to be more precise, it should be conceived mentally. It is using man's will power and a kind of very vivid and bright imaginations

“Can you do it?”

“Yes, I can, but my efforts alone are not sufficient. The joint effort of dozens of persons are required. Those who have the same abilities. It would be necessary to work at the project for about a year”.

“Is there everything necessary on our Earth to create or grow, as you say. this flying saucer including these micro-organisms?”

“Sure, on the Earth there is everything that exists in the Universe”.

“How could these micro-organisms be placed inside a saucer if they are so tiny and invisible?”

“When the outside wall is being grown it attracts and accumulates them by itself and in large quantities, just like a beehive attracts bees. Though for this very purpose the efforts of scores of people are also required. Well, there is no sense in continuing this issue, especially to go into details, since you will not be able to grow it, because now no people exist with the proper will power, intellect and knowledge

“And what about you, can't you help somehow?”

“I can”.

“So, do it”.

“I've done it already”.

“What have you done, Anastasia?”, I asked as I did not understand her answer.

“Well, I've told you already about the proper way of children's upbringing. I'll tell you even more later on. You will tell people about it. Many of them will realize it and their children, while being raised and educated this very way will possess the required intellect, knowledge and will power. Which would provide them with the ability and opportunity to create not only a primitive flying saucer but much more...”.

“Anastasia, how do you know everything about a flying saucer?”

“They landed here and, well, I was in a certain way helping them to repair it”.

“Are they much smarter than we are?” “Not at all, they are immeasurably far away from man, they are afraid of him. They are keeping their distance, though they are very inquisitive. At the beginning they were afraid of me. They were trying to send paralyzing thoughts. All of them were trying hard making this effort. They were trying to frighten and surprise me. I did my best to calm them down and comfort them”.

“Well, what do you mean by "not smarter" if they can do the things which man is not yet able to?”

“What makes you so surprised? Bees are also constructing unbelievable things by using natural materials. They build ventilation and heating systems but it does not mean that their intellect is superior and stronger than man's in the whole Universe. Just God's is!”

Chapter 21

THE BRAIN - SUPER COMPUTER

The possibility of creating a flying saucer awoke an interest in me. If one takes into consideration only the principle of movement as a hypothesis, still it is a new one. Though a flying saucer is a very complicated mechanism, for us terrestrial people, it is not a matter of top priority.

That was why I decided that I would rather hear from Anastasia about something that I could understand right away. That “something” should not require any kind of scientific research or investigations. It could be applied in practice as being very helpful and beneficial for all people. I asked Anastasia to solve some kind of problem which our society is facing right now as a matter of top necessity. She agreed but asked, “Can you specify somehow? I mean this problem. How can I solve a problem if I don't even know what exactly you want?”

So I tried to think of the most urgent problem of today and the following terms of the task came to my mind, “You know, Anastasia, in our large cities one of the most urgent problem of today is environmental pollution. It's difficult to breathe the air there”. “But you are polluting it yourselves”. “Of course, we do. Please, listen to what I am going to say. Let me finish. Only don't start your

philosophical talk trying to debate the subject as you always do, by saying: “you should take good care of yourselves, don't pollute, plant more trees and so on and so forth”. Just accept everything as it is now and think of something.

For instance, something which could purify the air in large cities, let's say, by fifty percent and moreover it would not need any expense from the state treasury. The thing which you are going to invent should be the most visible of all kinds of variants which anyone could think of and it would be applicable, understandable for me and everybody”.

“I'll try”, answered Anastasia. “Are you sure you have mentioned all the conditions?”

Trying to make the task more complicated, I had some kind of gut feeling that her mind and abilities could be more powerful and advanced than our conscious mind could possibly assume. That was why I added, “Let the innovation you are going to think of be profitable”

“For whom?”, she asked.

“For me and my country as well. Since you live on a territory which belongs to Russia, let it be beneficial for all Russia”.

“Does it mean money?”

“Yes, it does”.

“How much?”

“You know, Anastasia, as far as profits and money are concerned, it is never enough. I need just enough to cover my expenses for this expedition and another one and also for Russia...”.

I became thoughtful... What if I would try somehow

to arouse in her some kind of interest in the material wealth of our civilization? So, I asked, “What about you? Do you want anything for yourself?”

“I've got everything I need”, she responded. All of a sudden a great idea came to me, I've realized what could arouse interest in her.

“You know, let the thing you are going to think of bring enough money so all your favorite dachniks, well, I mean gardeners, all over Russia can get seeds free of charge or on preferential terms, at reduced prices”.

“Sounds nice!”, exclaimed Anastasia. “What a wonderful idea! I'll start processing it right now if you have nothing else to add. I just love it! Are you sure you have nothing else to add?”

“Yes, I am sure, Anastasia. That's it for the presents I could tell that she was excited by the task itself and especially the idea of helping the dachniks by providing them seeds for free.

Although at that very moment I was absolutely sure in spite of her extraordinary ability that the problem of air purification was an insoluble one. Otherwise our numerous scientific establishments would have solved it by now.

This time Anastasia lay down on the grass rather vigorously. Usually she did it very quietly, spreading her arms wide apart. The pads of her slightly curved fingers were upwards. Sometimes she was moving them, then they were absolutely still, the eye lashes of her closed eyes quivered once in awhile. She stayed in that position for about twenty minutes, then she opened her eyes, sat down and announced:

“I have determined it. But I tell you, what a nightmare it is!”

“What have you determined? What is the "nightmare"?”

“The greatest damage you are getting is from so called vehicles. As their number in large cities is tremendous. Each of them is producing extremely unhealthy toxic gas and dangerous substances for the human organism. The most awful thing is that these substances are getting mixed up with earth particles or, dust as you call it, so the dust gets saturated with it. While the vehicles are moving the saturated dust gets into the air and people are breathing in this terrible mixture. Also these particles are scattered all over covering grass, trees and everything around. This is very bad!”

“Sure it is bad. Everybody knows about it only nobody is able to do anything about it. There are washing machines but they can't cope with this task. You, Anastasia, have discovered absolutely nothing new. You have not thought of an original solution of the purification problems

“I've just determined the main source of harm, now I'll start analyzing and think it over. Now I need a long time for concentrating, maybe, an hour, because I have never been involved in something like this before. To kill time, you can go for a walk in the forest or...”

“Please, mind your own business and don't worry about me. I'll find what to do”.

Anastasia went deep down into herself. When I came back after a half an hour's walk, I found her, it seemed to me, rather unsatisfied and I said, trying to comfort her:

“You see, Anastasia, in this case even your brain is helpless. Please, don't get upset. Many research institutes are working on this problem but all of them, just like you did, are only able to ascertain the fact of pollution. Yet they have managed to do absolutely nothing till now”. Her reply sounded guilty:

“Well, I've tried, I guess all possible variants, to solve it quickly and by 50 percent... Sorry, I've failed”. I pricked up my ears for, evidently, she had found some answer.

“What amount did you get?”, I asked.

She sighed and said, “I've not reached a lot. My percentage is only 35-40 percent improvements

“What?! Are you kidding?”, I could not restrain myself.

“Very poor, isn't it?”, she asked. My throat got dry. I felt that Anastasia could not lie, exaggerate or underestimate.

“All right, let's change the conditions of the problem. Now tell me quickly what you have thought of?”

“It is necessary that all these vehicles should not only scatter this disgusting dust but

should be able to collect it”.

“What is it necessary to do? Tell me! Hurry up!”

“What is it that sticks out in front of the vehicles, what do you call it?”

“A bumper”, I prompted.

“So, it is a bumper. Right inside or under it they should fix a box with holes on the top cover of it. The back cover should also have holes from the which air could get out. While these vehicles are moving the flow of dusty, toxic air can go through the front holes. It would get purified and get out through the back ones. The air will get purified by 20 percent”.

“What are the 40 percent I've been promised?”

“Right now this road dust is not being removed and while using this method it's amount would be getting less and less as it will be removed every day and everywhere. I've calculated that within a month with the help of these kind of boxes, providing that they were installed on all vehicles, the quantity of polluted dust could be reduced by 40 percent. Though the air pollution percentage would not continue to go down as there are other factors which prevent it”.

“What is the size of the box? What should they contain? What is the number of the holes? What is the supposed distance in between the holes?”

“I say, Vladimir, maybe, you would like me to fix all these boxes to each vehicle”.

It was the first time that I realized that Anastasia had a sense of humor. I burst out laughing when I tried to visualize Anastasia fixing her boxes to the vehicles. She also started to laugh and spin around the clearing. Really the idea was very simple and our technique could take care of the rest. I tried to imagine on my own how everything could be done. A couple of special decrees on behalf of the leading administrative authorities, proper control of State Automobile Inspections, filter exchanges at gas stations and control tickets would be needed”.

“Wait a minute, Anastasia, will you stop, please”. I was trying to attract her attention as she was spinning in a dance.” What is supposed to be inside these boxes?”

“Inside... inside of the boxes? Well, for a change you should think for yourself. It is so simple”, she replied without stopping her dance.

“All right, and where will the money come from?”, I asked her again. She stopped dancing:

“Well, what do you mean "where from"? You have only asked me for the most rational idea and here it is. I've thought of exactly the one you had programmed. They will use it

all over the world in large cities and pay Russia for this idea. This will pay the amount of money just sufficient to cover the costs of seeds for dachniks and you will get paid too. Only your money would come to you under certain conditions”

At that time I did not pay attention to her words “certain conditions” as I was too busy trying to figure out something different:

“So, do you mean it is necessary to patent it? Who will pay voluntarily?”. “Why not? They will, just a minute, I'll set the percentage Russia will get from the boxes' production by 2 percent and 0.01 percent for you”.

“What is the use of your settings? You are smart in some fields but as for business matters you are a complete layman. Nobody will pay voluntarily. They don't even pay according to signed agreements. If you knew only know the number of non payments! The courts of arbitration are overloaded. Do you know what an arbitration tribunal is?”

“I suppose. In this case they will pay meticulously. The one who refuses to pay will get ruined. Only honest ones will prosper”.

“How would they be ruined? Is it you who is going

to ruin them?”. “Oh, good for you! What else? It's unbelievable. Anyhow, they will do it on their own and be more precise, circumstances will happen to make it unfavorable for the deceivers and eventually they will be ruined”.

At that moment an idea crossed my mind: taking into consideration the fact that Anastasia could not lie and as she had said herself, the natural mechanisms would not allow her to make any mistake. Before making that kind of statement she evidently had processed in her mind a tremendous volume of information and colossal mathematical calculations had to be made. At the same time it was necessary to take into consideration a great mass of psychological factors. These are caused by the people who would be involved in her project. Actually to interpret everything into our language, Anastasia had not only solved the most difficult problem of our time, air purification, but created and analyzed a business plan. Moreover, she had done it within only half an hour. As I wanted to specify some details I asked her, “Tell me, Anastasia, had you made any calculations in your mind, before giving me the percentage numbers of the air purification. Then what is the expected income and benefits from the production of your boxes for the vehicles, filter changing and so on?”

“Very detailed calculations have been done and not only with the help of my own brain...”.

“Stop, will you! Be quiet! Let me finish. Tell me, could you compete with the most powerful and perfect modern computer, let's say, a Japanese or an American one.

“But I am not interested in it”, was her reply. Then she added, “It's so primitive and to some extent even humiliating for me. To compete with a computer is just like... well, how

can I explain it to you by a simple example? Well, it's equivalent to competing with an artificial limb and, to be more precise, not exactly with a complete prosthetic appliance but only a certain part of it. A computer is lacking the main thing and this main thing is feelings”.

I started to debate trying to prove a quite opposite opinion, telling her that the people who play chess with a computer are considered to be very smart and highly respected in our society. Having failed to convince her after trying all kinds of reasoning, I asked her to do me a favor and also, for the good of other people, to prove a human brain's abilities and possibilities. She agreed and I did my best to specify the issue, “Do you mean that I can announce officially your willingness to compete with a Japanese super computer in solving problems?”

“Why precisely a Japanese one?”, asked Anastasia. “Because they are believed to be the best in the world”. “Are they? I would rather compete with all of your computers together. So you would not ask me to get involved into any other kind of competition in the future”.

“Fine”, I felt very happy, “Let's do it with all computers, let's formulate the task now”.

“All right”, agreed Anastasia, “but to begin with, without wasting time on the task formulation, let them solve the problem which you had suggested to me and let them prove or decline my solution. If they disprove of mine, let them make their own suggestions. People and life itself will judge us”.

“Wonderful, Anastasia! Good for you! It's a constructive design. What do you think, will it take a long time to solve this problem? I guess, an hour and a half will not be sufficient time for them. Let's give them three months”.

“All right. Let it be three months”.

“I proposed to take as referees all those who are willing to do it. If their number is great nobody will be able to influence their estimations mercenarily”

“Let it be. I would like to tell you more about children and then education...”.

Anastasia believes that the education of children is the most important issue of today. She usually speaks about it with great joy. My idea of competing with our computers did not provoke in her any special interest. However, I was glad to obtain her consent and right now I am calling upon the firms which produce modern computers, inviting them to compete with Anastasia in solving the problem mentioned above. To summarize and call it a bargain I asked, “What about a winner's prize?”

“I need nothing!”, was her answer.

“Why do you speak on your behalf? Are you absolutely sure of your victory ?”

“Of course, I am sure! Because I am human”.

“Well, all right. Anyhow, what would you suggest for a firm which could be second after you?”

“Well, I'll try to give them some ideas about how they could modify their computers”.

“Sounds fine! Let's call it a bargain!”

Chapter 22

“THERE WAS LIFE IN HIM AND THE LIFE WAS THE LIGHT OF PEOPLE”

The Gospel of John

Once on my request Anastasia took me to see the Ringing Cedar, the one her great-granddad and granddad had spoken about. It was not far away from the clearing. It was approximately a forty meter high tree which towered a little above the neighboring ones. The distinctive feature of it was its crown. It looked as if it was illuminated, producing a halo around itself exactly like those they depict around the images of saints on icons, though its halo was pulsating. At the very top of the tree one could see a beam which was directed into cosmic infinity. The sight was extraordinarily fascinating and it cast a spell.

I followed Anastasia's suggestion and pressed my palm against its trunk. I felt vibration or crackling which could be compared with that which we can hear when under a high voltage line, though this one was more resonant.

“You know, it was me who had found out, only by chance, how to send its accumulated energy back to the Cosmos and after that to send it back scattering it all over the Earth”. Anastasia reported to me, “Do you see the marks on the trunk? At the very places it was debarked by the she bear which was dragging me climbing up the tree. I tell you, I could hardly manage to make her do it taking me to the first branches. I took a strong grip on the back of her neck. She was climbing up and howling, howling and climbing. That was the way I had managed to reach the first branches and then it was easy for me to climb moving up from branch to branch.

So I went on till I reached the top of the cedar. I stayed there for two days. I tried everything possible. Whatever came to my mind: now I was comforting the tree by stroking it's trunk. Then I started to shout, directing my sound upwards, but nothing seemed to work.

Then my granddaddy and great granddaddy came. Can you imagine what kind of show was happening here at that time? They were standing under the tree speaking strictly to me demanding me to climb down. I, in turn, was demanding from them instructions on what to do, how to handle the problem but they would not. My granddaddy, can you imagine, he decided to trick me by promising his help in establishing a contact with a woman with whom I had failed to contact. I did want to help her very much. I realized that before he used to get irritated and even angry at me because, as he stated, I was

wasting my time on her instead of minding my own business and doing something else. I knew for sure that he was not able to help me because my great granddaddy had tried twice and failed too. Although my granddaddy did not know about it, as we kept it secret from him.

Then my granddaddy completely lost his temper, a twig, started running around the Cedar, switching the twig and screaming at me that I was the most stubborn muddle-headed one in the family. He said that my behavior was illogical. I could not perceive wise advice and he would "educate" by beating me with twigs on my behind. All those speeches and actions he accompanied by whipping the air with his twig. It was so funny and even my great granddad could not help but laugh. I was shouting with laughter too.

At that moment somehow I broke the top branch and luminescence came out of it. I heard my great-granddaddy's voice become very serious with a shade of demanding and at the same time pleading: "Please, don't touch anything else, my grandchild, come down, be careful, take your time, you have done it already". I followed his advice and came down. My great-granddaddy hugged me silently. I could feel that he was trembling then he pointed to the Cedar and one could see that all its twigs were starting to illuminate light.

Then a small beam was created and went away high up into infinity. My great-granddaddy explained to me that the beam had been created at the very place I was shouting upwards, creating a kind of channel for the energy. Then he told me that if I had touched that small beam which was coming out of the broken twig my brain would have exploded. It happened because that tiny beam had a lot of powerful energy and information and that was why my dad and mamma had perished...".

For a while Anastasia was silent and then she continued her story:

"They had found a similar Ringing Cedar. Only my mamma was doing everything differently because she did not know. She climbed a nearby tree which was smaller, reached the bottom branch of the Ringing One, half broke it and accidentally lighted herself with it. The branch was directed downwards and the beam went into the earth. It is very bad; it is very harmful when this kind of energy gets into the earth...

When my dad came he saw the beam and my mamma hanging on one hand having a death grip on the branch of the regular cedar. The branch of the Ringing Cedar was in the other grip. Evidently my dad realized everything. He climbed the Ringing One and reached its top. My grand-daddy and great-granddaddy were watching him breaking the top twigs but they would not illuminate. Meanwhile the lower ones were illuminating brighter and brighter.

Later on my great-granddad told me that my dad had understood that if he had only stayed a bit longer he would have never been able to come down but the long awaited beam which should have gone upwards with its pulsating illumination would not appear. Although the tiny beams which were directed downwards were growing in number. The beam directed upwards appeared only when my dad had half broken a big branch directed upwards. It did not start illuminating right away so he had to bend it directing it towards

himself. When it flashed out he could not manage to unclasp his hands and the beam of the straightened out branch was directed into the sky.

Then a pulsating halo was created. The great-granddaddy said that dad's brain was able to receive a huge flow of energy and information at the very last moment of his life. Somehow that energy could clean his brain from all kinds of information which had been loaded in it before. That was why it was possible for him to gain time just enough to unclasp his hands before the brain explosion had taken place and direct the branch upwards”.

Anastasia rubbed the Cedar's trunk with her hands, pressed her cheek against it and stood still smiling, trying to catch the tree's vibrating sound.

“Anastasia, is the oil from cedar nuts stronger or weaker than the pieces of the Ringing Cedar wood?”

“The same. If the nuts are harvested at the proper time and in a certain proportion to a cedar tree, when it gives them of itself”.

“Do you know how to do it?”

“Yes, I do”.

“Will you tell me?”

“All right. I will”.

Chapter 23

IT IS NECESSARY TO CHANGE ONE'S OWN WORLD OUTLOOK

I asked Anastasia about the woman who caused the conflict between Anastasia and her granddad. I asked why she could not make contact and establish a relationship with that woman and what did she need it for?

“You see”, Anastasia started her explanation, “it is very important when two persons join their lives into one on the basis of spirituality, bondage and attraction. Unfortunately, most of the time, everything starts from carnal desires. Well, for example, you had seen a beautiful girl and a desire of intimacy came to you. Although it does not mean that you have seen a real personality, the soul itself. Very often people join their destinies led only by carnal attraction. This does not last long. So they switch over to another one. What connects people then?

It is not a very complicated task at all to find your soul mate with whom you can find real happiness. Although in your technocratic world there are a lot of obstacles to it. The woman, I am seeking contact with, lives in a large city, regularly goes to the same place, evidently to work.

Over there or, maybe on her way to that place, there is a man who is her soul mate. They are very closely related spiritually. She could be really very happy with him and, what is of most importance, they could have a child who would be able to bring a lot of good to the world. You know, Vladimir, they would be able to create it in the same impulse we did. This man can't find the way to express his feelings to this woman and to some extent she creates the problem. Can you imagine, when he is looking at her face he recognizes subconsciously his soul mate.

On her part, as soon as she feels somebody's gaze she strains trying, as if by chance, to pull her skirt higher or something like that. By doing it she provokes a carnal desire but he doesn't know her well enough or maybe they have never been introduced to one another. Anyhow this is the reason that he goes to the one who is more familiar, closer to him and available for him to satisfy his carnal feelings.

I would like to prompt this woman on how to behave but I can't get through to her. Her brain is never opened, even for a moment, to realize the message and information involved. It is completely preoccupied with everyday problems. Can you imagine, I was

watching her once all day and night long. It's terrible! My granddaddy was blaming me for ignoring my work with dachniks and in general for scattering myself. He said that I was wasting my time and poking my nose into something that had nothing to do with me and my business.

The first thought which would come to her on awakening in the morning:

“What to eat”, instead of being happy and welcoming the coming day. She gets upset just because the food she would like to have is not available. Then she gets frustrated as she does not have enough of something that women usually put on their face in the morning (maybe it is cream or colors). Her mind is always busy trying to figure out the way to get it. She is always late and in a hurry. She is always afraid to miss this or that means of transportation.

At the place where she comes usually her mind is absolutely overloaded and, to be more precise, to my mind, by all kinds of nonsense. She is trying to keep the appearance of being preoccupied with business matters and minding the job she is supposed to do. Nevertheless she is thinking evidently about her girlfriend or just an acquaintance and she is having a feeling of irritation towards her. At the same time she is trying to listen to everything they are talking about. Can you believe, this is her regular routine which is repeated from day to day as if she were a clockwork toy.

When she is back at home and if somebody can see her, she keeps the look of a woman but really she is thinking again about all kind of colors. When at a store she takes a good look at the clothes and mainly that kind which recover her alluring charms, assuming that they would work a miracle though in reality in her particular case everything goes quite the contrary.

When back home again she starts house cleaning. She believes that she is enjoying a rest while staring at a television set. She messes about with food and the most important thing of all is that she thinks about something good only for a moment. She goes to bed and again, she can't just leave her troubles alone. Isn't it something! She never lets them go! If she could only try to let them go only for a minute during the daytime and try to think...”.

“Wait a minute, Anastasia, will you explain, please, what do you imagine her appearance should look like. I mean her clothes and what exactly should she think at the very moment when that man is near by? What does she need to do in order that he would be able to open his heart to her?”

Anastasia told me everything in detail though I am going to tell you only the main idea as I see it. Anastasia said, “She should wear a dress a little bit below her knees, not a low necked one with a white collar and be almost without make up. She should learn to listen to the speaker who is communicating with her with great attention and interests

“Is that all?”, I asked, being surprised to hear such a simple explanation. And Anastasia's reply sounded like follows:

“There is a lot behind these simple things. In order to choose the right dress, put on her make up differently and look at a person without false interest she should change her world outlook”.

Chapter 24

MORTAL SIN

“I need to speak to you, Vladimir, about the conditions under which you would be able to get your money from banks when you have a lot in your account”.

“Oh, it's interesting! Go ahead, Anastasia, tell me, it's a pleasant procedure” I remarked. Though the next moment the words I heard made me burst out... It's unbelievable! Just read and be my judge...

Anastasia proceeded, “Whenever you decide that you need to get money from your bank account you should do the following procedure:

“First of all, three days before going to a bank to get your money you should not drink alcohol. When you arrive at the bank, the bank senior official is supposed to carry out the inspection, in accordance with this condition, using an instrument specially designed for this purpose, in the presence of not less than two witnesses. As soon as you are through with the above mentioned procedure you are ready to start with a second one.

You should drop curtsies not less than nine times in front of the bank senior official and those two witnesses present there...”.

When the sense of these conditions had reached my consciousness, though I would rather say the senselessness. I jumped up and she stood up too. I could not believe what heard and asked again, “First they will check me regarding the presence of alcohol and after that I am supposed to drop curtsies in the presence of witnesses not less than nine times, am I right?”

“Exactly”, was her reply, “for each drop they can give you a sum of money not more than one million in your currency in accordance with the up-to-date value”.

I was overwhelmed with feelings of madness, anger and frustration.

j “Why have you said this? Just tell me why? I was || so happy I trusted you. I have even started to believe that you are right on many things, that there is logic in your conclusions. But you... Do you realize that men do not curtsy? They bow. Only women curtsy. Now I am absolutely convinced that you are a schizophrenic, a forest fool, a

crazy one. You have crossed over by your last statement. It is absolutely senseless and the bottom line is there is no logic in it at all. You know what, it is not only my personal opinion. Any clear thinking man can prove it to you. Ha... Maybe you would like me to put these conditions of yours down into the book you want me to write?"

"Yes, I would like you to do it".

"Well, well, I am quite sure now that you are absolutely not in your right mind. Are you going to write a special instruction or maybe an edict for banks?"

"No, I am not. They will read the book and all of them will act accordingly. Otherwise they will face bankruptcy"

"Oh, God!!! I can't believe that I am still listening to this creature the for third day in a row! Maybe you would like the senior officials to drop curtseys also together with me in the presence of the witnesses?"

"It would be a good idea for him to behave exactly the way you will. It would be of great use for all of them though I did not put them on these kinds of terms as I have done in your case".

"Does it mean that you have demonstrated such favor only for me? Do you have any idea what kind of a laughing stock you have made of me? Now anyone can see what could result if one is loved by a crazy hermit. Just remember, nothing will come out of your tricks. Not a single bank will ever agree to serve me under these kinds of terms. It does not matter how much you try to model your situations. Look at her! She is lost in her daydreams. I tell you, right here, where you belong, you can drop curtseys as much as you like".

"The banks will agree and, even without your consent, will open accounts for you, though I should add, only those which are willing to work honestly. Moreover, people will trust them and become their customers", continued Anastasia holding her ground.

Anger and irritation were accumulating in me more and more. I was becoming rude and nasty, to say the least. She was standing leaning her back against a tree trunk, her head slightly bent forward, one hand was pressed to her chest with the other one which raised up as she was waving slightly. I recognized that gesture. She used to do did it when she was trying to calm down the environment. She was protecting me that way, so I would not get scared and I realized why she was calming down at that time... Any rudeness or offensive word directed towards Anastasia was hurting her like a whip, making her body wince.

I shut my mouth, sat down on the grass again turning my back to Anastasia. I made a decision that I would calm down, then go to the shore and never speak to her again. That was why when I heard her speaking behind my back I was very surprised as there was no outrage or reproach in the tone of her voice.

“Don't get me wrong, Vladimir, all bad things which are happening to man are being attracted by man. This happens only when he is violating the laws of spirituality and losing contact with Nature.

The dark forces are trying to mislead man's attention by the momentary attractiveness of your technocratic being. To make you forget the simple truth and the commandments which were set forth for humankind long ago through the Bible. They do succeed very often. One of man's mortal sins is arrogance and a great majority of people are prone to it. Right now I am not going to speak about the great baneful influence of this sin on man. If you would like to learn more about this subject when you come back home you will be able to understand it yourself or with the help of enlightened people who will come into your life.

Right now I have to say only that the dark forces, as opposed to the light ones, are using every moment in trying to cultivate sin so it could stay with man and the most important instrument of their efforts is money. Actually they invented money and now money exists as a high voltage zone. The dark forces are very proud of their invention. They even think that they are stronger than the lights just because they had managed to think up money. The great opposition has been lasting for thousands of years and man is in the center of it.

I don't want you to be held liable for this sin since I do understand that nobody can manage to overcome it. All kinds of explanations which have been given to humankind have not worked out, as man has not recognized the right way to resist this sin. You too would not be able to realize it naturally by yourself. I would like to help you to get rid of this mortal danger of spirit spoiling and that was why I had thought up especially for you a special situation in which this mechanism of the dark forces looks as if it breaks down and moreover it works quite the contrary, it eradicates the sin.

That's why they had become so mad at me. Their anger moved into you and that was why you started to shout at me using insulting words and expressions. They wanted me to get angry at you but I'll never do that. I've realized that my invention had just hit the mark and now it is quite evident to me that it is possible to break their perfectly adjusted mechanisms. These were working without a hitch for millennia. It was my first experience till now. I have done it only for you but I shall also think up something for other people... Well, what's wrong if you drink less of this intoxicating potion and not become an arrogant and obstinate person? What has made you so excited ? Surely it was the arrogance which had leaped inside you”. She became quiet and I became thoughtful.

It was unbelievable and absolutely extraordinary or better to say a comical situation. Whatever one can call this squatting or curtseys at banks, which her brain could invent. “Anyhow her mind has logged a very deep meaning into it and, to tell the truth, there could be a logic to it... Of course, it requires one to take a closer look at it”, I thought to myself.

All kinds of ill feelings towards Anastasia were gone. They were replaced by a feeling of vague guilt though I did not apologize at that time. I only turned towards her seeking peace.

Chapter 25

GETTING IN TOUCH **WITH PARADISE**

“Your brain has been tired by the effort of understanding me yet I would like to tell you a lot more. Right now, Vladimir, you need a rest. Let's sit down for a while”, said Anastasia. So we did. We sat down on the grass. Anastasia attracted me to her taking me by my shoulders. The back of my head touched her breast and I experienced a feeling of pleasant warmth.

“Don't be afraid of me, relax”, she said quietly and lay me down on the grass helping me to relax and feel comfortable by dipping her fingers into my hair as if combing it and with the finger tips of another hand she started to give me quick touches to my forehead and temples. Occasionally she pricked me with her nails at different points on my head. All these manipulations gave me feeling of comfort, peace and enlightenment. After that Anastasia put her hands on my shoulders and said, “Now, please, listen attentively and try to distinguish the surrounding sounds”.

I followed her suggestion and I could catch a great variety of sounds which differed in tone, rhythm and duration. I started to enumerate them aloud, “The singing of birds in the trees, chirping and clicking of insects in the grass, rustling of leaves and the flapping of wings”. Having enumerated everything I had heard I stopped and tried to lend an attentive ear to the natural sounds and while doing it I was experiencing a great joy. It was a pleasure mixed with an awakened interest. “You have not named something else”, remarked Anastasia. “Why? What else? That's all. Well, maybe I've missed something insignificant or I just can't distinguish it”.

“Vladimir, don't you hear my heart beating”, asked Anastasia. To tell the truth, I really did not pay attention to that sound.

“Oh, yes, I do”, I announced hurriedly, “sure, I do. I hear it. I can hear it very well. Its beat is calm and smooth”.

“All right. Now try to remember the intervals between the sounds you can hear. In order to do it you should select the main ones and memorize them”. So I did. I picked out the rattling of an insect, a crow croaking, the babbling and splashing of water in the brook.

“Now I shall accelerate my heart beating and you listen attentively to everything that is

going to take place around you”.

Her heart beats were becoming more frequent and the rhythm of the nearby sounds followed the changes. Their tone turned into a higher one.

“It is amazing. It's just unbelievable!” I exclaimed. “Does it mean that they are so sensitive and can react to the rhythm of your heart beating?”

“Exactly. Absolutely all of them. From a tiny blade of grass to a large tree and even a tiny bug. They can respond to any change of a heart rhythm. The trees accelerate their inner processes, they start to produce more oxygen...”.

“Is it the way all plants and animals react when they are near people?”, I asked.

“No, it is not. In your world they don't recognize whom they should react to because people are not trying to contact them. People do not realize the destination of this contact. They don't give them sufficient information about themselves. Such kind of contact can take place between plants and people who are working at their garden strips, but only when they behave the way I've already described to you. First of all, they have to saturate the seeds with information about themselves and start their communication to the plants more deliberately. Do you want me to show you what kind of feeling man could experience if he were enjoying this kind of contact?”

“Of course, I do. How will you do it, I wonder?”

“Right now I am going to adjust the rhythm of my heart beating to yours and you will feel it”.

She pushed her hand under my shirt. Her warm palm was slightly pressed against my chest. Her heart was slowly adjusting to my heart beating and soon it started to work in unison with mine. A miracle happened. I experienced an extraordinarily pleasant feeling as if my beloved relatives and my mother were nearby. A wonderful feeling of softness and healthy well being spread all over my body; my soul was full of joy, freedom and a new understanding of the Universe.

The whole range of surrounding sounds was caressing and telling me the truth. Although I had not realized that feeling completely yet it was felt intuitively. All kinds of joyous, mellow and pleasing feelings which I had never experienced before were merging into one wonderful feeling. Maybe that kind of feeling they call happiness.

As soon as Anastasia started to change the rhythm of her heart beat that wonderful feeling began to fade. It was leaving me. I asked her, “Oh, please, Anastasia, not yet, leave it for a while”.

“Sorry, I can't do it for a long time, I have a rhythm of my own”.

“Please, keep it a little bit longer”, I was begging her. Anastasia gave me the gift of

happiness just for a couple of moments more and then everything vanished. Although a tiny particle of that heavenly pleasure and bright feeling, as a recollection about it, was left inside me. For a while we kept silent and then a desire to hear Anastasia's voice again came to me and I asked her, "Did the first people on the Earth feel as good as I did? Well, I mean, did Adam and Eve feel the same way? Isn't it something! Just lie down, enjoy yourselves and experience a mellow and pleasing feeling. Here you are, everything is at your disposal... Though it would become boring".

"Will you tell me, Vladimir, are there many of those who think exactly the same way you do, about the first man, Adam?", Anastasia asked me in return.

"Well, I guess a large majority of people do. But really, what had they to do over there in Paradise? It was later on when man started to develop himself

trying to think up all kinds of stuff. Labor has developed man. Only through labor has man become smarter".

"It is true. It is necessary to work but the first man was immeasurably cleverer than today and his labor was more significant. It required great intellect, comprehension and will power".

"All right, what did Adam do, staying in Paradise? Did he cultivate a garden? Well, it is not a big deal. Nowadays every gardener can do it. The Bible tell nothing else about Adam's activities"

"If they would have put into the Bible everything in detail then one would not be able to read it within a whole lifetime. It is necessary to understand the Bible, behind each line of the Holy Book there is a huge amount of information. Do you want to know what Adam was doing? All right, I'll tell you about it.

To begin with, just try to recall what the Bible says. It is exactly right there. God had entrusted Adam to determine the destination of each creature living on the Earth and give names to them. He has done it. He has done something that till now all the scientific establishments in the world taken together have not managed to perceive".

"Anastasia, and what about you, do you appeal to God, do you ask from Him anything for yourself?"

"What else can I ask for? I have already been given a lot. I must be thankful to Him and help Him".

Chapter 26

WHO WILL BRING UP OUR SON?

On our way back, when Anastasia was accompanying me to my motorboat, we stopped for a rest exactly at the place where she left her outer clothing and I asked her, "Anastasia, how shall we bring our son up?"

"You, Vladimir, try to realize one thing. You can't yet bring him up. When his eyes are ready to look at the world intelligently for the first time you should not be near him".

I gripped her by her shoulders and gave her a good shake, "What are you talking about? You know, you are taking too many liberties. I don't understand where are you getting these distinct conclusions from? Generally speaking, the fact of your existence itself is inconceivable. Although it does not give you any right to decide everything your way against all laws of simple logic".

"Please, Vladimir, calm down. I have no idea of the kind of logic you mean but try to realize everything quietly".

"What do I need to realize? This is not only your child but mine also and I want him to have a father, I want him to be provided with everything he may need and properly educated".

"Please, try to understand, he does not need any material welfare the way you understand it. He will get everything primordially. While yet in his infancy

he will get and realize such amounts of information that education, as you understand it, is absolutely ridiculous. It would be almost the same as if they try to send a great mathematician to learn the program of the first grade at a primary school. You would like to bring to the baby some senseless trinket but it is absolutely useless. The baby doesn't need it. You need it for self-satisfaction. "Oh, how nice and thoughtful I am! Everybody, look at me!" If you believe that by providing your son with a car or anything else that you believe to be "a good thing of life", you are doing a great blessing for him. You are wrong.

If he would like he will get it on his own. Just try to remain calm and think what exactly you can say to your son or teach him? Have you done anything great that he would like to follow?" She continued her speech saying it in a very soft and quiet voice but the words

were plunging me into tremors. “Try to understand, when he starts to understand the Universe and you, if you happen to be by his side, it will look just like an undeveloped being. Do you want your son to think his father is a dunderhead? The only thing that can bring you more close to him is the degree of pure thinking. This purity can be reached only by a few people in your world”.

I realized that it was absolutely useless to argue with her and shouted at her giving myself up to despair: “So, it means that he will never know about me?!”

“I'll tell him about you and your world when he is ready to realize everything intelligently and make his own decisions. I don't know what he will do, it is up to him to decide”.

Pain, despair, offence and terrible guesswork, everything got mixed up inside me. An unbearable desire to smash that beautiful, intellectually hermitic face of hers awoke inside me. I realized everything my own way and it made me short of breath because of what I had realized! I started my tirade:

“Well, everything, I guess, is evident? Now I have realized what you are... Well, you could find nobody around to "have a bad fall" (Russian vulgarity for "to have dirty sex") in order to have a baby of yours. At the beginning you were even putting on airs, but you are a poor plotter. You were trying to pretend to be a nun. You just needed a baby. You even went to Moscow for this purpose. Look at her, she had sold her berries and mushrooms! Why? You would rather become a street-walker. You only had to take off your shawl and quilted jacket and somebody would bite your hook. Then you would not need to spin your web involving me into it.

Oh, yes! Of course. But of course! You needed a man who was dreaming of having a son too and here you are! You have achieved that goal of yours! I wonder, did you think about a child, a son, whose predestination was to be a hermit? He is supposed to live his life according to your modelling, what is right for you? Isn't it something that you were talking so much about the Truth. You talk too much of liberty and allow too much to yourself, poor hermit woman. Are you thinking of yourself as the highest stage of Truth itself? And what about me? Did you think about me?

Yes, that's right, I did dream about a son! I was dreaming about leaving to him my business, teaching him to live right. I wanted to love him. And now! What am I going to do now? How shall I live? What kind of life would it be when one knows that his tiny baby son is somewhere in a wild taiga crawling helplessly and unprotected? Without a future! Without his father! Well, one would have a heart break because of it. You can't understand it, you are a forest female!”

“Maybe, your heart will become intelligent and everything will turn to be good. This kind of pain will purify your soul, accelerate your thinking, calling upon...” she pronounced quietly.

Such an anger was storming inside me that I could not control myself any more. I gripped a stick, ran away from Anastasia and started whipping against a small tree with all my

might till it was broken.

Then I turned towards Anastasia and when I saw her... Although it could sound strange but my anger started to vanish away. A thought crossed my mind:

“What's the matter with me, I have lost control of myself again and become stormy”. Exactly the same way as it was at that time when I was abusing her before, she was standing pressing herself against a tree trunk with one hand raised up and her head was slightly bent forward as if she was withstanding a hurricane wind. My anger was gone completely. I came closer to her and started to examine her.

Her hands were pressed against her chest, her body was trembling, she was silent, only her kind, as kind as usual, eyes were looking at me tenderly. We were examining each other for a while. I was thinking to myself: “No doubt, she is not able to say an untruth. She could keep to herself everything she had said but she... She knows that she is going to suffer and yet she speaks... She just can't help it. Of course, it is also a kind of an extremity. One can't live always telling only the truth, just the things one is thinking about. Well, there is nothing to be done if she is the way she is and she just can't be different. Everything had happened the way it was supposed to. Whatever had to happen had just happened? It was just inevitable”

I tried to comfort myself by positive thinking: “Now she is going to become the mother of my son, surely. No doubt she will, since she has told it. It is true that she will be a strange mother, not a regular one because of her way of life... her thinking... Well, there is nothing I can do about it. I can't change her. On the other hand, she is physically strong. She is kind; she knows a lot about nature and animals. And she is smart, though her mind is a rather peculiar one. Nevertheless, she knows a lot about the way to bring up and educate children. Wasn't she trying to speak all the time about children? She will nurse my son. A woman like her will manage to do it. She will go through cold and snowstorms. For sure, it is just child's play to her. She will nurse him and bring him up. It is just necessary for me somehow to adjust myself to the situation. I will visit them in summer just like coming to a dacha. It is impossible to come in wintertime, as I will not be able to stand it. In summer I would be able to play with my son. When he grows up I shall tell him about the people who live in large cities. Right now it is necessary at least to apologize for my behavior. So I said, “Sorry, Anastasia, I got nervous again”.

And she started to speak right away, “It is not your fault, Vladimir. You should not punish yourself. Don't worry. It is quite natural because you are troubled and anxious about your son. Who would not be? You were getting concerned that he will not be happy here. That your son's mother is just a regular female. She is not able to love with a real human love. Please, don't you worry, don't get upset. You have told me everything just because you did not know, you knew nothing, my beloved about my love”.

Chapter 27

AFTER A WHILE

“Anastasia, if you are so smart and powerful, then maybe you would be able to help me too?”, I started again.

She looked up at the sky then looked at me again and said, “There is no being in the whole Universe which could be able to develop itself stronger than man as well as at the same time to enjoy more freedom. All other existing civilizations bent their knees before man. All kinds of other civilizations are able to develop and perfect themselves only in one direction and they are not free.

The greatness of man is beyond their understanding. God, the Great Mind has created man that way. He has given to nobody more than He has given to Man...”. I could not comprehend or, rather to realize at that time what she had said and asked her again the same question. I was asking for help, not even realizing what kind of help I needed.

She asked me back, “Well, what do you mean? Do you want me to heal all your physical illnesses? It is easy for me to do. Moreover, I did it half a year ago. However, I did not manage to achieve any results at the most important level. I could not reduce the quantity of the pernicious and dark things in you. They are the distinctive features of the people of your world. All kinds of sicknesses are trying to come back again. "A witch, a crazy woman hermit, it's necessary to get away from here,

the sooner, the better". Those were the thoughts which crossed your mind, weren't they?”

“Yes, that's right”, I answered with great surprise. “Those were exactly the thoughts. Are you reading my mind?”

“I am just assuming what you may think. It is written on your face. Tell me, Vladimir, don't you remember me, just one a bit?”

Her question surprised me very much and I started to peer into the features of her face. Yes, her eyes! A vague feeling that I had already seen these eyes somewhere came to me... but where could it be?

“Anastasia, haven't you told me that you were living in the forest permanently? Then, how could I see you?”

She smiled and ran away. In a while Anastasia came out from behind bushes. She was wearing a long skirt, brown knitted jacket with buttons. Her head was covered by a shawl which was hiding her hair. Though she did not have the quilted jacket I saw her wearing when I met her for the first time on the bank of the river. The shawl also was tied around her head in a different way. The clothes were clean but old fashioned, the shawl was covering her forehead and neck and finally, I recognized her...

Chapter 28

A STRANGE GIRL

It was a year ago, the main steamboat of our caravan moored in a small village. Not far from that place we were planning to buy meat for our restaurant and stay for a while at the shore. About sixty kilometers ahead there was a dangerous space on our route up the river as the navigation lights were not working there and that was the reason why we could not move at night. We decided to organize an evening of recreation at our steamboat for the local youths. We started advertising through our broadcasting system of communication loudspeakers and the local radio.

The alluring white steamboat, shining with multitudes of lights, the sounds of modern music always worked to attract local youths. In the evening almost all the young people of the village moved one after the other towards our luxurious steamboat. Usually our visitors at the beginning, especially the newcomers, like to go sightseeing. After a walk along the middle and upper decks they usually move towards our bar and restaurant. As a rule the girls enjoy dancing and the guys drink spirits.

The exceptional atmosphere of the steamboat together with nice music and spirits always excites them. Although sometimes it causes some trouble for our crew as there is never enough time for the young people and they started collective appeals asking to prolong the pleasure for at least half an hour, then again and again.

At that time I was in my cabin alone. I could hear the sounds of music from the restaurant and was trying to adjust the future schedule of our caravan movement. Suddenly I felt somebody's intent look. I turned and saw her eyes behind the glass of the window. At that time it did not surprise me as the visitors were always eager to see the steamboat cabins. I stood up and opened the window. She did not move and continued to look at me though she seemed a bit embarrassed. I felt like I should do something for that lonely woman who was standing in front of me. A thought crossed my mind: "Why isn't she dancing with all the rest, maybe she is troubled?", I suggested I would be her guide and show her our steamboat. She bent her head silently as a sign of agreement.

I took her sightseeing. I showed her our office which used to impress our visitors by its carpeting, soft leather furniture and computers. Then I invited her to my private cabin which consisted of a bedroom-study and a living room which was also furnished with a beautiful set of furniture. There was a TV set, a video player and also wonderful carpets on the floor.

Apparently, at that time it was fun for me to impress a country girl from a remote area with the articles of a civilized way of living. I opened a box of chocolates for her. I also filled two fine crystal glasses with champagne trying my best to impress her completely with the ostentatiousness, turned on the video tape where Vika Tsiganova, a famous modern variety show singer, was performing Love and Death. There were many other songs on that tape which were performed by my favorite singers. She took a sip of champagne, looked at me attentively and asked, "It is very difficult, isn't it?"

I could expect any other question from her but that. The voyage was really a very difficult one. Because of the very complicated navigation situation on the river, the crew consisted mostly of the students of the River Vocational School. Some of them were smoking "herbs" and also from time to time stealing some stuff from our store.

Very often we ran out of our schedule and could not manage to be on time at some settlements where people had been informed beforehand about our arrival. All those anxieties deprived me of the opportunity not only to enjoy the environmental beauty but also of time enough for a good sleep.

I told her something like that: "It's all right, never mind, we shall overcome. Then I turned towards the window having my drink of champagne. We were talking about something else, watching videotapes almost till the end of our outing when our steamboat moored to the bank. I saw her to the ladder.

On my way back to my cabin I noted to myself, "There was something strange about that woman and at the same time she left inside me some kind of light and bright feeling". That night, for the first time after many days in a row I slept like a baby.

"Dear me, so, it was you, Anastasia?"

"Yes, that's right. Over there, in your cabin I had memorized all the songs I sang for you in the forest. While we were talking they were being played. Now you can see how simple everything is".

"How did you get on the steamboat?"

"It was interesting for me to see the way everything was taking place, your way of life. You see, I usually took care only of my dachniks. I ran to the village, sold the dry mushrooms collected by the squirrels and bought a ticket for your outing. So, now I know a lot about the category of people you classify as entrepreneurs and I know you well enough too. I am sorry, I am feel, very guilty towards you. At that time I did not know that things would develop like that. That I could change your life and your destiny so much. I just couldn't help it as they have started accomplishing this plan. They are dependent only on God Himself. Now, for a while, you and your family are going to go through great difficulties and misfortunes but later on everything will be fine".

I did not realize what exactly Anastasia was talking about. Although at that time intuitively I felt that something was going to happen which would go beyond the realms

of our regular imaginations. That something would have something to do with me. So I asked Anastasia to specify and tell me exactly what she had in her mind. I tell you, at that time while I was listening to her I could not even suspect the exactness on her prediction and that it would start to come true. Anastasia's story had brought me back to the events which took place a year ago.

“At that time on the steamboat you showed me everything, even your cabin, treated me to chocolate, suggested champagne then accompanied me to the ladder. I did not leave the bank of the river. I was standing there behind the bushes and I could see through the lighted windows of the bar the dancing youths who were having fun. You took me sightseeing all over the boat except the bar. I guess the reason was my clothes. They did not correspond to the situation. I was twisted around into the shawl. I had my simple knitted jacket on and too long a skirt. Although I could take my shawl off, my jacket was clean and tidy, my skirt had been carefully pressed with my hands before I came to the boat”.

She was right, I did not take her to the bar because of her strange looking clothes under which as it has now come out this young girl was hiding her dazzling beauty. This kind of beauty would have singled her out from the other people. I said to her, “Well, Anastasia, did you really need that bar, would you have danced there in those galoshes of yours? And don't tell me you know how to dance modern dances”.

“Sorry, but at that time I was not wearing galoshes. When I was changing mushrooms for money to buy a ticket, I also took from that woman a pair of shoes. Although they were rather old and tight for me but I had polished them with grass and as far as dancing's concerned... you know, I just need to have one glance at those who dance, — that's all. Believe me, I can dance better than you can imagine”.

“Sorry, did I hurt your feelings?”

“No, you did not. Although if you had only invited me to the bar, I don't really know for sure whether it would have been good or bad, but the events could have taken a different course. Everything that has happened would never happened. Anyhow, right now I am not sorry. Whatever happened, just happened”.

“Well, what exactly has happened? Has anything terrible happened?”

“After having seen me off you did not return to your cabin. You called to the captain and you went to the bar together. When both of you came in, the audience was very impressed. The captain was wearing his uniform and he looked very smart. You also looked very elegant and respectable. You were well known to many people in the environs, the famous Megre, the owner of an exceptional caravan. Both of you realized perfectly well the impression you were producing on the surrounding people.

You sat down at the table where three country girls were sitting. They were only eighteen years old, they had just finished school. The waitress brought you right away chocolate, champagne and crystal glasses of better quality than those the rest of the people were

using. You took one of the girls by her hand, bent towards her and started to tell her something into her ear as far as I could understand... they call it "compliments".

Then you danced a couple of dances with her and never stopped telling her something sweet. The girl's eyes were shining. She had an impression of being in wonderland. You took her out on deck and showed her the steamboat, exactly the way you did to me. You took her to your cabin, treated her to the same stuff you did to me: chocolate and champagne. Although your behavior was a little different, I mean not exactly what you did with me. While with me you were serious and even a shade of sadness was present. In her company you were full of joy. I could see it perfectly well through the lighted windows of your cabin. Maybe, at that time I wished I were her”.

“Oh, did you feel jealous, Anastasia?”

“I don't know what kind of feeling I was experiencing at that time but it was unfamiliar to me...”.

I recalled that evening, those young country girls who were trying their best to look older and stylish. Next morning the captain of the steamboat Alexander Ivanovich Senchenko and I were laughing together at our night adventure. At that time when the girl was in my cabin I realized that she was in the state of mind when one is ready for anything... I did not mean to take possession of her, so I told Anastasia about it and she replied, “Still you had taken possession of her heart. You came out on deck, it was drizzling. You threw your jacket on the girl's shoulders and accompanied her back to the bar”.

“What about you, were you standing all that time behind the bushes, in the rain?”

“It was all right. The rain was very light and comforting though it was preventing me from watching. I did not want my shawl and skirt to get wet. You know, they belonged to my mammy. I was lucky to find a plastic bag on the shore so I took them off, put everything into it and hid it under my jacket”.

“Anastasia, why didn't you come back to the steamboat since you did not go home and, moreover, it was raining”.

“I couldn't as you had seen me off and yet you had other worries so I did not want to bother you. The bottom line was that everything was coming to an end. When the party was over and the time came to say "Good-by", you at the request of the girls and mainly at the request of that girl who was with you on the steamboat, allowed the crew to stay by the shore a little bit longer.

Everything was in your power including their hearts and you were intoxicated by that power. The local youth were thankful to the girls and the girls in turn felt themselves gifted by the power through you. They forgot absolutely about the young people who were also in the bar and though the same time they were their friends and former schoolmates. The captain and you accompanied the girls towards the ladder. Then you went to your cabin and the captain went to his bridge; the steamboat gave a hooting

sound and slowly, very slowly started to cast off.

The girl you were communicating with was standing on the shore among her girlfriends watching the beautiful white steamboat moving away. Her heart was beating strongly as if it was ready to break away. Her thoughts and feelings were messed up. Behind her back there were the dark shapes of the country cottages without lights. Before her there was the steamboat of her dreams leaving the shore forever. It was shining with multitudes of lights lavishly pouring charming music all over the river and the dark quiet shore-Over on that magic boat there were you. The one who told her so many beautiful words which she had never heard before, such alluring and charming words. All that magic was moving away from her forever. A decision came to her and in front of everybody... the girl squeezed her fingers into her fists

and screamed desperately: "I love you, Vladimir!" Then again and again. Did you hear her screaming?"

"Yes, I did", I replied.

"It was impossible not to hear it and the people from your crew could hear it too. Some of them came out to the deck and were laughing at her. I did not want them to laugh at her. And then as if they had realized something they stopped laughing. You did not come out on the deck and the steamboat was moving slowly away. She thought that you did not hear her and continued chanting, "I love you, Vladimir!" Then her girlfriends joined trying to help her. It intrigued me, I wanted to know what kind of feeling was the one which they call "love". Because of that feeling man could lose control over himself or maybe I wanted to help that girl. Anyhow I shouted together with them, "I love you, Vladimir."

Somehow, at that moment I forgot that I could not pronounce words like that without meaning it. The words should always be supported by feelings, awareness and trustworthiness of natural information. Now I know how strong this feeling can be. Sometimes even the mind is not able to control it. Later on that country girl started wasting away, drinking spirits and I could hardly manage to help her. Now she is married and involved in everyday routine. I had to add her love to mine".

The story about the girl touched my feelings a little. Anastasia's words brought back the memory of that evening very clearly and in detail. Everything had happened exactly the way she had described. It was so real. Though Anastasia's rather peculiar declaration of love did not occur to me at that time. Even later on when I had learned and seen a lot of her way of living and got acquainted with her world, she still seemed to be an unreal being, though she was sitting next to me and I could reach and touch her easily. My consciousness, having been used to operate with different criteria of evaluation rejected taking her as the one who is existing in reality. Although, at the beginning of our meeting I was , attracted to her but later on I did not experience former emotions towards her. I asked, "So, it means , you think that the new feelings which appeared in you were occasional?

“They are longed for”, answered Anastasia, “they are even pleasant but in return, I would like you to love me the same way I do. Though I have realized that on learning about me and about my world better, you would not be able to perceive me as a regular person. Maybe you could even get scared of me sometimes... You know, actually it has happened that way. It is all my fault. I have made a lot of mistakes. I don't know why but all the time I got nervous. I was rushing, trying to explain and failed to do it. Everything looks foolish, doesn't it? I need to correct myself”.

While saying those words she was smiling with a shade of sorrow. She pressed her hand against her breast and I recalled right away something that had happened one morning while I stayed at Anastasia's.

Chapter 29

TINY BUGS

That very morning I made up my mind to join her morning procedure. At the beginning everything ran smoothly. I was standing under a tree touching different shoots. She was speaking about herbs. Then I lay down on the grass next to her. We were absolutely naked but I did not feel cold evidently, because it was after a good run which both of us had enjoyed before. I was in a perfect mood. There was a feeling of some kind of lightness and the sensation was not only in my physical body but somewhere inside me. Everything started when I felt something on my hip was nipping, biting or pinching me. I lifted my head and looked, there were some kind of bugs, ants and a beetle on my leg and hip. I swung my arm to smash them off but did not have time enough to do it as Anastasia intercepted my hand.

“Don't touch them”, she said.

Then she stood on her knees before me, bent over and pressed my other hand to the ground. I was lying on the ground as if I had been crucified. I tried my best to get free but alas, I realized that it was absolutely impossible. Then I pushed with all my might but she was retaining me easily and while doing it she was even smiling. I was feeling the increasing sensation of crawling, bilking, biting and pinching all over me and my conclusion was that they had started to eat me. I was in her hands in the literal and figurative sense of the words so I was trying my best to appraise the situation. “Well, nobody knows where I am, nobody will drop in here by accident and if somebody would happen to come, they could see only my picked bones if there were any left”. Many other thoughts crossed my troubled mind within a moment.

Evidently, they were the reason why my instinct of self-preservation prompted the only one possible solution at that time. So, I applied all my strength and desperately clenched with my teeth her unprotected breast. While doing it I started to move my head from side to side. As soon as Anastasia screamed from pain I unclenched my teeth. She set me free, jumped up, pressing her one hand against her breast and waving with the other one. This was raised up and she was trying to keep smiling. I jumped up also and shouted feverishly shaking off all those crawling creatures. I produced a howl of despair:

“You wanted to feed me to the skunks, you forest witch, but I am not going to yield to you so easily!”

Anastasia continued waving her hand and forcing tier-self to smile at the watchful

surrounding. She glanced at me and slowly, not running as usual, went to the lake with her head drooped.

For a while I was pondering what to do. I wondered whether to go back to the steamboat, and how would I find my way to it? "Should I follow her, but what for?"

So, I went to the lake. Anastasia was sitting by the water, rubbing in her palms some kind of herb and rubbing its juice into the injured spot on her breast where one could see a huge black and blue spot, the result of my bite. I stayed for a while marking time near her in silence and then asked, "Does it hurt?" Without turning her head she said, "I would rather say that it pains me".

She continued to rub in the herb's juice.

"Why did you decide to play this trick on me?", I asked. "I wanted to do the best of my ability. Your skin's pores are completely blocked. They don't breath. The tiny bugs could clean them; it is not painful at all, rather, it is pleasant".

"What about the snake, it was sticking its forked tongue in my foot?"

"It was not doing any harm to you and if it did let its poison out, it would be only on the surface of your skin and I could rub it in right away. The muscles and the skin on your heel are growing numb".

"Well, it is the result of the accident I've been involved in". I commented. For a while we were quiet. Then feeling ill at ease without even realizing what I was saying, I asked, "Well, why didn't He help you? Well, I mean somebody invisible as it had happened before when I had lost consciousness"

"He did not help because I was smiling. Even when you were biting me I was trying to smile".

I felt a kind of shame for my behavior. I gripped the bunch of the herbs which was near by, vigorously crushed them in my palms, kneeled before her and started to rub the black and blue spot with my wet palms.

Chapter 30

DREAMS-FUTURE CREATION

Now having learned about Anastasia's feelings and her desire to prove that she was a natural and regular human being, though seeming to be non ordinary from my own perspective, I have realized what kind of pain I had caused her soul that morning. I apologized again and Anastasia answered that she was not angry. Although she was worried about me because of everything she had done for me.

“What is it so terrible that you could have done to me?”, I asked her and again she told me a story which a person who would like to look as normal as everybody living in our world, would never reproduce in earnest.

“Well, when your steamboat left”, Anastasia proceeded, “and the local youths went to the village, I stayed for a while on the shore all by myself and I felt very well. Then I ran away into my forest. The next day went by as usual and in the evening when the stars came out in the sky, I lay down on the grass and started my dreaming and it happened exactly at that time when the plan of mine had been formed as it was”.

“Now what? What kind of "plan"?”

“You see, what I know, different people of the world you belong to also know. Although they know it in parts but all together they know almost everything but the bottom line is that they don't understand the mechanism up to the end. So, I started to dream that you would come into a big city and tell many people about me and everything I had explained and am going to tell.

You would accomplish it the way you usually spread all kinds of information in your world. Yes you would write a book. Many people would read the book and the truth would open slightly. They would reduce their sicknesses, change their attitude towards children and work out new methods of teaching and education. People would start to love everything and everybody more and eventually the Earth would emanate more light energy.

Artists would paint my portraits and it could be the best they had ever done before. I would try my best to inspire them. They would produce the thing you call "cinema" and it would be the most wonderful film that had ever been created. It would bring memories of me while you watch it. Many scholars would be attracted to you, those, who can

understand and appreciate everything I have said to you. Moreover, they would explain to you a lot which you can't embrace right now. You would trust them more than you do me and you would realize that I am not a kind of witch but a regular human being only more informed than other people.

The things you are going to write about would arouse great interest and it would make you rich. You would have bank accounts in 19 countries of your world. You would visit the holy places which would help you to get purified from the darkness that dwells in you. You would keep your memory of me. You would fall in love with me and the desire to see your son and me again would come to you. My dream was very bright and vivid and, yes, maybe it was a bit pleading... Evidently, it was the reason why everything had happened exactly that way.

They have accepted it as a plan for action and made a decision to transfer people over the space of time of the dark forces.

It is acceptable if the detailed plan is being born on the Earth in the soul and mind of an earthly man. Evidently, they had perceived this plan as a great one or maybe they added to it something of their own. That is why the dark forces have activated their activities to such a great extent.

It had never happened before. I have realized it only through the Ringing Cedar. Its beam became a great deal thicker. Now it is vibrating stronger as it rushes to give its light, its energy away”.

I was listening to Anastasia and at that moment the thought that she was a crazy one was growing inside me, getting stronger and stronger: “Well, who knows, maybe long ago she had escaped from some kind of a hospital for the mentally sick. Now she is living here in this forest and moreover I had sexual intercourse with her. As a result of it a child can be brought into the world... Isn't it something!”...

However watching her speaking seriously and emotionally I did my best to calm her down by saying:

“Don't you worry, Anastasia, your plan is wittingly unrealizable and that's why there is no need for the Light and Dark forces to fight. As a matter of fact nowadays they publish plenty of books but even the works of famous writers are not in great demand. I am not a writer anyhow and, to begin with, I have no talent for writing at all. Nor do I have any ability and special education and this is the bottom line”.

“That's right, everything you have mentioned you did not have before but now you have got it”, she replied.

“All right”, I was trying to comfort her by saying, “suppose I do try but nobody will publish my stuff, they will not believe in your existence”

“But I do exist. I exist for those for whom I exist. They will believe and help you in

exactly the same way I am going to help them later on”.

At that time I did not realize the meaning of her words and I was trying my best to calm her down again and again:

“But I am not going to try to write anything. Try to understand that there is not any sense in it, that's it”.

“But, you will! It is evident that they have already created the whole system of circumstances which will force you to do it”.

“Am I a tiny screw in somebody's hands according to you?”

“You know, a lot depends also on you. The Dark Forces will try their best to interfere and to prevent you from accomplishing everything you are supposed to do. They may push you hard even to suicide by creating an illusion of hopelessness”.

“It's enough, Anastasia, I am bored to death with listening to your fantasies”.

“Do you consider it to be fantasies?”

“Yes, yes, I do! Fantasies...” And at that point I had to stop short.

A thought had flashed in my head commensuring time and I realized, — everything Anastasia was telling me about her dreams and her son she had conceived in her mind a year ago. She did it when I did not know her as much as I do now. Here you are, a year later it has happened.

“So, does it mean that everything is interconnected with what is happening now?”, I asked her.

“Of course. If it was not because of them and a little bit of my efforts too, your second expedition would never be possible. As you know, you could hardly manage to make ends meet after your first voyage and to add to it you had no rights to the steamboat”.

“Does it mean that you had influenced the steamship line and the firms which were involved?”

“Yes, it does”.

“You know, you have ruined me and caused great damage to them. What kind of right do you have to interfere like that? Now here I am, I have left my steamboat again because of messing with you. Maybe right now they are robbing me in every possible way. Evidently you have a kind of power to hypnotize people or, even worse, you are a witch. That's it!”

“I have never done anything wrong to anybody and moreover, I just can't do it. I am a human being! If you are worried so much about material well being and money, you

should just wait a while and everything will come back to you. I am sorry. I feel guilty towards you because I have dreamed that way. I dreamed that you would have a hard time for a while but at that very time I could think of nothing else. You don't accept logic. You have to be forced by your world life circumstances”.

“Here it is! 'To be forced", that's it! It is you who is forcing me and you are trying to pretend to be a regular human being”.

“I am a human being, a woman!” , Anastasia was excited and it was evident when she exclaimed, “I have always wanted only good and light. It is my only wish. I wanted you to get purified. That's the way I had modelled that you would visit the holy, secret places and write a book. They have accepted it. The Dark Forces have been always fighting them though they never managed to win with the main things”.

“What about you, Anastasia? Are you going to keep aside, to be just an observer having all this intellect, information and energy of yours?”

“At such an extent of opposition of two great sources the effect of my effort is going to be insignificant. The help from other people of your world is required. I shall be looking for them and I am going to find them. I am positive. I'll do it the same way as I had done it before, when you were staying at the hospital. Only you, yourself should acquire more awareness. Let it be just a little bit at least Try to overcome all evils inside you”.

“Now what? Will you specify? What is evil inside me? What was I doing wrong while at the hospital? How could you heal me being far away from me at that time?”

“You simply did not feel my presence but I was near you. When I was on the steamboat, I had a small twig of the Ringing Cedar which my mama had broken before she perished... I left it in your cabin. You had already been sick at that time. I felt it. Do you remember the twig?”

“Yes, I do”, I answered.

It was true, the twig was hanging in my cabin for a long time, many people of my crew saw it; I brought it to Novosibirsk but I never attached any importance to it

“You simply have thrown it away”.

“But I did not know”.

“Yes, you are right. You did not know... You have thrown it away... My mama's twig did not manage to overcome all your sickness. Then you got to the hospital. Just try to recall and look very carefully through the report of your sickness. The report reads that in spite of applying the most powerful medication there was no improvement in your case. After that they gave you a cedar oil injection. The doctor who was following very strictly all required procedures should never have done it. She has done something that does not exist in any of your medical journals. In general it had never been done before. Do you

remember it?"

"Yes, I do".

"The lady doctor", continued Anastasia, "who was healing you was the head of a department of one of the best hospitals in your city. That department had nothing to do with the disease you had. She accepted you though the department which was supposed to

treat that kind of disease was on the next floor of the same building. Am I right?"

"Yes, you are".

"She was applying the needles to you while nice music was on. The room was half darkened. Anastasia described everything exactly the way it had happened to me at that time".

"Do you remember that woman?"

"Sure, I do. She was the head of the department of the former regional hospital".

All of a sudden looking at me seriously Anastasia said some phrases which produced a shocking effect on me. It made me feel creepy all over my body.

"What kind of music do you like?... All right... Is it good? Isn't it too loud?", Anastasia was speaking exactly the way the lady doctor had spoken to me, -the same voice, the same intonations... It was amazing!

"Anastasia!", I exclaimed.

She cut me short saying, "For God's sake, listen to me and don't be surprised. Will you, please, try! Try to realize, after all, what I am saying to you. Will you try to mobilize your mind just a bit at least".

Then she continued: "That lady doctor was very nice. She is a real doctor. It was very easy for me to work with her. She is kind and candid. It was I who did not want you to be moved to another department, though her department did not correspond to the type of disease you had. She asked her bosses, "Let him, please, stay here, I'll heal him". Because she simply knew that she could. She also knew that your weak spots were the result of something else, there was more to it. She was trying her best to fight that "something else". She is a real doctor. Look at yourself. How did you behave?! You did not only smoke, you were drinking spirits as much as you wished. You used spices, pickles and all that was while you were suffering a very severe ulcer. You refused nothing, no restrictions "enjoying yourself.

Somewhere in your subconscious mind a fearless idea was trapped that nothing would happen to you. You even did not realize it in your consciousness. I did nothing good but

rather vice versa. The darkness in your consciousness was not reduced. The awareness and will power did not increase. When you were at last safe and sound you sent your greetings on the occasion of a holiday through your lady coworker to the woman who had saved your life... Although, you know, she was waiting your call, she had fallen in love with you just like...”.

“Had she or you, Anastasia?”

“We had, if it is more clear to you”.

I stood up and without realizing it made a couple of steps away from Anastasia who was sitting on a fallen tree. My thoughts and feelings were messed up and it made my uncertainty towards her grow even more.

“Here you are! Again you don't understand how I had managed to do it. You are getting scared and it is so simple to guess just using your imagination and precise analysis of possible situations. Again you were thinking about me...”. She became quiet bending her head over her knees.

I was standing silently thinking to myself: “Why does she keep speaking about all kind of incredible things. While speaking she is getting upset because

they are incomprehensible? Evidently she does not realize that any normal man would never understand them and therefore she also will never be accepted as a normal human being”.

Then I came to her, parted her falling locks away from her large blue-gray eyes and saw the drops of tears rolling down her cheeks. She smiled and uttered a phrase which was not characteristic others.

“A woman is a woman, isn't she? Now you are startled to doubt my existence as a fact and, as they put it in your language, you can't believe your eyes.

You absolutely don't believe me. You can't realize what I am saying to you. The fact of my existence, my abilities and aptitudes seem astonishing to you. You have stopped perceiving me as a normal human being but I am, trust me! I am a human and not a kind of witch.

Why does it not seem to you as astonishing and paradoxical that people have recognized and accepted the Earth as a cosmic body? It is the greatest creation of the Highest Mind, every mechanism of which is the greatest achievement of His.

Now this mechanism is being tormented and the people are creating a tremendous amount of effort to break it down. You take for granted a handmade spaceship or an airplane but all these mechanics have been made of broken and melted parts of the greatest mechanism.

Can you imagine a creature which is breaking an airplane in flight just to make a regular hammer or scraper of its parts. It is getting very proud of itself when it manages to make a primitive tool. Poor thing,

it does not realize that it is impossible to break a flying aircraft without limits. Well, really! Why don't you understand that it is impossible to torment the Earth like that.

A computer is an achievement of the human mind but there are few people who can even suspect that a computer can be compared to a prosthetic appliance of a human brain. Can you imagine what could happen to a man if he uses crutches while his own legs are in good shape? No doubt that the muscles of his legs will become atrophied. A machine will never surpass a human brain if it was trained constantly...”.

She wiped a rolling tear from her cheek with her palm and continued setting forth her incredible conclusions. At that time I could not even assume that everything she had said would agitate many people. She would stir up the minds of scientists and even if it were taken as a hypothesis it would have no analogies in the known world.

According to Anastasia, the Sun is a kind of a mirror. It reflects the radiation coming from the Earth which is invisible to regular vision. Actually this radiation is coming from the people who are experiencing joy or any other light feelings. Being reflected from the Sun it returns back to Earth as sunlight giving life to everything earthly. Anastasia's speech is full of proofs and examples though it is not very easy to understand them.

“If the Earth and other planets would only consume sunlight benevolence”, she said, “then, inevitably, it would have to fade away, burning unevenly and its luminescence could not be uniform. A unilateral process does not exist in the Universe, it could not exist as everything is interconnected”

Then she quoted from the Bible: “... and the life was the light of the men...”. Anastasia also stated that one man's feelings, after being reflected from cosmic bodies are being transmitted to another one.

She tried to prove it by examples:

“Nobody among earthly people can deny the feeling anyone is experiencing when being loved. This sensation can be felt even more when you are near the person who loves you. You call it "intuition". But in reality a loving person is illuminating invisible waves of light. Though when the person is not by your side, if his love is strong enough it also can be sensed. With the help of this feeling and moreover, when you understand its origin, it is possible to perform miracles. It is exactly the thing which you call "miracles, mysticism, extraordinary abilities". Now, tell me, do you feel a little bit better in my company? Well, somehow easier or warmer?”

“Yes, I do”, I answered.

“Now watch, what is going to happen to you when I concentrate on you even more”, she

said.

Anastasia lowered her eyelashes, made a couple of steps backward and stopped. A very pleasant warmth started flowing all over my body. The sensation was growing. Although it burned, it did not make me hot. Anastasia turned and slowly moved away. Then she disappeared behind a thick trunk of a high tree. Yet the sensation of the pleasant warmth flowing on me did not diminish and even a new one appeared as if something was helping my heart to

stimulate the blood to flow in my veins. With each beating of the heart the sensation was as if the blood streams were reaching each tiny vessel of my body within a moment. My feet were sweating a lot and became wet.

“Well, do you see now? Do you understand everything?” asked Anastasia coming out from behind the tree with the triumphant look of a conqueror being absolutely confident as if she had managed to prove something to me.

“You were feeling everything, weren't you, when I was behind the trunk? Your sensations had become even stronger when you did not see me, hadn't they? Go ahead, tell me about them!”

I told her and asked in my turn what the tree trunk could prove...

“You see, before, the light and information waves were moving from me to you directly. When I disappeared the trunk of the tree had to distort my waves greatly as it has the information and illumination of its own. It did not happen. The waves of feelings were coming to you after being reflected from cosmic bodies. To add more to that, they were even reinforced. Then I did something that you may call a "miracle". Your feet became sweaty, didn't they? Why didn't you tell me about it?”

“As a matter of fact, I did not pay attention to it. What kind of miracle could it be when your feet are sweating? What is special about it?”

“I have pushed toxins out of your organism through your feet, a lot of junk and sicknesses. You should feel a lot better now. Anyone can tell that your round — shoulderedness reduced significantly”.

To tell the truth, I felt much better around the shoulders. So I asked her, “Does it mean that when you concentrate, thinking of something then your wish comes true?”

“Well, something like that”.

“Does it always work even when you are dreaming about something else besides healing?”

“Always! If my dream is not an abstract one. It should always be specified, worked out in detail up to the smallest events, very precisely and without any contradiction to the

spiritual laws of existence... You know, this kind of dream is not always possible to create. It is required that a thought should rush very fast and at the same time the vibration of feelings should satisfy the specific requirements. Then it will be incarnated for sure. It is natural and it happens very often in regular life with many people. Ask your friends. Maybe among them there are those who had dreams and their dreams became true completely or partially “.

“"Working out the details... The thoughts should fly..." Will you tell me, please, when you were dreaming about poets, artists and the book, did you work out everything in detail? Did your thoughts fly?"

“Yes, extremely fast. Everything was specified, worked out in details even trifles, very scrupulously”

“Now, do you believe that it will come true?”

“It will come true, I am absolutely positive about it”.

“Did you dream about anything else at that time? Have you told me everything about your dreaming?”

“No, I did not tell you everything about my dream”.

“Why don't you tell me everything?”

“You... Do you want to listen to me, Vladimir? Am I right?”

“Yes, I do. Go ahead”.

Anastasia's face was lit up, as if it was illuminated with a ray of light. She produced her incredible monologue with great emotion and inspiration.

Chapter 31

ACROSS THE SPACE OF TIME **OF THE DARK FORCES**

The space occupied by the negative thoughts created by people during the whole history of their existence. Later on Anastasia will explain: "Any thought which is created by Man doesn't disappear into nowhere" (Comment by the translator).

"During that night of dreaming I was thinking how to transfer people across the space of time of the dark forces", started Anastasia. "My plan and awareness were so real and efficient that they had accepted it.

The book you are going to write will contain non obtrusive word combinations and formulas so that they will stir up the great majority of people. They will waken up their light and kind feelings. These types of feelings are able to suppress physical and emotional sicknesses. They will stimulate the birth of a new consciousness which will be the distinctive features of the people of the future. Believe me, Vladimir, it is not a mysticism, it agrees with Universal laws.

Everything is so simple. You will be writing this book being guided exclusively by your feelings and listening to your soul. This is the only possible way for you as you have never mastered the art of writing.

Everything is possible with feelings. These feelings are already inside you. They are yours and mine too.

Although, they are not yet realized by you now, they will be understood by a lot of people. Being embodied into signs and combinations they are going to become stronger than Zoroastrian's Fire. You should hide nothing of what is going to happen to you even those secret. Get yourself emancipated from any shame and fear. Don't be afraid to look funny. You should suppress your arrogance.

I have opened myself to you completely: my body and soul. I belong to you. Now let me open myself to all people through you because they have allowed me to do it. I know that a huge amount of dark forces are going to attack me. They will resist my dreams coming true but I am not afraid of them; I am stronger than they are and I will live to see everything I have conceived in my mind happening: to give birth to my son and bring

him up, our son, Vladimir.

My dream will break many mechanisms of the dark forces which were influencing people in pernicious ways for many millennia. It will make many of them start working for the good of mankind.

I know you can't believe me right now as all kinds of conventions and postulates are blocking you. They were implanted in your mind by the conditions of the life style of the world you belong to. You consider the time transference as an impossible reality. Your notions and ideas about time and space are conditional. Only the degree of willpower and awareness can characterize its quantity, not "seconds" and "meters".

The purity of intentions, feelings and sensations, which should be characteristic features of the great majority of people, determines the location point in Time and in the Universe.

You believe in horoscopes, in, your absolute dependence on the planetary positions. This belief has been achieved with the help of the dark forces' mechanisms. This very faith is an obstacle which is hampering the time of the parallel of light giving the opportunity for the dark one to come forward and to change their quantity. This faith leads you away from realizing the Truth, the essence of your earthly existence. You are trying to analyze everything very carefully. Just think, Man was created by God in His image and likeness. Man has been given a great freedom, the freedom to chose between darkness and light. A soul has been given to man. Everything visible is under Man's power and he is free even with respect to God Himself: to love or not to love Him. Nobody and nothing can control man but his own will. God wants nothing from man but love in response to His great love. Although God wants the love of a free man. He wants the love of a perfect man, just like He Himself is. He needs a companion, not a slave.

God has created everything visible including the planets. They serve to provide order and harmony in everything living: plants, the animal world. They exist only to help the human flesh but they are absolutely powerless with respect to man's soul and mind. It is not they who are directing man but man through his subconscious is ruling all the planets.

If only one man decides that he wants a second sun to appear in the sky, it would never happen. It has been organized this way to prevent planetary catastrophes. If people all together express a desire for a second sun, — it will appear!...

While compiling a horoscope one should take into consideration the main values: the level of the person's time awareness, willpower and the power of her spirit, the soul's striving and the degree of its participation in the moment of today's presence.

They can easily conquer beneficial and non beneficial days, magnetic storms, high and low pressure; willpower and awareness.

Really, didn't you see a happy and joyous man even when the weather is nasty or vice versa, a sad and depressed one on a sunny and most benevolent day?

Do you think that I am letting my imagination carry me away as a crazy person when I am talking about the word combinations and formulas of letters which are going to heal and enlighten people? You don't trust me because you don't understand... Really, it is so simple.

Right now I am speaking your language using your patterns of speech and sometimes I am even trying to use your intonation. It will be easy for you to memorize everything I have said because it is your native language which is characteristic of you only and it is understood by many people. It does not contain incomprehensible words, rarely used turns of speech in regular everyday communication. It is very simple and that's why it is understandable to the great majority of people. Although I am changing a bit, well,

in a certain way I am replacing some words just slightly. Now I see that you are in a state of excitement. That's why in the future on recalling this state you will recall everything I have told you. You will write it down. This way my combinations of letters will get into your writings, everything you are going to write.

These combinations are very important. They can perform miracles exactly the way a prayer does.

Many of you already know that prayers are definite combinations and matches of letters. These combinations and matches have been built up by enlightened people with God's help.

The dark forces were always striving to take away from man the possibility of using the benevolence which comes from these combinations. Because of this they even changed languages introducing new words to replace the old ones, twisting their essential meanings. For instance, long, long ago your language had 47 letters and now there are only 36 left. They introduced absolutely different combinations and formulas of their own, agitating brutish and dark instincts. They always tried to carry people away by carnal desires and passions.

I have transferred the primordial combinations from the Sources, activated them, using modern letters and symbols. Now they will act. I tried so hard to find the right ones and I have managed to do it. I have collected the best ones from different times and there are a lot of them. I have installed and concealed them in what you are going to write.

As you see, it is simply an interpretation of the combinations of symbols of the depth of Cosmic infinity and eternity/which are precise in sense and goals.

You should write about everything you have seen, hiding nothing, — neither bad nor good nor secret and they will be preserved.

You will be convinced of this by yourself so, please, trust me. You are going to be convinced as soon as you finish the book. The feelings and emotions will be provoked in many of those who will read your writings, though at the beginning their emotions will not be completely realized and comprehended by them. You'll see, they will confirm it to

you. You'll hear that they will do it. The light feelings will come to them. Later on, many people will realize on their own with the help of these feelings much more than you will be able to write. Do write, at least a little! Then you will see that people are able to feel these combinations. When ten thousand, one hundred thousand people confirm it then you will believe and write everything. Only, you should believe. Believe in yourself. Believe in me.

Later on I shall be able to speak even more meaningful things and they will understand and feel it. That more meaningful one is the Upbringing of Children. It was interesting for you to know about flying saucers and mechanisms, rockets and planets. I was very anxious to tell you as much as possible about the education of children and I shall do it. I'll tell it when I install a great awareness inside you.

Only one should bear it in mind that it is advisable to read all these when the sounds of handmade, artificial mechanisms are not interfering, not with drawing your attention. These sounds are harmful. They are leading man away from the Truth. Let the natural sounds, created by God stay with you while you are reading my messages. They are carrying within themselves the information of Truth and Benevolence. They are helping the Awareness to grow too. Then the healing process would be much stronger.

I am sure, you are full of doubts and don't believe in the healing power of the Word. You are thinking about me... Although in this, again, there is not any kind of mysticism, fantasy or contradictions to the laws of spiritual existence. When light feelings appear in man they start to influence beneficially upon all fleshy organs, absolutely all of them. It is beyond all question. Verily, the light feelings are the most powerful and effective remedies which can resist any sickness. God healed using these kinds of feelings. The saints also did the same.

Read the Old Testament and you will see for yourself. With the help of these feelings some people of your world can heal too. Many of your doctors know about it. Ask them if you don't trust me. It is easier for you to believe them. The more powerful and brighter this feeling is the stronger influence it can produce upon the one to whom it is directed.

I could always heal with my small beam. My great-grandpa taught me when I was at a tender age. He explained everything to me. I did it many times with my dachniks.

Now my beam is more powerful than great-granddad's and granddad's. They have explained the reason why. It is the feeling which had appeared in me, the one that you call Love. This feeling is so great and pleasant though it burns a little. I would like to give it as a gift to all people and also to you. I wish everybody the best. Let everything be all right exactly the way God wanted everything to be.

She delivered her monologue with extraordinary inspiration and confidence, as if she had launched it into space and time. Then she became quiet. I was looking at Anastasia, having been startled by her passion and confidence. Then I asked her, "Anastasia, is that all? Are there any other peculiarities in your plans? Well, I mean in your dreams?"

“The rest are just meaningless trifles. I have produced them in passing as “twice two is four”. Though there was only one complication concerning you I have solved it also”.

“Right here and right now you should speak in details. Please, specify what kind of complications exist concerning me?”

“You know, I have turned you into the richest man on Earth. Moreover I have made you the most famous too, a number one celebrity. It will happen in a while. When I was processing my dream, I was working it out, polishing the details... You know, before it took off by the light forces... The dark forces... They are always striving to introduce something of their own, something harmful, all kinds of their own side effects, influencing perniciously the person whom it concerns and other people.

My thoughts were dashing very, very fast, but all the same the dark forces still managed to follow me.

They had to leave many of their earthly things and were trying their best to activate their mechanisms around my dream. Then... Guess what I did? I just outwitted them and made all their mechanisms work for the good. The dark forces were at a loss for less than a moment, but it was just sufficient time for my dream to get picked up by the light forces. My dream speeded away into the light infinity which is unreachable for them”.

“What have you thought of, Anastasia?”

“Quite unexpectedly for them I prolonged the space of dark forces time during which you will have to overcome different hardships. To add to this I deprived myself of the possibility of helping you with my small beam. I tell you, they were confused a lot as they could see no logic on my part. Meanwhile I was directing my beam sending my light to the people who will associate with you in the future. I was doing it as fast as I could”.

“What does it all mean?”

“It means that people will help you and my dream. They will do it with the help of their tiny almost uncontrolled beams. There will be many of them and taken together, they and you will manifest the dream into material reality. You will transfer yourselves across the space of time of the dark forces. You will carry other people across it. And you are not going to be arrogant and greedy when you become rich and famous. You are going to realize that the main thing is not money, as you will never get the warmth and sincere sympathy of the human soul with money.

You will understand all these things while passing through that space of time. This is when you will see and meet those people. They also will understand it. As far as the making of curtseys... Your interrelations with banks I have thought up just because you absolutely neglect your body. This way you will at least exercise a little before you get money in the bank. Some of the bankers will do it too, which is beneficial for both sides. Let it look a bit funny, but in exchange you will get rid of sinful arrogance.

The result is that all difficulties and obstacles which had been created by the dark forces during their space of time are going to temper you and the people around you too. It will be making you more and more aware. Later on they will save you from the dark temptations for which the dark forces are very proud. Their own actions will save you. That was why they had been messed up for a bit of a moment. From now on they will never manage to catch up with my dream”.

“Oh, Anastasia! You are my dear dreamer, my visionary”.

“Oh! How wonderful you've done it. Thanks! Thank you. You have said it so nice, "My dear"“.

“You are welcome. I've also called you a "visionary" and a "dreamer". Do you felt offended?”

“Not at all. You don't know yet how precisely my dreams are always coming true when they happen to be bright and detailed. This one is going to come true for sure. I am very positive about it. It is my favorite and the brightest one. Your book will come out perfect. Non ordinary feelings will come to people and these feelings will call them towards...”.

“Wait a minute, Anastasia, you are getting enthusiastic again. Calm down, please”.

It was not long after I interrupted her passionate speech which seemed to be only a fantasy. The meaning of Anastasyia's monologue was not completely understandable to me at that time. Everything she said seemed to be too fantastic. Only in a year Michael Firnim, a reporter from the magazine Miracles & Adventures having read my manuscript containing this monologue, was very excited when he handed me the fresh issue of the magazine (May, 1996).

I also became excited after looking through it. Two Russian scientists, academicians: Anatoly Akimov and Vlayil Kaznacheyev spoke in their articles about the existence of the Highest Mind. They spoke about close interconnection between man and the Cosmos, about invisible rays coming from man. These rays had been traced and tracked by special kinds of instruments. Two photos depicting these rays which come from people were also in that issue.

However, official science has only started to speak about something that Anastasia had not only known about since her childhood, but had been effortlessly using in her everyday life, trying to help people.

How could I know a year ago that Anastasia, the one who was standing in front of me at that time, in her old and only skirt, wearing those clumsy galoshes, being nervous and fingering the buttons of her hand knitted jacket, could possess colossal knowledge and ability to influence peoples' destinies. Her soul impulses really could resist everything which is dark

and pernicious for humankind and later on the famous Russian folk healer, the chairman

of the Healers of Russia Foundation, V. A. Mironov would call his staff together and tell them: "We are all bugs in front of each other". Then he would add that the world had yet never known any one as powerful as she was. He would be sorry for me because I had not been able to understand her and realize what she really was for such a long time. What a shame!

Many people will feel the energy which is coming from the book. The poems will pour like a spring rain, washing away the mud, right after the first small edition of the book. She is the author of it as well as me. Now, dear reader. You are holding in your hands this book. You are reading it. Whether it wakes up any feelings in your soul, it is up to you to decide. What do you feel? What is it calling to you?

Anastasia alone, over there, in the taiga, on her clearing will persistently, using her tiny beam of kindness scatter all obstacles away from the highway all other dreams. She will be putting together and inspiring more and more people to her dream.

So it will happen that three Moscovite students will stand by my side at the moment of hardship. Without being rewarded for their work and moreover even helping me materially. Trying to get any kind of extra job, wherever they could, especially Alyosha Novichkov. They will type the text of this book on their computers by night. They will not stop doing it even during the most difficult time for them, the period of tests and examinations.

The book will be published by the Moscow Printing House #11, edition of two thousand copies. They will do it passing the publishing house test. Even before that a lady journalist Evgueniya Kvitko from the farmers' newspaper Krestyanskiye Vedomosti (Peasants " Gazette) will be the first to tell about Anastasia in the press. Then Katya Golovina from Moskovskaya Pravda (Moscow Truth), then Lesnaya Gazeta (Forest Newspaper), MirNovosti (World News) and the radio of Russia. Miracles and Adventures, where famous leading lights of academic science are usually published, by ignoring their tradition would dedicate to Anastasia several issues reading the following:

"In their most audacious dreams our academicians are not reaching Anastasia's enlightenment. She is a wonderful enchantress from the Siberian taiga. The purity of his intentions makes Man an omnipotent and an omniscient being. Man is the summit of Creation.

Only the prominent Moscow press will publish Anastasia. As if Anastasia herself were selecting them passing over the gutter press, carefully guarding over the purity other dream's intentions. Although all these have become evident only a year after I met her, at first I did not understand her. Having a lot of doubts and with my peculiar attitude towards everything which was happening, I tried to change the topic of our talks to the one which was more familiar to me, — entrepreneurs.

Chapter 32

POWERFUL PEOPLE

The highest estimation of your personality is the one given to you by the surrounding people.

She spoke a lot about the people whom we call "entrepreneurs". She spoke about their influence upon the spirituality of our society. Then picked up a twig and drew a circle on the ground. Inside the circle she drew a lot of smaller ones putting dots inside them. Then she depicted other circles around the first one. It was a kind of a planetary map inside the terrestrial world. She added a lot of different things to it and said:

“The big circle is the Earth, the planet of the people. Small circles are small people collectives which are somehow interconnected. The dots represent the people who are at the head of these collectives. The way these leaders treat the people, what they make them do, what kind of psychological climate they create using their influence, — all these things, will determine whether it is good or bad for the surrounding people. If the great majority of people feel good then everyone produces light illumination and when they are all taken together as a whole, produce a nice light illumination. If it is bad, — it gets dark”.

She shaded some circles, making them look dark, then proceeded:

“Sure, there are many other factors which also influence people's inner state but during that very space of time when they belong to that community the main factor is their relationship with the one who is at the head of them. It is very important for the Universe that only light radiation could come from the Earth as a whole; the radiation of love and goodness. The Bible reads: "God is Love"

I am sorry, very sorry for the people whom you call "entrepreneurs" as they are the most miserable ones. I wish I could help them a lot, but it is hard for me to do it on my own”.

“You are wrong, Anastasia. In our society the pensioners are considered to be the most miserable ones. The people who are unable to find a job, provide themselves with proper dwelling, food and clothes, to pay their living are the most miserable. An entrepreneur is a man who has all these things to a greater degree than the rest of the people. He can afford some pleasures which many people can't even dream about”.

“Like what? Give me an example, please, will you?”

“Well, if you take just an average entrepreneur, he has a modern car, a nice apartment or a house and as far as food and clothes are concerned, there is no problem at all...”.

“And what about joy? What does he find satisfaction in? Look! I'll show it to you”.

Anastasia carried me along again to the grass and, the way she did before when she was showing me a woman dachnitsa, she started to show me different pictures.

“Here, do you see it? Here, he is sitting in the car which you call a luxurious one. Do you see him? He is alone on the back seat. A micro climate is being contained inside the car. A driver is behind the wheel. He is driving very smoothly. Look at the boss. Do you see how strained and thoughtful his face is? He is thinking hard, creating some kind of projects. He is afraid of something. Just watch. Now he has gripped a thing which you call a "telephone". He is troubled... Well, he has got some information... Now he has to evaluate it very quickly and make a decision. He is all strained... He is thinking. He is ready. The decision has been made. Now watch, watch: he looks quiet but on his face one can read doubt and anxiety. There is no joy at all”.

“Well, this is work, Anastasia”.

“This is a way of life and there is no break in it from the moment of his awakening in the morning till he falls asleep. Even during his sleep he is not free. He can see neither the newly arrived leaves in the trees nor the joyous spring brooks... He is surrounded only by ever envious people who are eager to take possession of everything he has. Trying to protect himself from them with, as you call it "security". To turn a house into a castle does not really bring complete peace as the fear and worries never leave him and so on and so forth till he comes at last to the very end of his life. The feeling of regret embraces him because he has to leave everything...”.

“An entrepreneur has his joys. They come to him when he achieves a desirable result, accomplishes his project. It is the joy of fulfilment.

“It is not true. He has no time to enjoy anything he achieves because a new and even more complicated project is coming to replace the previous one and everything begins all over again though with greater difficulties”

The forest beauty was depicting for me a very gloomy and sad picture of a rather successful, if to look at it externally, layer of our society and I did not feel like accepting it as a true one. I made a remark as a disproving argument:

“Anastasia, you forget to mention their ability to achieve the desired goal and get the good things of life. For instance, he gets the admiring looks of women, who adore this kind of man and respect on the part of the surrounding people”. Her response was:

“Illusion! Maya! None of these exist. Tell me, where did you see a respectful or an admiring look of a person who is gazing at the passenger of a splendid car or an owner of a most expensive house? There is no man who would agree with you. Those are the gazes

which are full of envy, carelessness and irritation. Even women are not able to love these people because their feeling gets mixed up with the desire to take possession of not only that very man himself but everything he has. In their turn these men are not able to love a woman properly as they can't afford to leave enough space for such a great feeling”.

There was no sense in arguing, trying to find more proofs, as everything she had said could be proved or rejected only by those about whom she was speaking. Being an entrepreneur myself, I had never had an opportunity to stop and think over the subject Anastasia had touched. I had never analyzed the duration of my joy and moreover I could not do it concerning somebody else. Somehow we are not used to complaining and snivelling in our midst. Each of us is trying to portray himself as a successful businessman who is quite content with his life. Evidently therefore the image of a man who is getting only good things from life has been adopted by the great majority of people.

Anastasia could sense not only the outer manifestation of feelings but even more delicate ones which are hidden deep down inside us. She was determining a person's state by the quantity of light radiating from him. To my mind the pictures and situations which she had seen, I was able to see through her voice. I told Anastasia about it. She responded:

“I'll help you, just a minute. It's so simple. You just close your eyes. Lie down on the grass. Put your arms aside and you must relax. Mentally visualize the Earth as a whole, try to see its color and blueish luminescence which is coming from the planet. Then start to make the beam of your imagination narrow. Only now don't embrace the Earth as a whole any more but make it more and more narrow till you see specific details. Look for the people over there where the blueish light is more intensive. The people are there. You try to make your beam even more narrow and then you will see one or a couple of persons. Let's try again with my help”.

She took my hand placing her fingers against mine and touching my palm with hers. Her other hand was lying in the grass with the palm facing upwards. I did everything she told me to do. Using my imagination I was trying to visualize. Soon I saw a vague picture of three men sitting at a table talking excitedly. I couldn't understand the words, actually I did not hear the words.

“No”, said Anastasia, “these are not entrepreneurs. Just a minute, we shall find them”.

She was moving her beam getting into large and small office rooms, closed private clubs, parties and bordellos. Sometimes the blueish luminescence was very weak or couldn't be seen at all.

“Look! It is night time over there and he is still sitting all by himself in his office room full of tobacco smoke. That one, look, he is so pleased with himself, in the pool enjoying the company of young girls. He is intoxicated with alcohol but there is no illumination around him. He is just trying to forget his troubles though his self-satisfaction is artificial...”

This one is at home right now. Here is his wife, his child is asking him about something, telephone... Here he is! He is serious again even his loved ones are being moved away to the background..."

Again one by one, all kinds of situations in a row were picked up. Some of them looked good at first glance but not really nice till at last we came across that horrifying scene. All of a sudden a room appeared before my vision. Evidently it was an apartment which was a rather respectable one, but... The next moment I saw a naked man was lying on a round table, his arms and legs were fastened to the table legs. His head was hanging off the table. His mouth was covered up with a brown plastic strip. Two young men were sitting at the table. One of them was solidly built with a short haircut, another one, less well built had smoothed down hair.

A young woman was sitting in an armchair away from the table under a standard lampshade. Her mouth was glued up too. Under her breast there was a flex linen rope fastening her to the armchair. Her feet were fastened to the armchair's legs. She was wearing only torn underwear. An elderly, slim man was sitting near her drinking something, evidently it was cognac. On a small table in front of him there was a box of chocolates.

Those who were sitting at the big round table, were not drinking. They were pouring on their victim's chest some kind of alcohol or vodka and then they were setting it on fire. "It is a kind of "gaining an understanding", I told to myself.

Anastasia moved her beam away from that scene, but I exclaimed, "Come back! Do something!" She brought the scene back again and answered, "There is no way to do anything. Everything has already happened. It is impossible to stop it. It was necessary to do something before. Now it is late".

I was looking at it as if being hypnotized and suddenly I saw the woman's eyes very close and so clearly. They were filled with horror and did not appeal for mercy.

"Then, at least, do something if you are not heartless!" I screamed at the top of my voice at Anastasia.

"Sorry, it is beyond my power. It has been programmed by somebody before, not by me. I can't interfere directly just like that. They are more powerful right now".

"Where has your kindness gone? Where are your great aptitudes?"

Anastasia was silent for a while. The terrible scene faded a little. Then the elderly man who was drinking cognac disappeared. All of a sudden I felt weakness spreading all over my body and my hand, which Anastasia was touching, started to grow numb. I heard her weakened voice. She could hardly utter the words trying to speak, "Take away your hand, Vladim..." she could not even finish my name. I pulled my hand away from Anastasia and got up. My hand was hanging as if it was numb. The way it happens when one "makes it numb by sitting" ones arm or leg turned absolutely white, all over. I tried to

move my fingers, the numbness started to leave me.

I looked at Anastasia and was horrified by her appearance: her eyes were closed, her face was pale. It looked as if there was no blood left under her skin as her hands and face turned dead pale. She was lying as if she were breathless. The grass around her for approximately three meters in radius turned white and faded.

I realized that something terrible had happened and screamed being scared to death:

“Anastasia!”, I gripped her by the shoulders and shook her already non resilient, but somehow softened body. Her absolutely white, bloodless lips were motionless.

“Do you hear me, Anastasia?”

Her eye lashes moved a little bit and her dimmed eyes were looking at me expressing nothing. I gripped my flask, lifted her head and tried to give her some water but she could not swallow it. I was looking at her thinking feverishly what to do. At last her lips moved slightly and she whispered, “Take me to another place... under a tree...”.

I picked up her limp body, carried it away from the circle with white grass and put her under the nearest cedar tree. After a while, very slowly she started to come to her senses and I asked her, “What happened to you, Anastasia?”

“I tried to fulfill your request”, she answered in a low voice and added after a pause, “I guess, I've manage to do it”.

“But you don't look well”.

“Because I have violated the natural laws. I've interfered into something that I must not get into. It has drained all my power and energy. I hope that something is still left”.

“Why did you run the risk if it was so dangerous?”

“I did not have a choice. You wanted me to do something, didn't you? I was afraid not to carry out your request. As I was afraid that you would not respect me any more if I wouldn't do something and you would decide that I was just a chatter box who is talking too much about everything but in reality could do nothings Her eyes were looking at me with a pleading look, her low voice was trembling a bit. “I just can't explain to you how things get done, how this natural mechanism works. I can feel it but I can't explain it properly, the way you would be able to understand, evidently, your scientists will fail to do so also”.

She lowered her head being quiet for a while as if she was summoning up her strength. She looked at me again with her pleading eyes and pronounced, “Now, even more than before you are going to think of me as a crazy one or a witch, aren't you?”

All of a sudden, I was overwhelmed with a desire to do something good for her, but

what? I wanted to say that I was thinking about her as a normal, ordinary human being, a beauty, a smart woman but I did not feel exactly that way. I did not feel a regular attitude towards her. I knew that she would sense my lie and would not trust my words because of that incredible and powerful intuition others.

Then I recollected the story she had told me about her childhood, the way her great granddad used to greet her when visiting her. He was kneeling before her on one knee kissing her hand. So I knelt to Anastasia on one knee, took her still pale and cold hand, kissed it and said, "If you are not normal then you are the best, the kindest, the cleverest and the most beautiful of all non normal ones".

Thank God! At last Anastasia's lips were touched by a smile. Her eyes were looking at me with appreciation. Her cheeks were turning pink again.

"Anastasia, you know, the picture looked rather gloomy. Were you choosing them on purpose or at random?"

"I was looking for something good but I failed to find it. They are all in the clutch of their troubles. They are face to face with their problems. They almost don't have a spiritual relationships

"So what is it necessary to do? What can you suggest besides feeling pity for them? I would like to note-that they are strong people, I mean the entrepreneurs"

"No doubt, they are very strong", she agreed, "and they are very interesting. They are living two life times within one period. One is known only to them and nobody else, even their intimate ones. Another is an outside one for the surrounding people, a social mask. I guess it is possible to help them by strengthening their spiritual and sincere relationships with each other. An open minded striving towards the purity of thoughts is required".

"Anastasia, I believe I'll try my best to write a book and to organize an association of entrepreneurs with pure intentions but only the way I understand it".

"It will be difficult for you. I'll not be able to help as much as I would like to as I've got only a small amount of strength left inside me. It will take time to rehabilitate my power. For a while I'll not be able to see with my small beam at a distance. Right now I can't even see you properly with my regular vision".

"Are you getting blind, Anastasia?"

"I think everything is going to return to normal. I am just sorry that for a while I'll not be able to help you".

"You don't need to help me. You had better try to save yourself for our son and to help others".

I had to leave to catch my steamboat. I waited till she would look better at least in her

outward appearance. When she looked almost the way she did

before, I got into my motorboat. Anastasia took hold of the handles at the front of the motorboat, pushed it off from the shore and it was picked up by the river flow. Anastasia was standing in the water which was almost reaching her knees. The hem of her long skirt was wet and swaying on the waves. I pulled the ignition rod. The motor produced a roaring sound tearing apart the silence which had become quite common for me during those three days of staying there and the motorboat rushed forward abruptly accelerating speed.

Suddenly Anastasia came out of the water and ran along the bank trying to catch the motorboat. Her hair flying in the wind looked like the tail of a comet. She was trying to run as fast as she could. Evidently she was using all her strength trying to do something impossible, to catch a speeding motorboat. Still the distance between us was increasing slowly. I was sorry for her useless efforts and wishing to cut short the painful farewell moments so I pressed down the accelerator lever with all my might. A thought crossed my mind: "Maybe Anastasia may think that I was scared again and now I am trying to escape from her".

Roaring at an extreme volume the motor made the front of the motorboat move upward with a jerk moving forward making the distance between us increase even more... and she... Oh, my God! What was she doing?! —Anastasia dashed off her wet skirt which was preventing her from running, cast aside her torn clothes. The swiftness of her running increased and something unbelievable happened. The distance between her and the motorboat started slowly to reduce. I could see that a little bit ahead of her there was an almost vertical slope.

I was still pressing the accelerator lever though it did not give way any more. I thought that it would help to stop her and bring that painful scene to an end. "She could not lose her vision to a such an extent that she was not able to see that slope", I was thinking to myself. Anastasia did not slow down at all, having run up on to the top of the slope she fell down on her knees. She raised her arms up towards the sky with a slight bend in my direction and shouted. I could hear her voice through the wild roaring of the motor and the noise of the splashing water, it was like a whispering:

"Sh-a-a-l-l-o-o-w wa-ter is a-h-e-a-d, sh-a-a-l-l-ow w-a-t-er, sun-ken l-o-o-gs".

On turning my head very fast, without even realizing completely what was happening. I turned the wheel so abruptly that the motorboat rushed aside and was about to scoop up water over the tilted side. A huge sunken log one end of which was resting onto a sand bank and another one, which was hardly seen sticking out of the water, slightly struck my motor-boat's side. If it had been a direct blow it could easily have broken its thin aluminum bottom. When I had reached the river fairway I turned back towards the slope and whispered addressing my thanks to the lonely figure standing on her knees who was becoming a diminishing spot.

"Thank you, Anastasia!"

Chapter 33

WHO ARE YOU, ANASTASIA?

The steamboat was waiting for me in Surgut. The captain and crew were waiting for my instructions. I could not concentrate and make any definite decisions concerning our future route so I told them to stay in Surgut. Meanwhile I organized recreations, dancing-parties, exhibitions of consumer goods and services for the local population.

My mind was processing the events connected with Anastasia. I was busy buying at the local book I. stores a lot of popular science literature, books about extraordinary phenomena and people's extraordinary abilities. Also I bought a history of that region. Locked in my cabin, I tried to find explanations and answers.

Among other things I was particularly interested in: was it really possible that a feeling of love could be born in Anastasia only because she was trying to help that country girl by shouting those words: "I love you, Vladimir". Why had the simple words, which we pronounce very often without putting into them sufficient feelings and meaning, influenced Anastasia, in spite of our disparity in age, and the differences of our ways of thinking?

Popular science literature did not give any answers to this subject. Then I took the Bible. And right there I found the answer, at the very beginning of the holy blessing by John it reads:

"Before the world was created, the world already existed; he was with God, and he was the same as God. From the very beginning the world was with God. Through him God made all things; not one thing in all creation was made without him. The world was the source of life, and this life brought light to mankind..." (John 1,1-5, The Word of Life).

Again I was startled, exactly the way it had happened many times before. How laconic and exact are the definitions of this amazing book!

Everything became clear to me right away. Anastasia, for whom any kind of slyness and cheating are not known, can't utter a word for no particular reason. Her words came to my mind: "At that moment it was as if I had forgotten that I can't pronounce words for no particular reason at all, behind them should always stand feelings, awareness or trustworthiness of natural information"

Oh, dear Lord!!! What bad luck she has! Why had she addressed those words to me, being not a young man any more, the one who has a family, liable to our world's multiple temptations, as she used to call them, "dark and pernicious"? With all her inner purity she deserves absolutely a different person. Who would fall in love with her, who is living her unusual life or having her uncanny intellect, or cast of mind?

At first sight she might appear to be an ordinary one. However, she is an extraordinary beautiful and appealing young girl, although, still later on when one starts to communicate with her she turns into a kind of being who is living beyond the reach of a reasonable mind.

Maybe these kinds of feelings were aroused inside me, one who does not have sufficient knowledge and understanding of the essence of our being. Evidently, other people would perceive her differently.

I recalled that even while we were parting I did not experience any desire to kiss or hug her. I don't know whether she wanted it also. Generally speaking what did she really want? I recalled the way she was speaking about her dreams. What a strange philosophy of love she has: to organize an association of entrepreneurs in order to help them; to write a book with her advice for people; to carry people across the space of time of dark forces.

The bottom line is that she believes it! She is one hundred percent positive that everything is going to happen this way. Isn't that something?! I had given her my word to try to organize an association of entrepreneurs and to write a book. Evidently by now she is dreaming about it even more. Why has she not thought up something which is simpler and closer to reality?

Some kind of a pity towards Anastasia arose inside me. I imagined her staying in her forest waiting and dreaming that everything would happen exactly that way in reality. It would be nice if she could simply be waiting for it, simply dreaming about it. What if she, God forbid, starts to make an attempt and direct her small beam of kindness, wasting a colossal amount of her soul's energy believing in something which is really impossible. Although she demonstrated to me the possibility of her beam, tried to explain its mechanism, my consciousness could not grasp it as reality.

Dear readers, judge for yourselves. According to her she directs her small beam to a person, lights him with invisible light, giving as a gift her own feelings, striving for good and light.

Right now I can recall her saying, "No, no, please, don't think that I am interfering with their psyche, trying to constrain their souls and minds. Man is free to take or reject anything. One can take as much as he is able to contain these feelings within oneself if, of course he likes them. They are to his liking. Then he becomes lighter in outward appearance and all kinds of diseases will start to retreat from him partially or completely. My granddad and great granddad can do it and I could always do it. My great granddad taught me while playing with me in my childhood. Now my small beam has become much stronger than great granddad's and granddad's ones are, as they say. It is because of

this non ordinary feeling which has been born in me, the one which you call Love. It is very bright and even burns a little. I have so much of it inside me and I wish to share it with everybody, to give it as a present”.

“To whom, Anastasia?”, I asked her.

“To you and the people, to everybody who can accept it. I wish good to everybody. I would like everybody to feel good. When you start to do the things I was dreaming about, I shall bring to you many of those people and all of you taken together...:”.

Recalling all those things and visualizing her, I have realized all of a sudden that I just can't, at least not try to accomplish the things she wanted me to do. Otherwise doubts would torture me till the end of my life. The feeling of betrayal regarding Anastasia's dream is going to stay with me, though the dream seems to look very unreal but still it is desired by her so passionately.

I came to that decision and the steamboat went straight ahead towards Novosibirsk. I asked the executive director of my firm to take care of the steamboat's unloading and dismantling of the exhibiting equipment. Having explained something haphazardly to my wife, I left for Moscow...

I set out to Moscow to make - or at least try to make - Anastasia's dream come true.

-to be continued



The Ringing Cedars of Russia

Vladimir Megre

Vladimir Megré

The Ringing Cedars Series

English translation by John Woodsworth

- Book 1 **Anastasia**
(ISBN: 978-0-9763333-0-2)
- Book 2 **The Ringing Cedars of Russia**
(ISBN: 978-0-9763333-1-9)
- Book 3 **The Space of Love**
(ISBN: 978-0-9763333-2-6)
- Book 4 **Co-creation**
(ISBN: 978-0-9763333-3-3)
- Book 5 **Who Are We?**
(ISBN: 978-0-9763333-4-0)
- Book 6 **The Book of Kin**
(ISBN: 978-0-9763333-6-4)
- Book 7 **The Energy of Life**
(ISBN: 978-0-9763333-7-1)
- Book 8, Part 1 **The New Civilisation**
(ISBN: 978-0-9763333-8-8)
- Book 8, Part 2 **Rites of Love**
(ISBN: 978-0-9763333-9-5)



Published by Ringing Cedars Press
www.RingingCedars.com

Anastasia herself has stated that this book consists of words and phrases in combinations *which have a beneficial effect on the reader*. This has been attested by the letters received to date from thousands of readers all over the world.

If you wish to gain as full an appreciation as possible of the ideas, thoughts and images set forth here, as well as experience the benefits that come with this appreciation, we recommend you find a quiet place for your reading where there is the least possible interference from artificial noises (motor traffic, radio, TV, household appliances etc.). *Natural sounds*, on the other hand — the singing of birds, for example, or the patter of rain, or the rustle of leaves on nearby trees — may be a welcome accompaniment to the reading process.



Ringling Cedars Press is an independent publisher dedicated to making **Vladimir Megre's** books available in the beautiful English translation by **John Woodsworth**. Word of mouth is our best advertisement and we appreciate your help in spreading the word about the Ringling Cedars Series.

Order on-line	www.RinglingCedars.com	ordering
call / fax toll-free	1-888-DOLMENS	details
or call / fax	1-646-429-1986	see last page

Generous discounts are available on volume orders. To help spread the word as an independent distributor, or to place the books in your bookstore, or to be kept up to date about future book releases and events, please email us at:

info@ringlingcedars.com

or write to the Publisher, Ringling Cedars Press, 120 Hana Hwy #9-230, Paia, HI 96779, USA. We also welcome reviews, poetry and artwork inspired by the Series.

Vladimir Megré

THE
RINGING CEDARS
OF RUSSIA

The Ringing Cedars Series
Book 2

Translated from the Russian by
John Woodsworth

Edited by
Leonid Sharashkin



Ringing Cedars Press
Paia, Hawaii, USA

The Ringing Cedars of Russia by
Vladimir Megré

Translation, Translator's Preface and footnotes by
John Woodsworth

Editing, Editor's Afterword, footnotes, design and layout by
Leonid Sharashkin

Cover art by
Alexander Razboinikov

Copyright © 1997 Vladimir Megré
Copyright © 2005 Leonid Sharashkin, translation
Copyright © 2005 Leonid Sharashkin, cover art
Copyright © 2005 Leonid Sharashkin, design and layout
Copyright © 2005 Leonid Sharashkin, preface, afterword,
footnotes

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, except for the inclusion of brief quotations in a review, without permission in writing from the publisher.

Library of Congress Control Number: 2005901794

ISBN: 978-0-9763333-1-9

Published by
Ringing Cedars Press

www.RingingCedars.com



Contents

Translator's Preface.....	vii
1. Alien or Man?	1
2. A money-making machine.....	19
3. Healing for hell.....	24
4. A confidential conversation.....	27
5. Where are you, my guardian angel?.....	31
6. The cherry tree.....	36
7. Who's to blame?.....	43
8. The answer.....	50
9. Dachnik Day and an All-Earth holiday!.....	64
10. The ringing sword of the bard.....	73
11. A sharp about-turn.....	80
12. Who sets the course?.....	84
13. Money from scratch.....	85
14. A destructive force.....	90
15. 'Herbalife' entrepreneurs.....	98
16. Free holidays in Hawaii.....	102
17. The beginning of perestroika.....	104
18. Fellowship of Russian entrepreneurs.....	108
19. Suicide?.....	112

20. The Ringing Cedars of Russia.....	116
21. Untitled.....	134
22. Unravelling the mystery.....	136
23. Untitled.....	137
24. Father Feodorit.....	139
25. The Space of Love.....	154
26. Anastasia's grandfather.....	161
27. The anomaly.....	171
28. Illusory people.....	183
29. Why nobody can see God.....	186
30. Dawn in Russia.....	193
31. How to produce healing cedar oil.....	199
32. Title!.....	205
33. Your sacred sites, O Russia!.....	212
 In Anastasia's Ray. Editor's Afterword.....	 236
 About the Ringing Cedars Series.....	 244



Translator's Preface

Most readers of this present volume will have already marvelled at the euphoric and mind-boggling revelations contained in Megré's first book, *Anastasia* (published in English translation by Ringing Cedars Press in February 2005).

In addition to offering the reader fascinating glimpses into the story of the publication of the first book, this second volume, *The Ringing Cedars of Russia*, delves deeply into the ethical and metaphysical concepts behind Anastasia's sayings presented so dramatically in the 'series opener'. The chapter-titles associated with these concepts range from the mystical ("The Space of Love") to the mysterious ("Illusory people") to the theological ("Why nobody can see God") to the down-right practical ("How to produce healing cedar oil"). They all ring a chord of response in the reader's heart and soul and at the same time call upon the thinker in each reader. And out of concepts such as these pop up at least as many questions as answers — questions that may well cause the reader either to re-examine or re-affirm his or her basic concepts of life.

My own involvement with *The Ringing Cedars of Russia* did not pass without a personal effect on me (independently of the actual translation process, in which I take special care to be guided by objective professional standards). In no small measure the opportunity to work closely with the book not only *reconfirmed* much of what I already believed, but also helped me *rediscover* my own faith, allowing me a fresh look at a number of concepts I had been brought up on from childhood (like moving around a three-dimensional object

and seeing it from a different angle). It also caused me to *re-examine the reasons* for believing in what I had long believed (including the practical understanding and application of a spiritual approach to healing), and for this I am grateful.

Indeed, it is hard for me now to believe that at this time last year I had never even heard of a Siberian recluse named Anastasia, or a Russian writer named Vladimir Megré, or a Russian-American forester named Leonid Sharashkin, or the mysterious 'Ringing Cedars'. Yet these are names that, since entering my field of awareness in September 2004, have not only become a significant focus of my professional activity as a translator but also figured prominently in my daily thought, conversation and life experiences.

Within four months I had not only read the first three books of Megré's Ringing Cedars Series but also completed the translation of Book 1, *Anastasia*. And now, less than four months after that, the translation of Book 2 is ready to go to press and I have already started work on Book 3.

Translating the 'cherry-tree' chapter brought back a particular memory of my initial read of the three books. This had taken place back in September and October, when our Ottawa weather still allowed a pleasant outdoor afternoon sit on our front porch. With its south-west exposure and view of nothing but the fields and trees across the road, the porch made an ideal spot in which to absorb this brand new literary adventure into the delights of a summer glade in the far-off Siberian taiga. The afternoon sun was bright and warm enough to permit me to dispense not only with heavy outer clothing (which had already sprouted on the backs of many pedestrians on downtown sidewalks here) but also with my eyeglasses, which I am accustomed to make use of during any indoor reading.

During the same period I was especially struck by the following incident. On the porch, right in front of where I was

sitting, stood a clay pot containing several red geraniums my wife had planted earlier in the year. My reading prompted me to look at them — and one flower in particular (the one closest to me) — through new eyes. I began to regard it with warmth and affection (I would even say *love*) every time I saw it.

Of course I had known from news reports about the effect of people's thoughts and attitudes on growing things, but it was not until my reading of Vladimir Megré that I had really seen anything like this in practice. My newfound feelings for the geraniums remained strong throughout the month of October, and as the days gradually grew colder, most of the flowers in our garden (as well as other geraniums on the same porch) faded and expired for the season. But the geraniums in this pot, especially the one closest to me, refused to fade or even droop with the cooling of the air. Even toward the end of October, when I finished my reading of Book 3, it was still standing proud and just as bright red as when my attention was first drawn to it. And even when I saw it months later, all bent to the ground by winter snows, its vivid red hue had scarcely faded.

Two other extraordinary coincidences occurred in our home during this period. In mid-November, just after I had finished translating the "Concert in the taiga" chapter in *Anastasia* and was working on the description of Anastasia's dance routine in the morning mist in the following chapter ("Who lights a new star?"), my wife Susan, who had not read any of the text at this point, presented me with a poem she had recently written. The poem was entitled *Gracefully, the dancer...* and described a dance of a young girl "where all movement conforms to poetry" and whose "life itself had become a never-ending dance" — rather close indeed to Megré's own expression.

Three months later, shortly before the first print-run of *Anastasia* rolled off the presses in February 2005, Susan, an

amateur artist as well as a poet, showed me a coloured-pencil drawing she had just been working on of a nude figure in her twenties with blonde hair, her hands upstretched to the heavens, the parts of her body drawn with colours of Nature instead of the flesh, and with a face very similar to the illustration of Anastasia on the cover of the Russian edition. The remarkable thing is that at that point my wife had not read any of the text about Anastasia, nor even seen a portrait of her, and did not have her consciously in mind as she was doing the drawing.

In his Afterword, editor Leonid Sharashkin will be sharing with you similar ‘coincidences’ from his own experience connected with the publication of the English translation of *Anastasia* in America. These and the hearty welcome of the book in the English-speaking world are indeed reminiscent of the surprising reaction of thousands of readers to the book’s initial appearance in Russia in 1996.

Hearing the impressions shared with me by the first readers of *Anastasia* in English — by people from quite different walks of life — I have come to appreciate just how far-reaching and universal Anastasia’s message is in its scope. For one thing, it does not limit itself to any formulated creed. It is not a new religion with a new set of doctrines for which we must necessarily abandon whatever we believed in previously in order to follow. It speaks to the hearts and minds of people of many different religions as well as, equally, to those who profess no religion at all. It speaks to the hearts and minds of many scholars and students of the physical sciences — especially those who are reaching out to explore the more holistic dimensions of their fields and to find answers that lift them beyond the confines of their specialist training and into an understanding of how their investigations relate to the universal aspects of Man, Nature, the Cosmos and even God.

In addition to a deeper exploration of these universal concepts, Book 2 offers an in-depth, behind-the-scenes look at how Book 1 finally came to be written and published. Like all great mind-stirring works of history, the birth-throes attending its emergence into light came at a considerable price to the author. Just how high the price was — indeed, the whole chain of extraordinary circumstances that led from the wilds of Siberia to the book's appearance on Moscow street-corners and its eventual inclusion in national best-seller lists — is part of the fascinating adventure you will now share with the author as you journey from the mental heights of a taiga glade to the urban depths of Russia's capital city, passing indeed “through the valley of the shadow of death”¹ en route, along with a surprising encounter in a completely different tree-lined setting and a final stop in the foothills of the Caucasus mountains for yet another amazing discovery.

While the book's message is indeed universal in its scope and applicable to individuals the world over, there is no escaping the fact that its original expression, in terms of not only words but concepts, draws in significant measure upon the *Russian* tradition, and this fact, as with its predecessor in the series, presented its share of challenges to the English translator. Two of these deserve particular mention here.

First, the Russian word *sviatyni* (derived from *sviatoi* = *holy* or *sacred*) has no direct equivalent in English. It refers not only to holy places such as sanctuaries, tabernacles, shrines and crypts, but also to sacred objects (including icons, statues and relics), sacred texts (e.g., the Bible or the Koran) and even trees. Having the same root as the Russian word for ‘light’ (*svet*), *sviatyni* may also be used to designate sacred concepts such as *spirit* or *grace*. None of these alternatives by

¹Psalm 23: 4 (*Authorised King James Version*).

itself would be sufficient to compass the range of the original Russian term. Since most of its occurrences relate to what we call 'locations', it was eventually decided to use the awkward but more or less accurate combination *sacred sites* as a general equivalent and employ alternative translations where the context required.

Another Russian word whose translation engendered considerable discussion was *pervoistoki* — derived from two basic roots: *perv-* (*first, primary, primal*) and *istok-* (*origin, source, spring* — as in describing the headwaters of a river, for example). The compound term, especially as used in this book, unmistakably conveys the sense of a *pure, uncontaminated* source, and this eventually led to the selection of the particular combination *pristine origins*. Other specific translation challenges are documented, where appropriate, in the footnotes.

Again, as in Book 1, the footnotes are also used to give background information on specific people, places and events unfamiliar to most English-speakers.

And now, dear readers, I need only invite you once again to find yourselves a comfortable reading-place — preferably one shielded from the possible intrusion of artificial sounds (a quiet outdoor setting would be ideal!) — and join with me in exploring the second instalment of the author's adventure through both the geographical space of Russia's vast distances and the mental space of the spiritual essence of the Universe, as revealed by *The Ringing Cedars of Russia*.

Ottawa, Canada

April 2005

John Woodsworth

CHAPTER ONE



Alien or Man?

Before telling about further happenings connected with Anastasia, I should like to thank all the leaders of religious denominations, scholars and journalists, along with ordinary readers, who sent in letters, religious literature and comments regarding the events recounted in my first book. Anastasia has been called many things. The press has referred to her as Mistress of the taiga,¹ a Siberian wizard-girl, a fortune-teller, a divine manifestation, the girl from outer space. And so when one Moscow journalist asked me: “Do you now love Anastasia?”, I replied to her: “I can’t really tell what my feelings are.” And all at once the rumour started flying around that I was incapable of grasping anything at all because of my immaturity in spiritual matters.

But how *can* one love when it’s not yet clear just who is there to be loved? After all, no one has yet been able to come up with a single definitive description of Anastasia. On the basis of her assertion: “I am Man, a human being — I am a woman!”² I’ve been trying to come up with some sort of explanation for her extraordinary abilities. Initially everything seemed to be falling into place.

¹*taiga* — the Russian name given to the boreal forest that stretches across much of Siberia and northern Canada.

²The word *Man* (with a capital *M*) is used throughout the Ringing Cedars Series to refer to a human being of any gender. For details on the word’s usage and the important distinction between *Man* and *human being* please see the Translator’s Preface to Book I.

Who is Anastasia?

A young woman, born and living as a recluse in the remote Siberian taiga, brought up after the death of her parents by her grandfather and great-grandfather, who have also been living the life of a recluse.

Can one consider the loyalty of wild animals to her something unusual?

Even this is nothing out of the ordinary. Many animals in peasant farmyards get along peacefully with each other and treat their human masters with respect.

A much more difficult task is determining the mechanism whereby she is able to see things at a distance and can know details of various events, even those that occurred thousands of years ago, and to be completely conversant with our contemporary way of life. How does this ray of hers work when it heals people far away, when it penetrates the depths of the past or peers into the future?

Philosophy professor Kim Ivanovich Shilin,³ who is also a Corresponding Member of the International Academy of Informatisation (MAI), has written a number of articles analysing Anastasia's sayings. In one of them he wrote:

Anastasia's creative potential is a gift of God, a gift of Nature, which is universal, not merely a personal gift to her. All of us collectively, and each one of us in particular, are connected with the Cosmos.

³*Kim Ivanovich Shilin* — Doctor of Social Sciences, senior researcher at Moscow State University's Institute for Asian and African Studies, known for his interdisciplinary research in philosophy, ecology, sociology, cultural and Asian studies, aimed at a synthesis of Eastern and Western cultural principles. He has authored numerous articles and several books on *ecosophy* (the interpretation of cultural and social phenomena on the basis of a culture's relationship to and perception of Nature).

The means of escaping an approaching catastrophe lie in a harmonious synthesis of our cultural principles. The development of this type of harmoniously pure childhood culture results in a “feminine” cultural type. This cultural type has been expressed most fully and clearly in Buddhism, but also in our Anastasia. It may be formulated in the following identification chain:

*Anastasia = Tara = Buddha = Maitreya.*⁴

Anastasia is in the fullest sense Man in the likeness of God.

Whether this is true or not is not for me to decide. Only I can't understand why, then, she hasn't written down any teachings, like all other enlightened people in the likeness of God, and instead has concentrated, all during her two decades of conscious awareness, on *dachniks*.⁵

Nevertheless, in reading what various scholars have to say, I have been able to conclude that she is not some kind of crazy person, inasmuch as there are at least *hypotheses* in the scientific world about what she has talked about, and experiments are being conducted on certain aspects of her sayings.

So, for example, to the question: “Anastasia, by what means do you discern and depict all the different situations of thousands of years ago and even decipher the thoughts of the great thinkers of the past?” she replied:

⁴*Tara* — a female Buddha, a deity capable of removing interferences and putting things in perfect order. *Maitreya* (literally, ‘the loving one’) is described as the future Buddha, associated with friendliness, success and prosperity.

⁵*dachniks* — people who spend time (their days off, especially summer holidays) at their *dacha*, or cottage in the country. Unlike most cottages in the West, a dacha is invariably accompanied by a garden where fruits and vegetables are grown to feed the family all year long (for further details, please see the Translator's Preface to Book 1 in the Ringing Cedars Series).

“The first thought, the first word was the Creator’s. His thoughts still live today, surrounding us unseen and filling universal space, reflected in material, living creations produced for the number one creation, Man! Man is the child of the Creator. And, like any parent, He could wish for His child no less than what He has Himself. He has given him all. And even more — freedom of choice! Man can create things and perfect the world by the power of his thinking. No thought produced by Man disappears into oblivion. If it is a thought of radiant brightness, it will fill the space of light and rise on the side of the forces of light. A dark thought, however, will fall on the opposite side. And today any Man may make use of any thought produced at any time either by people or by the Creator.”

“Then why doesn’t everybody use them?”

“Everybody does, but in varying degrees. To use them, one is obliged to think, and not everybody succeeds in doing this because of the vanity of daily life.”

“So, all you have to do is think, and the ability comes to you? And you can even discern the thoughts of the Creator?”

“In order to discern the thoughts of the Creator, one must attain a purity of thought appropriate to Him, as well as the pace of His thinking. To discern the thoughts of enlightened people, one must possess their purity of thought and the ability to think at the same rate. If a given Man has insufficient purity of thought to communicate with the dimension of the forces of light — the dimension in which radiant thoughts dwell, — then Man will draw his thoughts from their dark counterparts, and will end up suffering himself and causing others to suffer.”

I’m not sure whether this is directly or only indirectly explained by Academician Anatoly Akimov,⁶ Director of the International Institute of Theoretical and Applied Physics at the Russian Academy of Natural Sciences, in his article in the

magazine *Chudesa i prikliuchenia* (*Wonders and Adventures*) entitled “Physics recognises a Supermind”. He writes as follows:

There have existed, and there exist now, two schools of thought, two models of perceiving Nature. One model is associated with Western scholarship — i.e., knowledge gained on the methodological basis prevalent in the West: evidence, experiments, etc. The other is the Eastern approach, wherein knowledge is received from an external source through esoteric means in a state of meditation. Esoteric knowledge is not something acquired, it is considered a gift to Man.

As it turns out, at some point this esoteric approach was lost and a different route was embarked upon — one extremely slow and complex. Following this route, it has taken us over a thousand years to arrive at a level of knowledge which was common in the East three millennia ago.

⁶ *Anatoly Evgenovich Akimov* — first introduced in Book 1, Chapter 7: “Anastasia’s ray”. Though it is not commonly known, the USSR maintained an extensive research programme on psychic phenomena (for details please see the well-researched book *Psychic discoveries behind the Iron Curtain* by Sheila Ostrander and Lynn Schroeder). Anatoly Akimov headed one of the many groups of scientists charged by the KGB and the Soviet Defence Ministry to find a scientific explanation for paranormal phenomena and some people’s extraordinary abilities in clairvoyance, telepathy and telekinesis (moving solid objects by mental power alone) with a view to their applications to intelligence and military purposes. Akimov’s and other teams’ experimental observations of these phenomena — in particular the direct control of human mind over physical objects — indicated that on a deeper level *consciousness* and *matter* have essentially the same nature, and led to the study of torsion fields. Many “traditional” scientists, jealous of the generous funding his group was receiving, were quick to label Akimov as a ‘pseudo-scientist’ and ‘charlatan’, and charge him with “fraud and falsification of scientific research”, even though they themselves still cannot explain such phenomena, let alone answer even more basic questions such as *What is matter?* and *What is energy?*

I have the intuitive feeling that those are right who say that the matter filling the whole Universe on a field level⁷ is some kind of interrelated structure. In his book *The sum of technologies*, in a chapter entitled “The Universe as super-computer”, Stanislaw Lem⁸ proposed the existence of a gigantic computer-like Universal brain. Imagine a computer the size of the observable Universe (with a radius somewhere in the order of 15 billion kilometres), filled with elements taking up a volume of between 10 and 33 cubic centimetres each.

And here this brain which fills the whole Universe is naturally endowed with powers which we are incapable of imagining or even fantasising. But if you take into account that in reality this brain functions not according to any computer principle but on the basis of torsion fields,⁹ then it all becomes clear: the manifestations of the Absolute

⁷*field level* (Russian: *polevoy uroven*) — the level of a number of ‘fields’ (such as electromagnetic and gravitational fields) filling the Universe but not directly observable by the material senses.

⁸*Stanislaw Lem* — Russian science-fiction writer best known for his novel *Solaris*, first made into a film by Soviet director Andrei Tarkovsky in 1972 and thirty years later in a Hollywood version by Steven Soderbergh. Incidentally, Lem’s *Solaris* appears to be the inspiration behind the plot of Gene Roddenberry’s first *Star Trek* feature-length film (1979).

⁹*torsion fields* — the term first introduced in 1913 by a prominent French mathematician, Élie Cartan (1869–1951), to refer to a hypothetical field generated by a rotating object. This term later became used to signify the ‘original’ field permeating the whole Universe, a spinning field considered to have formed the physical vacuum and given birth to all matter. If matter can be thought of as ‘frozen energy’, then energy can be equated to ‘frozen torsion fields’. While modern physics still lacks the appropriate technology to detect torsion fields, the notion that everything in the Universe is born from a spinning void is one of the oldest concepts in virtually all traditional cultures (note its ages-old symbolic manifestation in the rotating cross (or swastika) — a symbol found in all cultures on all continents).

proposed by Schelling¹⁰ or the Shuniat¹¹ of ancient Vedic literature — these in essence constitute a computer. And there is nothing in the world apart from this computer. Everything else is some form or other of the Absolute.

This is what Academician Vlail Kaznacheev,¹² Active Member of the Russian Academy of Medical Sciences, wrote about the Ray in his article “Living rays and a living field”¹³ in *Chudes-
sa i prikliuchenia (Wonders and adventures)* of 3 May 1996:

¹⁰Friedrich Wilhelm von Schelling (1775–1854) — German philosopher, who developed a dialectic of Nature as a living organism and an unconscious, spiritual, creative principle.

¹¹*Shuniat* — the Buddhist concept of the ‘void’, or the space in which all exists.

¹²*Vlail Petrovich Kaznacheev* (1924–) — a prominent member of the Russian Academy of Medical Sciences from Novosibirsk, specialising in the inter-relationship between Man and Nature, including bio-systems and information processes. A decorated World War II veteran, Dr Kaznacheev has received numerous awards for his research and publications.

¹³In America pioneer research on the fields surrounding living organisms was carried out by Dr Harold Saxton Burr (1889–1973), Professor of Anatomy at the Yale University School of Medicine. Dr Burr discovered “that man — and, in fact, all forms — are ordered and controlled by electrodynamic fields which can be measured and mapped with precision... the ‘fields of life’ are of the same nature as the simpler fields known to modern physics and obedient to the same laws. Like the fields of physics, they are part of the organisation of the Universe and are influenced by the vast forces of space. Like the fields of physics, too, they have organising and directing qualities which have been revealed by many thousands of experiments. Organisation and direction, the direct opposite of chance, imply purpose. So the fields of life offer purely electronic, instrumental evidence that man is no accident. On the contrary, he is an integral part of the Cosmos, embedded in its all-powerful fields, subject to its inflexible laws and a participant in the destiny and purpose of the Universe” — quoted from E.F. Schumacher’s *A guide for the perplexed* (New York: Harper & Row, 1977), pp. 116–17, and used by permission of the Random House Group Ltd. For more information see Burr’s *Blueprint for immortality: The electric patterns of life* (London: N. Spearman, 1972).

Vernadsky¹⁴ was probably right in asking the question: how does the ideal, which is mental, translate the planet Earth into its new evolutionary phase? How? If you say: only through labour, only through explosions or only through technogenic activity, such a primitive answer will not do.

There is factual evidence showing that Man is capable of exerting a remote influence on many electronic equipment readings. He can throw the measuring device out of whack, and that from far away. Here in Novosibirsk experiments are taking place on telepathic communication with Norilsk, Dikson, Simferopol and Tiumen,¹⁵ as well as an American centre in Florida, and the remote links between Man and Man as well as between the measuring device and the operator register accurately and reliably.

We are confronted with an unknown phenomenon — the interaction of living substance over huge distances.

These articles, unfortunately, contain many unfamiliar terms, along with references to works of other scholars. It would be quite a task just to read them all, let alone make sense of them.

¹⁴*Vladimir Ivanovich Vernadsky* (1863–1945) — a Russian scientist compared to Charles Darwin for his scope of contribution to the biological sciences. Vernadsky's prime interest was researching how the human mind influences the development of life on the planet. He viewed human intelligence as a powerful evolutionary force capable of transforming the whole biosphere onto a new level. Vernadsky introduced the term *noosphere* (literally, 'sphere of Intelligence') to refer to the incipient state of biosphere controlled by human intelligence — the new evolutionary stage transcending the conflict between technology and Nature.

¹⁵*Norilsk* — one of the most northerly cities in the world, close to the Yenisei River, and a major mining centre. *Dikson* — a port in Russia's Far North, on the Kara Sea. *Simferopol* — capital of the Crimea (now part of Ukraine). *Tiumen* — the oldest Russian city in Siberia, founded in 1581, which long served as a centre for the Russian colonisation of Siberia.

Still, I have found out that scientists are aware of Man's capability to make contact at a distance. They are aware, too, of the universal data bank used by Anastasia. She calls it *the dimension of the forces of light*, home to all thoughts ever produced by mankind. Modern science also speaks about this phenomenon, which it refers to as a *supercomputer*.

I then had to figure out how I, who had never practised any literary art, having never been trained for it, managed to write a book which continues to excite so many people.

When I was in the taiga, Anastasia told me: "I shall make you a writer. You will write a book, and many people will read it. It will have a beneficial influence on the readers."

Now the book has been written. And one might suppose that it was all due to her involvement. But then one would have to figure out how she influences other people's creative abilities. However, nobody has yet managed to figure this out.

It might make things easier, of course, to pretend that I myself possessed at least a little talent and was simply setting forth the interesting information I had learnt from her. Then, it seems, everything would fall into place. Everything would be explained. There would be no need to waste any further time on reading scientific or religious literature or badgering specialists with questions. And here Anastasia presented a new phenomenon for which neither I nor any of the people who have been helping me can find an explanation to date.

You may remember me writing in Book 1 what she said two years earlier: "Artists will paint pictures, poets will write verse and they will make a movie about me. You will see all this and think of me...."

To my question "What do you mean, can she predict the future?" Anastasia's grandfather replied: "Vladimir, Anastasia does not predict the future, she visualises it and turns it into reality."

Words, just words. Words come cheap. And to be honest, I didn't pay too much attention to these words, dismissing them as mere metaphor, since I had absolutely no way of even imagining how accurately everything Anastasia said would turn out to be true in real life. But the incredible does happen!

Anastasia's words are starting to come true in reality.

First there was the flood of poems. A few of these poems I published at the end of Book 1. Next, Anastasia clubs started springing up in various cities. The first of these was in the city of Gelendzhik, where they held an exhibit of paintings by the Moscow artist Alexandra Saenko, all dedicated to Anastasia and Nature.

I visited the clubhouse and looked at the walls hung with large pictures. The surrounding space seemed to change in appearance before my gaze.

From the many pictures Anastasia looked out at me with her kindly eyes. And the scenes! I couldn't get over it — some of the pictures showed scenes from this second book, which hadn't been published yet. And there was this glowing sphere, sometimes appearing right next to Anastasia. Later I learnt that the artist painted not with a brush but with her fingertips. Most of the pictures had already been sold, but left hanging for the duration of the exhibit, since more and more people were coming to see them. The artist presented one of them to me as a gift, depicting Anastasia's mother and father. I couldn't take my eyes off her mother's face.

Offers started coming in from various film studios about making an Anastasia movie. And this was now something I was already accepting as a matter of course.

As I touched the paintings and sheets of poetry with my hands, as I listened to the songs and looked at stills from a film which had already been made, I tried to make some sense of what was going on.

And now there is a Moscow Research Centre devoted to investigating Anastasia phenomena, which has concluded:

The greatest spiritual teachers known to mankind for their religious teachings and philosophical and scientific investigations, cannot match the fantastic pace of Anastasia's influence on the human potential. Their teachings have had a noticeable manifestation in real life only centuries and millennia after their first appearance.

In some inexplicable way, over a matter of days and months Anastasia has managed, without the aid of written doctrines and religious teachings, to directly influence people's feelings, provoking emotional outbursts and causing a surge of creativity manifest in artistic creations on the part of a whole lot of people who have been mentally touched by her. We are able to perceive them in the form of works of art and inspired impulses toward goodness and light.

How is it possible that this lonely recluse, all alone in the remote Siberian taiga, has at the same time managed to soar over our lives in real time and space?

How does she bring artistic creations into being through other people's hands? They are all about light, about goodness, about Russia, about Nature, about love.

"She will cover the world with her great poetry of love. Poems and songs will shower the whole planet like a spring rain and wash away its accumulated filth," Anastasia's grandfather told me.

"But how does she do it?" I asked.

And the answer:

"She gives off inspiration and illumination by the energy of the impulse of her own aspirations, by the strength of her dreams."

"What kind of power is hidden in her dreams?"

“The power of Man as a Creator.”

“But Man should receive some sort of compensation for his creations — honours, money, titles. And here she is giving them away and asking nothing in return. Why?” I asked.

“She is self-sufficient. Her highest rewards are her own satisfaction and the sincere love of at least one person,” replied Anastasia’s grandfather.

But so far these answers are not something I’ve been able to make complete sense of. In attempting to grasp who Anastasia really is and my own relationship to her in particular, I have continued to seek out various opinions about her, and read as much as I can in the way of religious literature.

In fact, I’ve read more over the past year and a half than in all the previous years of my life taken together. But what has come of it? I have managed to come to only one indisputable conclusion: a number of ‘learned’ books claiming to be historically accurate, religious and sincere, are nothing but a pack of lies. This conclusion arose out of a situation connected with the historical figure of Gregory Rasputin.

In Book 1 I cited a passage from Valentin Pikul’s¹⁶ historical epic novel *U poslednei cherty* (At the last frontier).

¹⁶Valentin Savvich Pikul (1928–1990) — one of the most popular Soviet prose writers of the 1970s and 1980s. His famous novel, *At the last frontier* — published in 1979 in the major literary magazine *Nash sovremennik* as an abridged version of the novel *Nechistaya sila* (The demonic forces) — significantly strengthened the popular image of Rasputin as a corrupted immoral debaucher. Pikul’s extensive use of documents of the period, including journalistic accounts, to give his works an authentic ‘historical’ feel, contributed to the popular perception of his novels as ‘historical chronicles’ (although this is not generally supported by historians and literary critics, who tend to dismiss them simply as adventure novels with an historical context). In 1981 *At the last frontier* was made into the ‘historical drama’ movie *Agonia* (Agony), directed by Elem Klimov (1933–2003), which won the prestigious International Federation of Film Critics award at the 1982 Venice Film Festival and became a must-see cinematic experience throughout the USSR. The passage below is quoted from Pikul’s *At the last frontier*.

Pikul's narrative tells about a semi-literate peasant named Gregory Rasputin from the remote wilds of Siberia where the Siberian cedar grows. In 1907 he came to St. Petersburg, then the capital of the Russian empire. He not only endeared himself to the imperial family, impressing them with his predictions of the future, but ended up sleeping with a good many of the most prominent women in the capital. When a group of officers tried to kill him, they were amazed to find that even after swallowing the cyanide poison slipped into his drink, he was still able to get up from the table and make his way outdoors, where Prince Yusupov fired shots at him point-blank from his pistol. Even after being riddled with bullets, Rasputin would not die. His wounded body was thrown off a bridge into the river, then fished out and burnt.

The mysterious and enigmatic Gregory Rasputin, who impressed everyone with his stamina, grew up amidst the cedars of the Siberian taiga.

This is how a contemporary journalist described his staying power:

"At age fifty he could begin an orgy at noon and go on carousing until four o'clock in the morning. From his fornication and drunkenness he would go directly to the church for morning prayers and stand praying until eight, before heading home for a cup of tea. Then, as if nothing had happened, he would carry on receiving visitors until two in the afternoon. Next he would collect a group of ladies and accompany them to the baths. From the baths he would be off to a restaurant in the country, where he would begin repeating the previous night's activities. No normal person could ever keep up a régime like that."

As with many other people, such descriptions also shaped my impression of Rasputin as a hopeless debaucher. But fate threw my way a different concept, as though trying to induce me to reconsider.

This is what the Pope of Rome, John Paul II, had to say about Rasputin:

"Today from the river comes unscathed the body (never found) of a holy monk. And his secret offspring will enter into the ark with prayer."

What's going on here? On the one hand he's referred to as a debaucher, on the other — a holy monk. Where is the truth? Where is the lie?

There's more. The text of some of Rasputin's notes, written during a trip to the Holy Land, happened to fall into my hands (they were brought to Paris by a refugee from the USSR named Lobachevsky). This is what Rasputin himself wrote:

The sea effortlessly comforts. When you awake in the morning and the waves 'speak' — they dance and make glad. And the sunlight glistens on the sea, it seems to rise ever so quietly, and at that moment Man's soul forgets all about mankind and fixes its gaze on the glow of the sun; and a happiness kindles in Man, and he feels in his heart the book of life and the higher wisdom of life — indescribable beauty! The sea awakens him from the dream of earthly vanities, and many thoughts arise all by themselves, quite effortlessly.

The sea is a vast space, but the mind is even more spacious. There is no end to Man's higher wisdom, no philosophy can possibly contain it. Another moment of stupendous beauty comes when the sun sets over the sea and its rays fill the western sky.

Who can estimate the beauty of the sun's twilight rays? They warm and caress the soul and offer healing comfort. The sun disappears behind the mountains minute by minute, and Man's heart grieves a little at its amazing twilight rays. And then it grows dark.

And oh, what silence falls! Not even the sound of a bird is heard. Lost in thought, Man begins to pace the deck of

the ship, involuntarily recalls his childhood and all of life's kerfuffle, and begins to compare the silence around him with the bustle of the world, and quietly talks with himself, desiring company to stave off the tedium inflicted upon him by his enemies...

So, who were you, you *Sibiriak*?¹⁷ A Russian named Gregory Rasputin? Where is the truth written about you, and where the lie? How to make sense of it all? What can one rely upon in trying to fathom the essence of one's being, one's destiny? What great works can help one discern between truth and falsehood? Where is the spiritual and sincere, as opposed to a mere pretence of omniscience? Perhaps one should try probing one's own heart? I have never written poetry before, but I want to dedicate my very first poem to you, Gregory Rasputin.

People read *Anastasia* and come up with sincere, original poetry. I have tried, too. And this is the result — for you. My apologies if the rhyme doesn't always work out.

Dedicated to
Gregory Rasputin

"So you're semi-literate?" "Why yes, semi-literate.
From the cedar forests — well, those are my roots!"
"And barefoot?!" "Walking all the way from Siberia,
You're bound to wear out more than one pair of boots!"

"I am going to the Tsar, to help our dear Batiushka"¹⁸
Hold on just a little bit longer out there.

¹⁷*Sibiriak* — the Russian word denoting a resident of Siberia.

¹⁸*Batiushka* (pronounced *BAH-tioosh-ka*, lit., 'Father') — an affectionate name used (especially by Russian peasants) in reference to the Tsar.

I am going to our Russia, our dear Russia-Matushka¹⁹
To give her a taste of our pine-forest air!

“What about it, hussars? You dashing rogues, freely
Debauching the ladies, making bold in a brawl?
Just look at *me*, look, and see how one really
Debauches — you scum, thinking you know it all!”

Peter’s city in fine Paris garb is assembling.
But watch, lest your corsets too tight squeeze your hearts!
The Sibriak enters, and ladies are trembling
At the sight of this peasant from far eastern parts.

But as he went off to the morning-prayer service,
For others’ redemption from error to pray,
He heard his land calling — She spoke in a whisper,
The only one telling him this: “Go away!”

“The flesh-eating age of the beast is upon us,
All drunken and growling, it leads men astray.
While your fiery soul has been keeping it from us,
It can no longer do so. You must go away.

“You can’t hold the savagery back for much longer.
Just a moment, that’s all you will last — it’s too strong.
I am Russia! You cannot imagine my sorrow!
I know now: you never will finish your song.

“Go back to your cedars. My rebounding is certain!
And then you may ask whatsoever you will...”

¹⁹*Russia-Matushka* (pronounced in Russian: *Ras-SI-ya MA-toosh-ka*) — an endearing term signifying ‘Mother Russia’.

"Oh how I'd love us to go to the *banya*.²⁰
I'd beat you with besoms of birch, even pine,
My profligate Russia — for you I am longing!
I shall stay with you, Russia, for ever — you're mine!"

The age of dark madness with fury came howling:
Grishka²¹ stumbled, his breast full of bullets that day.
While the blackness stood mocking, its dark visage scowling,
Saying "Crawl, you Sibriak! Go on, crawl away!"

"You can hold me back only a half-second longer,
And then from the depths of my pit you'll be shown
A punishment frightful, more painful and stronger
Than ever the world in its history has known!"

"A hero you are, but you'll be called a blasphemer.
From bottles of poison²² your image will peek.
And the scions you save will curse you as a schemer
And spit on your soul, you Siberian *muzhik*.²³

"Crawl away. It is I who now have all the power!
Fly away, if you like, to your heaven on high!
But a moment is left, see? Not a day, not an hour.
So give me my moment! You're still going to die."

²⁰*banya* — Russian baths or a bath-house, similar to a Finnish sauna, where boiling water is poured over hot stones to increase the temperature and bathers beat each other with birch besoms (brooms made of twigs tied around a stick) to stimulate blood circulation. Braver participants sometimes prefer besoms made of sharp-needed conifers (e.g., pine) instead of birch.

²¹*Grishka* — a diminutive form of the Russian name *Grigory* (Gregory).

²²*bottles of poison* — referring to the *Rasputin* brand of vodka, popular all over Russia, with a picture of Rasputin's face on the label.

²³*muzhik* (pronounced *moo-ZHIK*) — a Russian word for a peasant, especially one who lacks the refinement of an urban dweller.

“Bring on the Madeira, let’s head for the *banya*!
And there I shall show you what’s real and what’s crass.
A Sibiriak, you say? I’m a down-to-earth peasant!
So what’s all the babble and gab about, ass?”

His body was shot through and drowned in the river,
Then burnt in a courtyard midst rubble and sand.
Today as spring winds blow their way over Russia,
They carry his ashes across the whole land.

“Well, *muzbik*,” said the blackness, still standing there mocking,
“Where on earth is your tombstone, and where are your eyes?
You can never bring back now the days of your living,
And your scions will see but an image despised.

“Show them the debt they owe! I give you power!
Show them the bills for your service unpaid,
Or is it your wish just to weep and to cower?”

Grishka spit a lead bullet: “You, Satan, are foolish!
As if I could care about either weeping or loans?
Come now, my *muzhiks* — how’s the banya, dear fellows?
Time for more boiling water to be poured on the stones?!”

Gregory Rasputin from the cedar forests of Siberia stepped into the life of pre-revolutionary Russia in an attempt to head off the storm of revolution, and perished.

Anastasia also lives amongst the cedars and is also trying to do good for people, also trying to head off something before it happens. But what fate has our society prepared for her?

CHAPTER TWO



A money-making machine

During my first days of talking with Anastasia I saw her as a recluse with her own unique way of looking at the world. Now, after all that I have heard and read about her, after all her subsequent penetrations into our lives, she has become a kind of an anomaly. My head has started to swirl in confusion. It is with great effort that I am trying to let go of the incoming tide of information and conclusions and get back to the simplicity of my first impressions. And to answer the oft-repeated question: “Why didn’t you bring Anastasia out of the taiga?”

I wanted very much to bring Anastasia out of the taiga. But I realised it couldn’t be done by force. I needed to try and show her how useful and appropriate her stay in our society would be. I reflected on which of her abilities could be used by people — and my business in particular — with benefit accruing to her as well. And suddenly I realised something: this Anastasia standing before me would be a real *money-making machine!*

For one thing she is easily capable of healing people from any disease. And she does this without making any kind of diagnosis, but simply chasing out of the body any pains and sores that have invaded it. And she doesn’t even have to touch the body. I experienced this for myself. She becomes utterly concentrated, looking out with her kind, unblinking bluish-grey eyes. And the body seems to warm up from her look, and even one’s feet begin to perspire. All sorts of toxins escape through the perspiration.

People pay big money for medicines and operations. If one doctor can't help, they go to another, or go to psychics, or bio-energy therapists, just to get cured of a single disease, sometimes spending weeks or months or even years in their search for a cure, while Anastasia's method takes but a few minutes. I calculated that if she spends even fifteen minutes on one patient and charges just two hundred fifty thousand roubles for that (although many healers charge a good deal more), that would make one million roubles an hour. But that's by no means the limit. Operations, for example, can cost up to thirty million roubles.¹

It seemed as though a sound business plan was taking shape in my head. I decided to work out some details and asked Anastasia:

"So, that means you can rid a person's body of any and all ills?"

"Yes," replied Anastasia. "I think I could eliminate any and all."

"How much time do you need to spend on a single patient?"

"Sometimes quite a lot."

"A lot — that's how long?"

"Once it took me more than ten minutes."

"Ten minutes — that's nothing. Some people take years to get better."

"Ten minutes is a long time, considering the fact that I have to concentrate, as it were, and decrease my sense of conscious awareness."

"That's not a problem, conscious awareness can wait. You know so much as it is. I've thought of something, Anastasia."

¹*two hundred fifty thousand, one million, thirty million roubles* — equivalent to approx. US\$50, 200 and 6,000 respectively at the June 1995 exchange rate. With an average Russian's monthly income of under \$100 at the time, those figures were truly astronomical.

“What have you thought of?”

“I’ll take you with me. In a big city we’ll hire a decent office for you, I’ll advertise and you can treat people. You’ll be of a great help to all sorts of people, and we’ll have a right good income.”

“But I sometimes treat people right now as it is. When I visualise various situations with the dachniks, to help them understand the world of plants around them, my Ray also eliminates their diseases, only I try not to eliminate *all* diseases...”

“But they don’t even know that *you’re* the one that’s doing it, they don’t pay you any money for it, or even say ‘thank you!’ You don’t get anything for your labours?!”

“I do.”

“What?”

“I feel happy.”

“Well, that’s fine then. You can be happy, and delighted, and the business will have an income as well.”

“But what if somebody does not have any money to pay for treatment?” she enquired.

“Now why are you jumping into trifling matters like that? You don’t have to think about that. You’ll have secretaries, and an administrator. All you need think about is treating people, perfecting yourself and attending seminars to share your experience and exchange ideas with other healers. Do you know yourself how your method works, your Ray, and what the underlying principle is?”

“Yes, I know. And this method is known in your world too. Doctors and career scientists know about it. Or at least they feel its beneficial effect. In hospitals they try to talk with their patients cheerfully, so as to uplift their spirits. Doctors have long noticed that if someone is in a state of depression, it is difficult to cure their disease, and medicines do not help, while if you treat a patient with love, the disease will go away more quickly.”

“So why has nobody tried learning this method and developing it to the degree you have?”

“Many scientists are trying to learn it. And many people you call folk healers also use this method, and they are having some success. This is the same method Christ Jesus healed by, as well as the saints. Much is said about love in the Bible, because this feeling has a beneficial influence on Man. It is the strongest feeling of all.”

“Why do healers and doctors have so little success, and you have so much?”

“Because they live in your world, and they, just like everyone else in that world, have taken in harmful feelings.”

“What kind of harmful feelings, and what do *they* have to do with it?”

“Harmful feelings, Vladimir, are anger, hatred, irritation, jealousy, envy... and others. They and other similar feelings make Man weaker.”

“You mean to say, Anastasia, that you hardly ever get angry?”

“I never get angry.”

“All right, Anastasia. It’s not important how this effect comes about, it’s the final result that’s important, and what benefit can be derived from it. Tell me, would you agree to go with me and get involved in treating people?”

“Vladimir, you see, my home is here — this is my motherland, the place where I belong. It is only by staying here that I can fulfil my purpose. Nothing gives Man greater strength than his motherland, the Space of Love created by his parents. Treating people, delivering them from physical ailments — I can do that right here from a distance, with the help of my Ray.”

“Well, all right. If you don’t want to travel, you can do your treating from a distance. You and I can set up an arrangement as to where those wishing treatment can come. They will pay

their money, and you will heal them at a specific time. We'll draw up a schedule. Would you agree to that?"

"Vladimir, I know you want to make a lot of money. You shall have it. I shall help you. Only that is not the way to do it. In your world people charge for treatment — there is no other way in your world. But I would rather do that without any question of money. Besides, I cannot treat everybody indiscriminately, since I have not fully realised in which cases healing will be helpful, and in which ones harmful. But I shall try to become aware of this and understand. And as soon as I can decipher —"

"What drivel is that?" I broke in. "How can healing or treating a person be harmful? Or do you mean harmful to yourself?"

"Healing of physical ailments can often bring harm to the one healed."

"It seems, Anastasia, your sophistications have given you a somewhat inverted concept of good and evil. Doctors have always been held in high regard by society, even though they have not performed their services free of charge. And, since you cite the Bible so much, you'll find that is not forbidden even there. So cast those doubts out of your head. Curing someone is always a good thing!"

"You see, Vladimir, I know this from experience. My grandfather showed me an example of the harm that healing can bring when it is not thought through, when the patient himself does not participate in the healing."

"What kind of strange philosophy you have here! I offer you a joint business venture. What have such examples got to do with it?"

CHAPTER THREE



Healing for hell

“One day I saw with my Ray a lonely old woman working on her garden plot,” Anastasia began. “She was spritely, slim and always cheerful. She caught my interest right away. She had a very small plot, and a lot of different things growing in it, and they grew very well, because she tended them with love.

“Then I learnt that the old woman would put everything she grew into a basket and take it into town and sell it. She tried not to eat the early fruits of her labours, but sell them when they would still fetch a high price. She needed the money to help her son. She had given birth to him late in life, and soon afterward she was left without a husband. Her relatives never communicated with her. Her son liked to draw as a child, and she had dreams that he would become an artist.

“Several times he tried to get in some place where he could pursue his studies. Finally he made it. And once or twice a year he would come to visit his elderly mother. These visits were the highlight of her life, and each time she would save up her money and prepare a whole supply of food for him. As the time for his visit approached, she would pack vegetables into glass jars, put their lids on tight and give the whole supply to him when he arrived.

“She loved him very much, and kept dreaming about her son becoming a top-notch artist. She lived on that dream. The woman was kind and cheerful.

“Then for a while I did not watch her. The next time I saw her she was very ill. She had a hard time bending over to work

on her plantings — each time she bent over, a sharp pain ran right through her body.

“But she proved to be very resourceful. She made her beds long and narrow. Each time she went out to her plot she would take with her the seat from an old stool (minus the legs) and use it to sit on while she did her weeding, and that way she was able to move around the whole plot without having to bend over. She dragged the basket along on a string. And she was looking forward to a good harvest.

“It really looked as though the harvest that year would be quite plentiful, since the plants felt her state of mind and reacted accordingly. The woman sensed that she would soon pass on, and to make things easier for her son, before she died she bought a coffin and a wreath and made all the funeral preparations.

“But she still wanted to bring in one last harvest, and prepare the winter’s food supply for her son before she died. I did not pay much attention then to why she was still sick even after such close contact with the plants. I thought perhaps it was because she herself ate almost nothing from her plot. She sold what she grew and then used the money to buy things she needed on the cheap.

“I decided to help her, and one night when she lay down to sleep I began warming her with my Ray, removing the pains from her body. I could feel some kind of resistance to the Ray, but I still kept on trying. I did this for about ten minutes until I succeeded in healing her flesh.

“Then, when Grandfather came, I told him about the old woman. And I asked him why the Ray had met some resistance. He thought about it, and then told me I had done the wrong thing. It made me very distraught.

“I began asking Grandfather to explain why. At first he did not say a word. Then he said, ‘You healed the body.’”

I was amazed. “What harm could you have possibly brought to the woman’s soul?” I asked.

Anastasia sighed and went on:

"The woman's health got better and she did not die. Her son came to see her earlier than usual. This time he came only for two days and told his mother he had quit his studies and did not want to be an artist any more. He was now involved in some other work that brought in more money. He had got married. Now he would have a lot of money. And he no longer wanted her to prepare 'those insipid food jars' for him, since transporting them would now cost more.

"'You can eat better yourself, now, Mother,' he said.

"He left without taking anything. That morning the woman sat on her porch, looked at her plot, and her eyes were filled with such emptiness and depression — they looked as though she did not want to live. You see, her body was healthy, but it was as if there were no life left in it. I saw, or rather felt, the terrible emptiness and hopelessness in her heart.

"If I had not cured her body, the woman would have died at the right time, she would have died peacefully with her beautiful dream and hope intact. Now here she was, still alive, but in great despair, and this was many times more frightening than physical death.

"Two weeks later she passed on."

CHAPTER FOUR



A confidential conversation

“I realised,” Anastasia continued, “that physical disease is nothing compared with mental torments, but at the time I was not yet able to treat the soul. I wanted to know how I could do this or even if I could do it at all. Now I know — it is possible!

“And I found out something else — that physical diseases appear in Man not just as a result of his self-withdrawal from Nature around him, and not just as a result of the dark feelings which he allows himself to take in. They (the diseases) can also be a means of warding off or even deliverance from considerably greater torments. Diseases are one of the devices or means of communication between the Supreme Intelligence (God) and Man. Man’s pain is His pain, too. But it could not be otherwise. How else could you get the message, for example: ‘Do not keep throwing into your stomach all sorts of harmful stuff.’ You tend not to listen to words of reason, after all. That’s why the message comes through pain. But instead you swallow pain-killers and go back to stubbornly doing your own thing.”

“So,” I countered, “it follows then, in your opinion, that there’s no need to treat people at all? No need to help them with their ailments?”

“Help there should be, but first of all to gain a proper understanding of the origins of the disease.

“Man needs help in discerning what the Supreme Intelligence, God, desires to say to him. But that is a most difficult task. One can make mistakes. Pain, after all, is a confidential

conversation between two beings who know about each other. Interference from a third party often harms Man instead of helping him.”

“Well, why then did you rid me of *my* diseases?” I asked Anastasia. “Does that mean you’ve harmed me in some way?”

“All your diseases will come back to you if you do not change your lifestyle, your attitude to things around you and to yourself. If you do not change some of your habits. They are the causes of your diseases. I have done no harm to your soul.”

It became clear to me that it would be impossible to persuade Anastasia to make money out of using her healing abilities until she had sorted things out for herself. My business plan had fallen apart. Anastasia must have noticed my irritation, for she said:

“Do not be upset, Vladimir. I shall try to grasp everything as quickly as possible. And now, if you really want to help others and yourself and not just make money, I shall tell you about the means by which Man can cure himself from many diseases without undesirable side-effects, as might happen when outsiders try to interfere in his destiny. If indeed you want to listen to this...”

“What choice do I have? I’m not going to change your mind, in any case. Tell me.”

“There are several main causes underlying the diseases of the human flesh, namely: harmful feelings, emotions, an artificial dietary régime — an unnatural meal schedule and food composition, the lack of short-term and long-term goals, and a misapprehension of one’s essence and purpose in life. Positive emotions, a variety of plants and a reappraisal of one’s essence and purpose in life — all these are capable not only of counteracting diseases but also of significantly enhancing one’s physical and mental or emotional state.

“As far as bringing back — under the conditions of your world — Man’s lost connection with plants, I have already told you about that. After Man has established a direct personal contact with these plants, it is much easier to make sense of everything else.

“The Ray of Love, too, is capable of curing many diseases of one’s fellow-Man and even prolonging his life by creating around him a *Space of Love*.

“But Man himself, once he has managed to arouse positive emotions in himself, can use them to extinguish pain and cure the diseases of the flesh — even the effects of poison.”

“What does that mean — ‘arousing positive emotions?’” I queried. “How can one think good thoughts if one has a toothache or a stomach-ache?”

“Pure, clear moments of life, positive emotions, like guardian angels, will overcome pain and disease.”

“But what if someone doesn’t have enough pure and clear moments to arouse the positive healing emotions — what should he do then?”

“He should create at once something to make them appear. They appear when people around you treat you with genuine Love. So you must create a situation along those lines, create it by your actions in respect to those around you, otherwise your guardian angel will not be able to help you.”

“I wonder whether I have ever had them myself, and if so, how strong they were. How does one call them forth?”

“This can be done through reminiscing. For example, let us recall something good, something pleasant from your past. With the help of that image try to feel the soft and pleasing state of mind you experienced back then. Do you want to try it now? I shall help you. Try it.”

“All right, let’s give it a try.”

“Please, lie down on the grass and relax. You can remember starting from this point in your life right now going back

into the past. Or you can start with your childhood and proceed up to the present day. Or you can jump at once to the most pleasant moments and feel the sensations connected with them.”

I lay down on the grass. Anastasia lay down beside me and pressed her fingers against mine. I thought her proximity might prevent me from concentrating on my reminiscences, and I said:

“Perhaps I’d better be alone.”

“I shall be very quiet. When you start remembering, you will forget about me. And you will not feel the touch of my hand. But I can help you remember everything more quickly and vividly.”

CHAPTER FIVE



Where are you, my guardian angel?

The chronicle of my life-story took me back to my childhood. My reminiscences continued up to the point where I was playing in the sand with the country kids, and then broke off. At that moment my soul was overwhelmed with an inexplicable sense of alarm. Not a single event in my whole life aroused positive emotions or feelings comparable to those I experienced that morning after spending the night with Anastasia. Or with those that arose in me after she brought the rhythms of surrounding Nature in tune with the beating of my heart (I described this experience in the chapter “Touching Paradise”). But I considered these marvellous feelings to be something created in me by Anastasia — they weren’t my own. They were artificial, a gift from Anastasia. Involuntarily, I compared them with those of my previous life, and found no analogy whatsoever.

Again and again I hunted down recollections of my life, as though running a movie reel, backward and forward. Everything I saw was related to my efforts to get or achieve something. Sure, I got what I wanted, one thing after another, but there was no great feeling of satisfaction. Instead, some new desire merely appeared. And the most recent years of my life, when those around me thought how splendidly everything was turning out for me, aroused an even greater feeling of confusion and chaos. The cars I had acquired, the women, the banquets, the gifts and congratulations I had received — all seemed empty and pointless.

I quickly got to my feet and said, with some irritation, either to myself or to Anastasia:

“There are none of these healing sensations in Man’s life! At least, not in mine. And I would say there are many lives where they can’t be found.”

Anastasia also rose to her feet and calmly observed:

“Then you should create them as quickly as possible.”

“*What* do I need to create? Tell me, what?”

“First you must understand what holds the greatest meaning, or significance, for you. You have just been looking over your past life. But even with the opportunity to analyse it, to look at it objectively, as it were, you still were not able to notice what was really significant. You kept latching on to the usual values, as you saw them. Tell me the situations where you felt you came closest to a sense of happiness.”

“There were two situations, but each time something prevented me from feeling truly happy in them.”

“What kind of situations?”

“Back in the early days of *perestroika*¹ I managed to acquire a long-term lease on a steamship. This was the best passenger ship in the Western Siberian river fleet — the *Mikhail Kalinin*.

“After the lease agreement was drawn up, I went to the harbour and there she stood. What a beauty! I remember the first time I stood on the deck of my very own ship.”

“And did your feelings of happiness greatly increase when you stood on the deck?”

“You know, Anastasia, our lives are filled with all sorts of problems. As soon as I had climbed aboard, I was met by the

¹ *perestroika* — the policy of restructuring the economic and political system of the Soviet Union, initiated by Gorbachev in 1985, which eventually led to the collapse of communism and the break-up of the USSR in the early 1990s.

captain. We went to his cabin and had a bottle of champagne together. During our conversation the captain advised that all the water pipes needed cleaning at once, or the health authorities would not allow us to set sail. And there were other things he told me..."

"And so, Vladimir, you immersed yourself in all the problems and cares involved in the running of the ship."

"Yes, that's right. There were a lot of them."

"It is inherent in the nature of artificially created matter and various mechanical devices, Vladimir, that they bring more problems than pleasures. Their benefit to Man is quite illusory."

"Well, I don't happen to agree. Maybe in themselves these mechanical devices have problems — they need constant repair and maintenance. Still, they help us get a lot of things."

"What, for example?"

"Even love."

"Genuine Love, Vladimir, could not possibly be under the control of artificially created objects. Even if you owned all the objects in the world, you would not be able, just with their help, to gain access to the true Love of even one woman."

"Well, you simply don't know our women. You're spinning theories, that's all. I managed to get it."

"What did you manage to get?"

"Love. I quite simply succeeded. There was one woman I loved a great deal. I loved her for many years. But she didn't really want to go off with me anywhere alone. When I got my ship, however, I invited her aboard, and she accepted. Can you imagine how great that was?! Here we were sitting alone at the ship's bar. There was champagne, first-class wine, candlelight, music — and nobody else around. Here we were alone in the empty bar on my ship. She was the only one there with me.

"I had the ship set sail without taking on any other passengers, just so we could be alone. The ship proceeded down the river. There was music playing in the bar. I invited her to dance. Her figure was fantastic, especially her breasts. I hugged her tight, my heart was pounding for joy, and I kissed her on the lips!

"She didn't run away, she even hugged me back. Do you see? There she was right beside me, and I could touch her, and kiss her. All this was because of the ship, and you say it can only bring problems."

"And then, Vladimir, what happened?"

"Nothing much."

"Please try to remember, anyway."

"I tell you, it was nothing important."

"Can *I* tell *you* what happened there, on the ship, between you and that young woman?"

"You can try."

"You had a lot to drink. You made a deliberate effort to drink as much as possible. Then you put the keys to your cabin — your luxury apartment — on the table in front of her, and you yourself went down to the lower decks. You slept almost twenty-four hours in the cramped crew's quarters. And do you know why?"

"Why?"

"The moment came when you noticed a strange expression on the face of that beloved young woman of yours — a pre-occupied smile. Intuitively, even subconsciously, you realised that she, your beloved, was thinking how happy she would be if only it were her own beloved that was sitting across from her in this bar, instead of Megré. Your precious girl was dreaming of someone else, someone she really liked. She fantasised that it was he, and not you, who was master of the ship. You were at the mercy of inert matter, to which you had tied your living feelings and aspirations, and were choking them to death."

"Don't go on, Anastasia!" I pleaded. "These recollections aren't happy ones for me. In any case, the ship did play its role. It was thanks to the ship that you and I met."

"The happenings of the present are the result of previous feelings and impulses of the soul, and it is only *they* that determine the future. And it is only *their* momentum, only the beating of *their* wings, that is clearly reflected in the heavenly mirrors. And only *their* impulses and aspirations will be reflected in happenings here on the Earth."

"What do you mean by that?" I asked in some bewilderment.

"Our meeting may well be the culmination of many aspirations of the soul on both your part and mine — perhaps on the part of our immediate or even more distant forebears. Perhaps it came from a single impulse of the cherry tree growing in the garden of your country home. Only not the ship."

"What has the cherry tree in my garden got to do with it?"

"In all your many glances back at your life, you failed to pay any attention to this cherry tree and your feelings connected with it, yet those feelings have played a leading role in your life in recent years. The Universe did not react to your ship. Just think, what could a primitive, run-down material device, incapable of either thinking or restoring itself, possibly mean to the Universe?"

"But the cherry tree... a little Siberian cherry tree, which you could not even make room for in your recollections, excited the cosmic expanses and changed the course of time and history — and not only yours and mine. Because it is a living being, and, like all living beings, has an inseparable connection with creation as a whole."

CHAPTER SIX



The cherry tree

“Remember, Vladimir, everything within you associated with this little tree. Remember, starting right from the moment you first made contact with it.”

“I shall try to remember, if you think it’s important.”

“Yes, it *is* important.”

“I was riding in my car, I don’t remember where I was going. We stopped near the Central Market. I asked my driver to get out and buy some fruit. I stayed in the car and watched people leaving the market carrying all sorts of saplings.”

“You watched them and were surprised. Why?”

“You see, their faces were happy and contented. Even though it was cold and rainy out, here they were hauling away some kind of saplings with their roots all bound in cloth. These saplings were heavy to carry, but the people’s faces were content, and here I was sitting in my warm car and I was sad.

“When the driver returned, I got out and went over to the market myself. I kept walking up and down past the merchants’ stalls and bought three cherry saplings. As I was tossing them into the baggage compartment, the driver said that one of the saplings wouldn’t survive, since its roots had been cut too short, and I’d better throw it out right off, but I decided to keep it. It was the most graceful of the three. Then I went and planted the saplings in the garden of my country home.

“I threw in extra topsoil around the tree with the short roots, and a sprinkling of peat moss, along with a bit of fertiliser.”

"In trying to help it, you burnt two more little roots of the sapling with the fertiliser," Anastasia added.

"But it survived! In the spring, when the buds started coming out on the trees, its branches came to life, too. Little leaves began to appear. Then I set out on my commercial expedition."

"But before that," Anastasia observed, "every day for a period of more than two months you would drive out to your country house and the first thing you did was go and see how the little tree was getting on. Sometimes you stroked its branches. You were so happy to see the leaves, and kept watering the tree. You drove a stake into the ground and fastened the trunk to it with twine all around so the wind wouldn't break it.

"Tell me, Vladimir, do you think that plants react to people's attitude toward them? Do you think they feel good and bad thoughts?"

"I've heard, or read, somewhere that house-plants and flowers do react that way. They can even become all withered when their care-giver goes away. I've heard about scientific experiments where they attached sensors to various plants, and the needles jumped one way when the plants were approached aggressively, and the other way when someone approached them with thoughts of gentleness and kindness."

"So, Vladimir, you know about plants reacting to the expression of human feelings. And, according to the Grand Creator's design, they strive to do all within their power, all that they can, to meet Man's needs — they bring forth fruit, and try to arouse positive emotions in Man with their flowers beautiful and fair — indeed, they put oxygen into the air so that we can breathe.

"But plants have been granted yet another function which is no less important. Plants which come into direct contact with an individual Man create for him a *Space of true Love*. The

kind of Love without which life for the human race would be impossible.

“Many dachniks are in a hurry to get out to their plots because it is there that such a Space has been created for them. And this little Siberian cherry tree you thought to plant, the one you cared for yourself, it tried to do the same as all other plants and perform its assigned function.

“If there are a lot of them, plants can create for Man a significant Space of Love — if they are of different varieties and Man communicates with them, and approaches them with Love. All together plants can create for Man a significant Space of Love which enhances the soul and makes the body whole.

“You see, Vladimir — all together, when there are a lot of them. But you looked after just one sapling. And so this one little Siberian cherry tree began aspiring to do what only a number of plants acting together can do.

“Its aspiration was aroused by your special relation to it. It was something you yourself realised only intuitively — in all your surroundings only this one little tree was not asking anything of you, it was not being hypocritical, it only aspired to give of itself — and then you came along. You were tired after a busy day. You went over to the tree, stood and pondered. You looked at it, and it responded.

“Before the first ray of dawn appeared in its perfection, the leaves of the tree tried to catch that ray’s reflection in the brightening sky. And when the Sun went down afar, it tried using the light of a bright star. And as it persisted, something transpired by and by, just a wee bit of something transpired.

“Its roots, twisting themselves around the burning fertiliser, were able to take in what they required from the Earth. And the Earth’s juices began turning and running through the veins of the tree a little more quickly than usual. And then one day, in an early morning hour, you came and saw the

little flowers to which the tree's delicate branches had given birth. The other saplings were devoid of flowers, but this one, thanks to your gift of caring, had already blossomed. You were overjoyed. Your spirits were uplifted and then... do you remember what you did, Vladimir, after seeing the flowers?"

"I really was overjoyed. For some reason my mood was on a high, I felt a lightness in my head. I went and stroked its branches with my hands."

"You *gently* stroked its branches. And you said, 'Well now, my beauty, you've blossomed!'

"You see the trees, Vladimir, and you see the leaves, and the fruit borne thereof. But more than that, the trees create a Space of Love. The little cherry tree very much wanted you to have this Space. But where was the place for the tree to find the strength to give back to Man what it had received from him? It had tried and tried and had already given everything that was in its power, but it had received something extraordinary besides — a showing of tenderness toward itself and the flowers it bore. And then it had the desire to do more! All by itself!

"You went off on your very long expedition. And then, completing your journey and returning, the first thing you did was go to the garden plot to see your little cherry tree. But along the way you were eating cherries you had bought at the market. As you approached it, you noticed that there were three red cherries growing on your tree. You stood there beside it, all tired out, eating the bought cherries and spitting out the stones. Then you tore one of the cherries off your tree and tried it. Indeed, it was just a little bit more sour, a little less sweet than the market cherries you had decided to eat, and you did not touch the other two."

"I had had my fill of the other cherries. And this one was indeed more sour."

"Oh, if only you had known, Vladimir, how much power those little cherries contained on their own that was so beneficial to you! How much energy and Love! From the depths of the Earth and the expanses of the Universe and more, the tree had gathered everything helpful for you and poured it into these three cherries. It had even let one of its branches wither in order to make these three cherries ripen. One of them you tried, but you left the other two on the tree to die."

"I had no idea. But still, I was happy that it was capable of bearing fruit."

"Yes, you were happy. And then... do you remember what you did this time?"

"Me? Well, I stroked the tree's branches some more."

"And you not only stroked them. You even bent over and kissed the leaves on the branch which was resting on the palm of your hand."

"Yes, I did. Because I was in such a good mood."

"And something incredible happened with the tree. What more could it do for you, since you had not taken the fruit thereof that had been grown with so much Love? What could it do?"

"It trembled from the kiss of Man, and the thought and feelings inherent only in Man but produced by this little Siberian cherry tree took flight into the Universe's space of light — to give back to Man what it had received from him. To give back to Man its kiss of Love, to warm him with this — the bright feelings, the Space of Love. And against all laws that thought swept across the Universe but could not find a resting-place, a means of manifesting the breath — the life — of itself."

"Knowing that one cannot find a resting-place means *death*."

"Then the forces of light returned to the cherry tree the bright thought it had produced, so that it might destroy the

thought within itself and not perish. But the tree did not pick it up!

"The little Siberian cherry tree's burning desire endured unchanged, extraordinarily pure and trembling.

"The forces of light did not know what to do. The Grand Creator was not about to change the established laws of harmony for you. But the cherry tree did not perish. It managed to endure because the thought, aspiration and feelings thereof were extraordinarily pure, and by the laws that constitute creation as a whole nothing can destroy pure Love. And it circled over your soul and dreamt of finding a resting-place, a place to thrive. Alone in the Universe, it was striving, aspiring to create for you a Space of Love.

"I came to your ship to at least try to be of some help and fulfil the cherry tree's desire to find this resting-place, to manifest its love. Even though I did not know to whom it was addressed."

Anastasia paused.

"You mean to say," I queried, "that your relationship to me arose out of your desire to help the tree?"

"My relationship to you, Vladimir, is simply that: my relationship. It is difficult to say who was helping whom here — the cherry tree me or I the tree. Everything in the Universe is interrelated. To perceive what is really going on in the Universe one need only look into one's self. But now, by your leave, I am giving an embodiment to this, to what the cherry tree desired. May I give you a kiss from the tree?"

"Of course you may. Since it's the right thing to do. And when I get home, I shall eat all of its fruit."

Anastasia closed her eyes. She pressed her hands to her breast and quietly whispered:

"*Feel* this, little cherry tree. I know you can feel it. I shall now do what you wished. This will really be your kiss, little cherry tree."

Then Anastasia quickly placed her hands on my shoulders and, without opening her eyes, drew near, touched her lips to my cheek and held them there.

It was a strange kiss, just the touch of her lips. But it was not like any I had ever received before. It aroused an extraordinarily pleasing sensation, one I had never felt up to now. The technique of moving the lips or tongue or body probably had nothing to do with it. What counted, most probably, was what was hidden in the inner Man that was manifesting itself in the kiss.

But what was hidden inside this taiga recluse? Where did she get so much knowledge from, so many unusual abilities and feelings? Or maybe everything she said was simply the product of her imagination? But then where did the extraordinarily tender, charming and heart-warming sensations come from — the ones I could most certainly feel within me? Perhaps our joint efforts will manage to unravel the mystery through the aid of the following situation which I had the good fortune to witness.

CHAPTER SEVEN



Who's to blame?

Once when Anastasia was trying to explain something to me about lifestyles and faith, but couldn't find suitable, understandable words — which she no doubt very much wanted to find — a curious incident took place.

Anastasia quickly turned to face the ringing cedar, pressing the palms of her hands against its trunk. But then something inexplicable began happening to her. Lifting up her head and addressing either the cedar or Someone way up high, all at once she started speaking passionately and with concentrated attention in a combination of words and sounds.

She was evidently trying to show or explain something, or plead for something. From time to time her monologue seemed to be infused with tones of persistent demanding. The resonant ring of the cedar increased in volume. Its ray became brighter and thicker. And then Anastasia demanded sharply:

"Answer me! Answer! Explain! Give it to me, give it to me!" she said, shaking her head and even stamping her bare feet.

All at once the pale glow of the ringing cedar's tree-top became focused into a ray, and the ray suddenly broke off from the cedar and flew upward and dissolved into thin air. But at this point another ray appeared, coming down to the cedar from above. It seemed to consist of a bluish mist or cloud.

The needles of the cedar, pointing downward, were illuminated with similar misty rays, almost unnoticeable. And these rays pointed toward Anastasia, but didn't touch her — they seemed to disappear and dissolve in the air. And when

she insistently stamped her feet and even slapped the ringing cedar's huge trunk with the palms of her hands, the glowing needles began stirring and their rays joined to form a single Ray of bluish mist. It aimed itself downward toward Anastasia, but didn't touch her. The Ray dissolved in the air, literally dissolved — at about a metre away from Anastasia at first, then at just half that distance.

I suddenly recalled with horror how Anastasia's parents had perished — very likely from just such a Ray.

Anastasia continued her stubborn pleading and demanding, much like a spoilt child insisting on some desired favour from its parents. And suddenly the Ray made a dash for *her*, as it were, illuminating her whole body like a flashbulb.

A cloud first formed around Anastasia and then began dissipating, ever so slowly. The ray from the Cedar dissolved, the rays from the needles were extinguished. The cloud around Anastasia continued to dissipate. It was either entering into her or dissolving in space.

Now radiant with a joyous smile, she turned and took a step in my direction. Then she stopped and began staring past me at something beyond. I turned around to see Anastasia's grandfather and great-grandfather coming into the glade. The tall, grey-bearded great-grandfather walked slowly, just ahead of his son. He was leaning on a stick that looked something like a shepherd's staff. Upon reaching my position, he stopped and fixed his gaze on me, as though staring into empty space. I couldn't even tell whether he actually saw me or not. Great-Grandfather stood silently for a moment. Then, after bowing ever so slightly, without uttering so much as a word of greeting, he headed over to Anastasia.

Even though Grandfather was a bit of a fussbudget, he was a very simple man. His whole demeanour pointed to a most kind and cheerful fellow. As he approached the spot where I was standing, he at once stopped and offered me a simple

shake of his hand. He started to say something, but I can't recollect exactly what he said. For some reason both of us felt our attention and concern suddenly drawn to what was going on at the base of the cedar.

Great-Grandfather had stopped just a metre from Anastasia. They stood there for a while, silently staring at each other. Anastasia was standing before the bearded old man, her hands lowered to a vertical position, as though she were a schoolgirl or university applicant being confronted by a strict examiner. She looked like a child caught being naughty, and her anxiety was most evident.

The tense silence which had come over the scene was broken by the deep, clear, velvety tones of Great-Grandfather's voice. He did not say hello to Anastasia but proceeded at once to a stern questioning, every word slowly and distinctly pronounced:

"Who can make an appeal directly to Him without going through the light and rhythm that have been bestowed upon us?" Whereupon Anastasia responded without hesitation:

"Any Man can make an appeal to Him. From time immemorial He Himself has taken great pleasure in talking with Man. And this is what He wills right now."

"Are all paths outlined by Him in advance?" Great-Grandfather continued. "Are there many Earth-dwellers capable of discerning them? Are you capable of seeing these paths?"

"Yes. I have seen what has been outlined for mankind. I have seen how future events are dependent on the conscious awareness of those who are living today."

"Have His Sons and their enlightened followers who have perceived His Spirit, done enough to bring enlightenment to those living in the flesh?"

"They have done and are doing everything, not even taking thought for their own life. They have borne witness to the truth and are still bearing witness."

"Can one who has seen the truth have any doubt about His intellect, kindness and magnificence of Spirit?"

"He has no equals! He is One! But He does wish to communicate. He wants people to understand and love Him as He loves."

"In communicating with Him, is it permissible to be insolent and demanding?"

"He has given a particle of His Spirit and Mind to everyone living on the Earth. And if a small particle — His particle — in Man, does not agree with what is generally accepted, that means He — and I mean He — is not satisfied with everything as it has been outlined for the future. He is reflecting on it. Could one term His reflections insolence?"

"Who is permitted to hasten the pace of His reflections?"

"Only the One who *gives* permission."

"And just what are you asking for?"

"I am asking how to give understanding to those who do not understand, how to inculcate feeling in those who do not feel."

"Has the lot of those who fail to perceive Truth been determined?"

"The lot of those who fail to perceive Truth has been determined. But who is to blame for the lack of acceptance of truth — the one who does not accept the truth or the one from whom he receives it?"

"What? You mean, you..." Great-Grandfather said in agitation, and then fell silent.

He stood silently for a while, looking at Anastasia. Then, with the help of his staff-like cane, he got down on one knee and took Anastasia's hand. Inclining his silvery-grey head toward her, he kissed her hand and said:

"Hello, Anastasia."

Anastasia herself at once knelt down before her great-grandfather, and exclaimed with excitement and surprise:

"What do you mean, Grandpakins, treating me like a child? I'm grown up now."

Then she put her arms around his shoulders, snuggled her head against his beard-covered chest and held still. I knew she was listening to his heartbeat. That was something she had loved ever since her childhood.

The oldster continued kneeling, one hand resting on his cane, the other stroking Anastasia's golden hair.

Grandfather got excited, and rushed over to his father and granddaughter who were both still kneeling. He began strutting around them, throwing up his arms in some bewilderment. Then all of a sudden he too got down on his knees and embraced them both...

Grandfather was the first to rise to his feet. He then helped his father up. Great-Grandfather was still staring intently at Anastasia. Then he slowly turned around and started walking off. Grandfather in the meantime started muttering away, though it wasn't clear whether he was addressing anyone in particular:

"All the same, they're all spoiling her. Even He spoils her. Dear me, just look at where she's got to! She pokes her nose in wherever she feels like it. There's nobody to teach her a lesson. Who will now help the dachniks? Who, I say?!"

Great-Grandfather stopped in his tracks. He slowly turned around and said distinctly, in his deep velvety voice:

"Granddaughter dear, follow the dictates of your heart and soul. I myself shall help you with the dachniks."

Turning away once again, the majestic greybeard started on his way out of the glade.

"Do you see what I mean? — they're all spoiling her," Grandfather broke in again.

Picking up a short switch, he strutted over to Anastasia. Waving the switch about his head, he threatened: "I'm going to teach her a lesson, right now!"

"Oh, oh!" Anastasia threw up her hands in feigned fright. Then she gave a laugh and ran off, trying to elude her pursuing grandfather.

"So, she's even taken it into her head to run away from me. As if I couldn't catch up!" he muttered under his breath.

With unaccustomed ease and speed he intensified his pursuit. Anastasia ran laughing, weaving her way across the glade. And while Grandfather did not relax his pace, he was still unable to catch up to her.

Suddenly Grandfather gasped and sat down, grasping his leg. Anastasia quickly turned about, her face full of concern. She ran over to her grandfather and held out her hands to him. And all at once she stopped. Her infectious peals of laughter filled the glade. I paid particular attention to her grandfather's pose and realised the source of her mirth.

Grandfather was squatting down on one leg, holding his other leg out in front, not touching the ground. And here he was stroking the very leg he was squatting on, as though it had been injured. He had outsmarted Anastasia, but she was not deceived.

As it turned out later, she was supposed to have noticed right off the comic discrepancy in his pose. While Anastasia was laughing, Grandfather managed to seize her by the arm. He raised his switch and gave her a light spanking, like a child. Anastasia squealed, trying to pretend it was painful. And in spite of the endless laughter she was trying so hard to restrain, Grandfather put his arms around her shoulders and said:

"All, right, that's enough. Don't cry. You've learnt your lesson? You've got what was coming to you. You'll be more obedient in future.

"Listen, I've started training the eagle. It may be old, but it is still strong and remembers many things. And here she's insolently poking her nose into everything."

"Grandpakins! My dear, sweet Grandpakins! The eagle! That means you already know about the baby?!"

"The star, don't forget!..."

Anastasia didn't let her grandfather finish. Putting her arms around his waist, she lifted him off the ground and spun him around. When she returned him safely to the ground, Grandfather staggered a bit, and said, trying to appear strict:

"So that's the way you treat your elders? You see what I mean — you're spoilt!" And, continuing to wave the switch, he hurried to catch up with his father. As he reached the trees at the edge of the glade, Anastasia called after him:

"Thank you, Grandpakins, for the eagle. Thank you very much!"

Grandfather turned around and looked at her.

"Only just be, my dear child... please remember to be more —" His voice was too gentle. Breaking off his sentence, he added with a bit more severity:

"Watch out, or else..."

And he disappeared into the forest.

CHAPTER EIGHT



The answer

Once we found ourselves alone, I asked Anastasia:

“What’s all the big excitement about some kind of eagle?”

“The eagle will be very much needed for the little one,” she answered. “For our baby, Vladimir!”

“To play with?”

“Yes. Only play has a considerable significance for his future learning and feelings.”

“I see.”

I said this, even though I didn’t fully understand this business of playing with a bird, even an eagle.

“But what were you doing with the cedar? Were you praying, or talking with someone? What happened with you and the cedar, and why did Great-Grandfather seem so severe when he talked with you?”

“Tell me, Vladimir, do you think there is, well, some kind of *intelligence* out there? Does there exist a Mind in the invisible world of the cosmic — in the Universe? What do you think?”

“I think it’s true. You know, even scholars talk about that, as do mediums, and the Bible.”

“And this *something* — what would you say is the best word to describe it? I need to know this so that you and I can agree upon a definition. Say, for example, Mind, Intelligence, Being, Forces of Light, Vacuum, Absolute, Rhythm, Spirit, God...?”

“Well, let’s say ‘God’.”

“All right, then. Now tell me, does God attempt to communicate with Man, what do you think? I do not mean by a

voice from heaven, but through people, through the Bible, let us say — to offer a hint on how to be more happy?”

“But the Bible was not necessarily dictated by God.”

“Well, by whom, then, would you say?”

“People could have done that — people who wanted to invent religion. They sat down and wrote it collectively.”

“You think it is that simple? People just sat down and wrote a book, and thought up narratives and laws? A book that has lasted for millennia and is the most popular and widely read book that has existed to date?! Over the centuries a whole multitude of other books have been written, but few of them can compare with the Bible. What does that mean to you?”

“I don’t know,” I admitted. “Ancient books, of course, have been around for a long time, but most people today prefer contemporary literature — novels, detective stories and all sorts of inferior stuff. Why is that so?”

“Because reading them hardly requires any thinking. In reading the Bible one is obliged to think at a faster pace and there are many questions one must answer for one’s self. Only then will it become clear. It unfolds itself, so to speak, to one’s consciousness. If one looks upon the Bible merely as a statement of dogma, then reading and memorising a few commandments is sufficient. But any dogma imposed from without and not grasped by one’s inner being precludes taking advantage of the opportunities afforded Man as Creator.”

“What questions do we need to answer when we read the Bible?”

“To begin with,” replied Anastasia, “you might try to figure out why Pharaoh was unwilling to allow the children of Israel to leave Egypt.”

“Well, what’s there to think about? The Israelites were slaves in Egypt. Who would want to let his slaves go? They worked hard and brought Pharaoh a good income.”

"The Bible says that more than once the Israelites brought a plague over the whole land of Egypt. They even killed people's first-born offspring, along with those of animals. Sorcerers were later burnt at the stake for such acts, but here Pharaoh simply refused to let them go. Now answer the question: where did the Israelite slaves get enough goods and cattle to spend forty years travelling? Where did they get the weapons to seize and destroy cities along their route?"

"What do you mean, where? Didn't God give them everything?"

"Do you think that was only God's doing?"

"Then who?"

"Man, Vladimir, has full freedom. He has the opportunity to make use of all the bright resources God gave him originally, but he can make use of other resources too. Man represents a union of opposites.

"See, Vladimir, how the Sun shines. That is God's creation. It is for everyone. For you and me, for the snakes, the grass and the flowers. But bees use the flowers to get honey, while the spider's power is to draw poison. Each of them has its own function and no bee and no spider can do otherwise. Only Man has a wider scope, only Man can act in more than one way! One Man can *rejoice* at the first rays of the Sun, while another might curse. Man, you see, can be both a bee and a spider."

"Does that mean God wasn't the only one helping the Israelites? How can you tell, then, what God actually *did*, as opposed to what was merely attributed to Him?"

"When something significant is created through Man," Anastasia explained, "there are always two opposites at work. Man exercises freedom of choice. Which he will accept more of depends upon his purity and conscious awareness."

"Well, all right, let's accept that. So, you were attempting to talk with Him when you were standing at the base of the cedar?"

"Yes, I wanted Him to answer me."

"And Great-Grandfather objected?"

“Great-Grandfather thought that I was speaking too irreverently, that I was too demanding.”

“You really were demanding, I saw it. You were stamping your feet, and pleading. What on earth did you want?”

“I wanted to hear an answer.”

“What sort of answer?”

“You see, Vladimir, God’s essence is not in the flesh. He cannot yell down to everyone from heaven, telling them how to live. But He wants things to be fine and whole with everyone, and so he sends His Sons — people into whose mind and soul He has been able to break through at least to some extent.

“His Sons then go and talk with other people, they speak different languages. Sometimes through words, sometimes with the help of music or pictures, or various actions. Sometimes they are listened to, at other times they are persecuted and killed. Like Christ Jesus, for example. And still God is sending forth His Sons. But as always, it is only some of the people who pause and listen to them, while others who are called do not get the message at all. And they violate the laws of a happy existence.”

“I see. And that’s why God will punish mankind by a global catastrophe — some kind of fearful judgement?”

“God never punishes anyone, and He does not need catastrophes. God is Love. But that is the way it was planned from the very beginning. Created that way from above. When mankind reaches a specific point, one might say, in its unwillingness to accept the essence of truth. Once the elements of darkness manifest in Man reach that critical point, in order to avert total self-annihilation, a global catastrophe rushes in which takes away a great many people’s lives and crushes the destructive life-support system of artificial creation. The catastrophe serves as a lesson to those who are left alive.

“Following a catastrophe there is a window of time in which mankind seems to go through a fearful hell. But it is

a hell of their own making. It is those who are left alive that fall into this hell. Then for a while their children survive as in a pristine, original state, and they eventually reach a stage one could call Paradise. Then they fall away again, and it all starts over again in tears. This has been going on for billions of earthly years."

"If all this has been inevitably repeating itself for billions of years, what then were you asking for?"

"I wanted to find out how and by what means people could be made wiser without subjecting them to a catastrophe. You see, I have figured out that a catastrophe can be blamed not only on those who do not accept truth, but also on the absence of a sufficiently effective means of making the truth be seen, of making people alert to the truth. I was asking Him to find such a means. To reveal it, either to me or someone else. To whom, I feel, is not really important. What is important is that it is there to be seen, and that it works."

"And what did He tell you? What kind of voice does He have?"

"Nobody can tell what kind of voice He has. His answer takes form, as it were, in Man's discovery of a thought spontaneously occurring to himself. After all, He can speak only through His particle that is present in every Man, and this particle is already relaying information to every other part of the individual with the help of the rhythm of vibration. Hence the impression arises that Man is doing it all by himself. Though Man himself can actually do a great deal. After all, Man is God's likeness. In each Man there is a tiny particle breathed into him by God right at birth. He has given half of Himself to mankind upon the Earth. And the forces of darkness try by whatever means they can to prevent this God-reflected particle from acting out its high purpose, to distract Man from communication with it, and, through it, with God. It is much easier to fight with a small particle when it is all

alone, especially if it is not connected to the Basic Force of the Universe.

"But if these particles unite amongst themselves in bright aspirations, it is much more difficult for the forces of darkness to hinder them. Even if one single particle, living in just one single Man, is in full contact with God, then it is impossible for the forces of darkness to overpower him, to defeat his spirit and mind."

"That means," I surmised, "you appealed to Him so that the answer would be given birth in you as to what to say to people, and how to say it, in order to avert a global catastrophe?"

"More or less."

"And what answer was given birth in you? What words must be spoken?"

"Words... just words alone, pronounced in the usual way, are not sufficient. So many words have been spoken already. Yet humanity on the whole continues to move toward its own perdition.

"You have no doubt heard words to the effect that smoking is bad, that alcoholic drinks are bad. And this is repeated by a number of sources, including your own physicians, in the language you best understand, yet you still go on doing it. You go on doing it without regard for the deterioration in your own health, and even painful sensations will not restrain either you or many other people from these destructive habits. God says to you: 'You should not do that.' And the message reaches you through pain. And it is not just your pain, but His too, and yet you take painkillers galore and go on doing your own thing as before. Again, you are not interested in thinking about what produces the pain.

"And all the other higher truths are known to mankind, but they are not being acted upon. Time after time they are rejected in favour of momentary illusory gratifications. It means another way must be revealed to allow them not only

to know but also to feel other kinds of pleasure. Once Man has learnt of these, he can compare and realise everything for himself, he will unblock access to the God-bestowed particle within him. It is no good simply threatening Man with a catastrophe, it is no good simply blaming those who do not accept truth. Everyone who brings the truth to others must understand how needful it is to seek a more perfect method of explaining it. Great-Grandfather agreed with me.”

“But that’s not what he said.”

“There was a lot that Great-Grandfather said that you did not hear.”

“If you were able to communicate with each other without words, why then did you say the words that I *did* hear?”

“Would you not consider it offensive if people conversed using foreign words you could not understand, given that they knew your language too?”

Various thoughts ran through my mind: Either I believe everything she tells me or I don’t. She herself, of course, believes. And it’s not just that she *believes* it, she *acts* upon it. She takes it all so intensely — maybe I should try to somehow restrain her enthusiasm. So I tried to dampen her fervour by saying:

“You know what I think, Anastasia — maybe you don’t need to take it so to heart and get so stirred up with your demands, as you were doing at the cedar tree. Even the blue glow or vapour from the cedar came crushing down on you. Your grandfather and great-grandfather were right to be concerned. It’s probably very dangerous. If God has not given the answer to any of His Sons as to how to explain everything to people most effectively, that means there is no answer. It means that a global catastrophe is the most effective way of getting His message across. Maybe He’s even annoyed with you for poking your nose in too far and will punish you so you won’t do it again, just like your grandfather said.”

“God is kind. He will not punish.”

"But He isn't speaking to you either. Maybe He's not interested in listening to you, and meanwhile you're wasting so much energy."

"He is listening and He is answering."

"What is He answering? Is there something new you know now?"

"He has hinted at where to find the answer, where to search for it."

"He's 'hinted'? To you?! So, where is it?"

"In the union of opposites."

"What does that mean?"

"It happens, for example, when two opposite extremes of human thinking in the *Avatamsaka* commentary merge into a new dynamic whole. This was behind the philosophies of Hua-yen and Kegon,¹ which offer a world-view of even greater perfection, not unlike the models and theories in your modern physics."

"What was all that?"

"Oh, please do excuse me. I do not know what came over me. I completely forgot myself."

"What are you apologising for?"

"You must forgive me. I used words which are completely unfamiliar to you."

"You're right. They are unfamiliar. I have no idea what they mean."

"I shall try not to do that again. Please, do not be angry with me."

"Don't worry, I'm not angry. Only explain in ordinary words where and how you will go about searching for this answer."

¹*Avatamsaka Sutra* (also known as the *Flower Garden Sutra*) — considered to be the most profound of the Buddhist *sutras* (sets of aphorisms), which holds that all manifestations of existence are self-created and mutually identical. It gave rise to the philosophical school known as *Hua-yen* in China and *Kegon* in Japan.

"I certainly cannot do it alone. It can only be known through the joint effort of the divine particles to be found in various people living on the Earth — people with opposite modes of thinking and comprehension. Only through a joint effort will it be seen, and then in a dimension invisible to the eye — the domain of thoughts. One can also call it the dimension of the forces of light. It exists *between* the material world, in which Man lives, and God.

"I shall see it, and many others will, too. Then it will be easier to attain a universal conscious awareness. It will be easier to bring mankind through the dark forces' window of time. And the catastrophes will not be repeated."

"Specifically, what do people need to do right now to make the answer appear?"

"It would be fine if a lot of people could wake up in the morning at a set time — six o'clock, say — and think about something good. What specifically they think about is not important. It is important that they come out with bright thoughts. They can think about their children, about their loved ones, about how to make everyone happy. If they could only think fifteen minutes like that. And the more people that do that, the quicker the answer will come. The Earth's time zones may be different, since the Earth is turning, but the images created by these people's bright yearnings will merge into a single, clear, fulfilled image of conscious awareness. The simultaneity of bright thoughts will intensify each person's ability many, many times."

"Oh, Anastasia, how naïve you are! Who in their right mind would wake up at six o'clock in the morning just to think for fifteen minutes? People will only get up that early if they have to go to work, or have a plane to catch, or are going on a business trip. Anybody else will decide: 'Leave the thinking to others, I'm going to get some more sleep!' I doubt you'll find many helpers that way."

"But you, Vladimir — could not *you*, at least, help me?"

"Me? I don't wake up that early unless I have to. But if I should somehow find myself waking up then, what good things should I think about?"

"Well, for example, you could think about the little son I will be giving birth to. Your son! Think how delighted he will be to be kissed by the Sun's rays, to see the pure and magnificent flowers all around him, and have the bushy-tailed squirrel play with him in this glade. Think how good it would be if all the other children in the world could forever be kissed by the warm Sun — then nothing would make them sad. Then think about who you might say something glad to or give a smile to during the day ahead. And how good it would be if this marvellous world lasted forever, and what you could do — you in particular — to bring this about."

"I'll think about our son. And I'll try to come out with other good thoughts. Only what's the point? You'll be thinking here, in the forest, while I'll be in an apartment in the city. That's only two of us. You say many people are needed. So until we get a lot of people involved, isn't it pointless for just the two of us to try?"

"Even one person, Vladimir, is more than none. Two together are more than two apart. Later, after you write your book, more people will come along. I shall feel them and delight in each one. We shall learn to catch each other's feelings of the heart, understand and help each other through the dimension of the forces of light."

"Everything you say still has to be believed. I myself don't completely believe in this 'bright dimension', this 'domain of thoughts'. You can't even prove it exists, because you can't touch it."

"Yet your scientists have come to the conclusion that thought *is* something tangible."

"They have, but since you still can't actually *touch* it, it's not something you can get completely set in your mind."

"But when you write your book, people will be able to touch it, they can hold it in their hands. Like a materialised thought."

"Again you're carrying on about that book! I've told you, I don't believe in *it* either. Even less in your claim that you, with the help of certain combinations of letters known only to you, can arouse feelings in the reader — bright feelings yet, that will help the reader make some sense of it all."

"I told you how it works."

"Yes, you told me. But it still doesn't make me believe. If I try to write, I shan't tell everything all at once. People will laugh at me... You know something, Anastasia, can I tell you in all honesty?"

"Yes, tell me in all honesty."

"Only don't be offended, okay?"

"I shall not be offended."

"Everything you've talked up to me I'm going to have to verify with our scholars, and see what they say about it in various religious and modern teachings. There's a lot of different courses out there now, a lot of preachers."

"Go ahead and verify, by all means."

"And still, I feel you're a very kind person. Your philosophy is interesting, quite unusual. But if you compare your actions with those of others who are concerned about the soul, about ecology, well, frankly, you're way behind the rest."

"Why should you conclude that?"

"Think about it. All the enlightened people, as you call them, have gone off by themselves at some point. Buddha went off for seven years into the forest and set up a whole doctrinal platform, and he has a lot of followers throughout the world. Christ Jesus went off just for forty days, and even now people are excited about his teachings."

"Christ Jesus went off by himself more than once," Anastasia pointed out. "And he did a lot of thinking when he was travelling about."

"So let's say *more* than forty days, let's say a year even. The elders, who are now considered saints, were ordinary people who went into the forest to live in isolation for a time, then later monasteries were built on these sites, and a lot of followers arose, right?"

"Yes, Vladimir, you are right."

"And here you've been living twenty-six years now in the forest, and you don't even have a single follower. You haven't come up with any platform. And here you're asking me to write a book. You're grasping at that like a straw. You dream of laying out your own combinations of signs in it. Well, if things aren't working out for you like with other leaders, maybe it's not even worth trying. There are others more capable than you who may well think up something without your input. Come on, why not get real and live more simply? I'll help you adapt in our world. Now, you're not offended, eh?"

"No, I am not offended."

"Then I'll tell you the whole truth, right to the end. To help you get a hold of yourself."

"Go on."

"You have some extraordinary abilities, Anastasia, there's no doubt about that. You can pick up any information you want as easily as counting one-two-three. But tell me now, when did you first become aware of that Ray of yours?"

"It was given to me right at the start, as it is to everybody. Only my awareness of it, and how to use it — that was something Great-Grandfather taught me by the time I was six."

"So. That means at six years of age you were already able to see what was going on in our lives? You could analyse situations, help people — even treat illnesses at a distance?"

"Yes, I could."

"Now, tell me, what have you been doing all the twenty years since?"

"I *have* been telling you and showing you. I have been working with the people you call dachniks. Trying to help them."

"All these twenty years, day in and day out?"

"Yes, sometimes even at night, if I was not too tired."

"So, you've been acting like an obsessed fanatic, stubbornly holding on to the dachniks all these years? Who made you do this?"

"Nobody can make me. I did it of my own free will. After Great-Grandfather suggested it to me, I realised for myself what a good thing, how important it was."

"You know, I think your great-grandfather suggested the dachniks to you because he felt sorry for you. After all, you grew up without your parents. He gave you the very easiest and simplest task. Now that he's seen you've begun to understand something greater, he's given you permission to work with other things. And to drop the dachniks."

"But this *other* is connected with the people you call dachniks. And I shall continue to help them. I love them very much and I shall never abandon them."

"Now *that's* what I call fanaticism. There's something in you that you don't have enough of to be a normal person. You must understand that. The dachniks are far from being the most important people in our society. They have absolutely no influence at all over social development. Dachas and vegetable gardens — they're just small subsistence plots. It's where people go to relax after their hard work or when they go into retirement. And that's all. You understand? That's it! And if you, with all your colossal knowledge and phenomenal abilities, are only interested in dachniks, then you must have some kind of psychological disorder. I think I ought to take you to a psychotherapist. If you can get that disorder cured, then just maybe you'll really be in a position to help society."

"I very much want to help society."

"So then, let's go — I'll take you to a practising psycho-therapist at a good private clinic. You yourself said a global catastrophe could happen. This way you'll be able to help ecological movements, you'll be able to help science."

"But I shall be an even greater help if I stay here."

"All right, you can come back here later and start getting involved in more serious issues."

"What do you mean, 'more serious'?"

"You decide. Probably something connected, for example, with heading off an ecological disaster or a global catastrophe. By the way, do you have any idea when the latter might occur?"

"There are localised disasters happening even now in various parts of the Earth. Mankind has been preparing everything and more for its own destruction for a long time now."

"But when will it happen on a global scale — when will the apocalypse come?"

"It might occur in 2002, for example. But it can be prevented, or delayed, as happened in 1992."

"You mean to say it might have come to pass in 1992?"

"Yes, but they delayed it."

"Who are 'they'? Who averted it? Who delayed it?"

"A catastrophe on a global scale in 1992 was averted thanks to the dachniks."

"Wha-a-at?!"

"There are all sorts of people all over the world who are working against global disaster. The 1992 catastrophe did not happen mainly thanks to the Russian dachniks."

"And you... that means you!... Even at six years old you were aware of the dachniks' significance? You foresaw it? You worked non-stop. You helped them."

"I understood the dachniks' significance, Vladimir."

CHAPTER NINE



Dachnik Day and an All-Earth holiday!

“But why Russian dachniks in particular? What’s the connection here?”

“You see, Vladimir, even though the Earth is very large, it is very, very sensitive.

“Think of how big you are by comparison with a tiny mosquito. And yet, when a mosquito lands on you, you feel it through your skin. And the Earth also feels — everything. When people pave it over with concrete and asphalt, when they cut down trees and burn the forests growing on it, when they pick and poke at its innards and sprinkle it with powder called fertiliser, it feels the hurt. And yet still it loves people, as a mother loves her children.

“And the Earth tries to absorb into its depths all humanity’s anger, and only when it no longer has the strength to hold it back, that anger explodes in the form of volcanic eruptions and earthquakes.

“The Earth needs our help. Tenderness and a loving attitude give it strength. The Earth may be large, but it is most sensitive. And it feels the tender caress of even a single human hand. Oh, how it feels and anticipates this touch!

“There was a time in Russia when the Earth¹ was deemed to belong to everyone and therefore nobody in particular. So

¹ *the Earth* (Russian: *Zemliá*) — in this case denoting the land, especially arable land. The reference here is to the early Soviet period of Russian history, when the Bolshevik government took the country’s farmland out of

people did not think of it as their own. Then changes came in Russia. They began giving out tiny private plots to people to go with their dachas.

“It was no coincidence at all that these plots were extremely small, too small to cultivate with mechanised equipment. But Russians, yearning for contact with the Earth, took to them with joyous enthusiasm. They went to people both poor and rich. Because nothing can break Man’s connection with the Earth!

“After obtaining their little plots of land, people intuitively felt their worth. And millions of pairs of human hands began touching the Earth with love. With their hands, you understand, not with mechanised tools, lots and lots of people touched the ground caressingly on these little plots. And the Earth felt this, it felt it very much. It felt the blessing touch of each individual hand upon it. And the Earth found new strength to carry on.”

“So, what now?” I queried. “Should we erect a monument to every dachnik as the saviour of the planet?”

“Yes, Vladimir, they are saviours indeed.”

“But that would be far too many monuments! I have it! Why not set up a one- or two-day national holiday? *Dachnik Day*, or *an All-Earth Day*, it could be designated in the calendar.”

“Oooh, a holiday!” Anastasia threw up her arms in elation. “What a terrific idea indeed! A celebration! A happy and cheerful holiday — that is something we definitely need!”

“And you with that Ray of yours can suggest to our government, to our deputies in the State Duma,² that they pass the required legislation.”

the hands of its individual peasant owners and declared it state property. It was not until 1993 that the right to private ownership of land was restored in Russia’s new Constitution.

²*Duma* (pronounced *DOO-ma*) — Russia’s national parliament.

"I cannot get through to them. They are too busy with their daily routine. They have so many decisions to make, they have absolutely no time to think. Besides, there is not much point in my attempting to raise their conscious awareness. It would be difficult for them to accept a complete conscious picture of reality. They are not allowed to make any better resolutions than those they are passing at the moment."

"Who can stop the government or the president from so doing?"

"You. The masses. The majority. As for correct decisions, they are what you call 'unpopular measures'."

"Yes, you're right. We have democracy. The most important decisions are taken by the majority. The majority is always right."

"The greatest conscious awareness is always achieved first by individuals, Vladimir. It always takes the majority a space of time to catch on."

"If that's true, then why do we need democracy, referendums?"

"They are needed to serve as a shock-absorber, to avoid sudden jerks. When these shock-absorbers do not work, revolution occurs. A revolutionary period is always a challenge for the majority."

"But a *Dachnik Day*? — that's not revolution. What's wrong with it?"

"A holiday like that is fine. It is needed. Definitely needed. It should be set up as quickly as possible. I shall think about how it can be done as quickly as possible."

"I'll help you. I know better which levers to pull in our world for the most effective results. I'll write to the papers... No, better still, I'll write about the dachniks in that book of yours and ask people to send telegrams to the government and the Duma, requesting the establishment of a *Dachnik Day* as an All-Earth holiday. Only what date should it be?"

"The 23rd of July."

"Why the 23rd?"

"It is an appropriate day. Also because it is your birthday, Vladimir. After all, this fantastic idea is all yours!"

"That's great. So, we'll ask people to send telegrams asking for legislation setting up the 23rd of July as Dachnik Day and an All-Earth holiday. And as soon as the telegrams start arriving at the Duma and people begin to wonder why people are sending them, you burst in with your Ray!"

"Burst in I shall! I shall burst in with all my might! And it will be a fine, bright and beautiful holiday! For everyone! Everyone will have such a good time and the whole Earth will rejoice in its light!"

"Why does *everybody* have to have a good time? This holiday's only for dachniks, isn't it?"

"We must see that *everyone* has a good time. This holiday will indeed begin in Russia. But then it will become the most fantastic holiday for the world as a whole. A marvellous holiday for the soul."

"And how will it be celebrated the first time in Russia?" I enquired. "Nobody will know what to make of it."

"Each one's heart will suggest on that day what he should do and how. I can visualise a general outline right now."

Then Anastasia began talking, clearly enunciating each word. She talked with both speed and inspiration. It was all most extraordinary — the rhythm of her speech, the arrangement of her phrases, the pronunciation of her words:

May all of Russia wake that day at dawn. May people alone, or with friends and family, come to the land and stand upon it with bare feet. Those who have their little plot of land, let them greet with praise the first rays of the Sun amidst the shoots and seedlings they have planted. And touch each species with caressing hands.

As the Sun rises in the sky, let them pick and taste the fruit of their plantings, one from each variety, and that should suffice them up 'til the mid-day meal.

Before the meal let them tend their plots anew. Let each one ponder, their life and joy, and what they are destined to do.

Let each remember their family and friends with love. And ponder why their planted seeds are growing, and designate the purpose of every plant.

And even before the mid-day feast everyone should spend at least an hour by themselves. It is not important how or where or exactly when, but they should be alone for a spell. To spend at least an hour in an effort to look within themselves.

Let the whole family gather for the meal in the middle of the day. Those living at home and those who have come from far away. Let dinner be prepared from what the Earth has borne for the hour of repast. Let every one bring to the whole table whatever is desired by his heart and soul. Let all the family members look each other lovingly in the eye. And let the eldest bless the table together with the youngest. And let the table all around with quiet conversation resound. There should be good words spoken. About all those who sit beside you.

The scene Anastasia described was so extraordinarily vivid that I could feel myself sitting at the table, with people all around. I found myself caught up in the celebration — I was believing in it or, rather, I was participating in it. And I felt led to contribute a feature of my own:

“There should be a toast before dinner. Everyone raise their glass. Let’s drink to the Earth, let’s drink to love!”

I actually felt I was holding the glass in my hand.

Then suddenly she broke into my reverie:

“Vladimir, please let there be no alcoholic poison on the table.”

The glass vanished from my hand.

"Stop it, Anastasia! Don't spoil the celebration!"

"Well, since you have your mind set on it, let there be some wine from berries, but this must be imbibed in very small sips."

"All right, wine it is, then. Just so as not to change our habits all at once. And after the dinner, then what shall we do?"

Let the people return to the cities and towns, having gathered the fruit they have grown on their little plots of ground. Let them bear it in baskets and share it with everyone at home who do not have plots of their own.

Oh, how many positive feelings will come from this day! They will bring about healings of many people's diseases. Diseases which threatened with death and those not erased by time will simply vanish. Let those who are incurably or even slightly ill go out and meet the flood of dachniks returning from their plots. The rays of Love and of good, along with the fruits of their labours will heal diseases.

Look and see! Look at the city's main railway station, where floods of people are arriving with baskets of flowers. Look and see the people's eyes glimmering with kindness, joy and peace.

Anastasia was virtually glowing with a radiance, as she became more and more inspired with the idea of the holiday. Her eyes were no longer merely shining with joy, they were literally sparkling with a pale-blue luminescence. The expression on her face was changing, yet still remained joyful, as though a mighty flood of images of this celebration were rushing through her brain.

All at once she fell silent. Then, bending one leg at the knee and lifting up her right arm, she sprang from the ground with a tremendous recoil, virtually taking flight like an arrow shot from the Earth. She leapt almost as high as the bottom branches of the cedars. Upon landing, she waved her arm,

clapped her hands, and a bluish glow flooded the glade. All the words Anastasia now uttered seemed to be echoed by each tiny bug and blade of grass and each majestic cedar. Her voice sounded as though it were being reinforced by a hidden power. Even though her words were not that loud, it seemed as though they could be heard by every vein running through the unfathomable expanse of the Universe.

Mother Russia will greet crowds of guests on that day! They are all of the Earth as Atlanteans born! As prodigal sons they shall return.

On that day, all over Russia, let everyone awake and greet the dawn. Let all the strings of the harp of the Universe make cheerful melody and swell with resonant sound. Let all the bards sing and tell with joyful tongue and play guitars in all the streets, in every yard around. And he who is too old will once again be young, as many, many years ago.

“And I, Anastasia, will I be young once more?”

Both you and I, Vladimir, shall be young, and people will feel young for the very first time. And the old shall write letters to their children. And children to their parents. And infants taking their very first steps on Earth shall enter a better world of joy and mirth. And on that day no child shall feel insulted. For adults shall treat children as their equals.

And all the gods on high will to the Earth descend. And will commend themselves to take on simple forms.

And God Himself, the Universal God will be delighted. May You rejoice too in Love, making all the Earth so bright!

Anastasia was really getting carried away with images of the holiday. She was whirling around the glade in a fiery dance, becoming more and more inspired at every step.

“Stop! Stop!” I cried to Anastasia, suddenly realising that she was taking it all too seriously. She was not merely uttering words. I now realised her every word and novel turn of phrase was actually a visualisation! She was visualising images of the celebration! And with her typical stubbornness she will go on visualising and dreaming about it until the dream turns into reality. Like a diehard fanatic she will dream! She will give her *all* to those dachniks, just as she has done for the past twenty years. And I cried out to stop her:

“What’s going on? Don’t you understand? All that stuff about a holiday — it’s all just in fun! I was just teasing!”

Anastasia suddenly stopped in her tracks. No sooner did I catch a glimpse of her than I felt a big lump in my throat from the look on her face. Her face looked bewildered like that of a child. She looked at me with pain and pity, as though I were an unremitting attacker. And almost in a whisper she started saying:

Vladimir, I took it seriously. I have already visualised it all. And to life’s chain of events people’s forthcoming telegrams have already interwoven a link. The order of events will be broken without them. I have accepted your words, believed them and brought them to pass. I perceived you were speaking of the holiday and telegrams sincerely. Do not take back the words that you have spoken. Just help me with the telegrams, so that I may, as you said, offer assistance with my Ray.

“Okay, I’ll try, only don’t panic, — maybe it’ll end up that nobody will even want to send the telegrams.”

There will be people who will comprehend. They will feel it in the government and in your Duma as well. And a holiday there will be! It will arise! Time will tell! Look here!

And once again celebration images passed before my eyes.

There! — I've written about it. Now you can go and do as your heart and soul dictates.³

³In 1998, one year after this book was first published in Russian, the governor of St. Petersburg, Vladimir Yakovlev, instituted a *Gardeners' Day*, giving the residents of St. Petersburg and the surrounding region an additional day off to spend on their garden-plots. Since then this example has been followed by many regional authorities and — while not yet instituted on the national level — the holiday is officially celebrated in dozens of cities and regions throughout Russia. The date of the holiday varies from region to region.

CHAPTER TEN



The ringing sword of the bard

“What do you mean, Anastasia, by such extraordinary turns of phrase in speaking about the holiday? You pronounced each word in such a tone that every sound was crystal clear on its own!”

“I tried to reproduce a picture of the holiday with precision, to use detailed images.”

“But what about the words? What particular significance do *they* have?”

“Upon each word was borne a multitude of happy pictures and events. And now they will all come true. For thought and word, you understand, are the principle instrument of the Grand Creator. An instrument bestowed not on all that grows with flesh and bones, but just alone to Man.”

“Then why doesn’t *everything* that people say come to pass?”

“When the thread between the spoken word and the soul is broken, when the soul is found empty and the image dulled, then what is said, though it be plenty, is as empty as chaotic sound. And nothing can it betoken.”

“That’s sheer fantasy! Come on now, you let yourself believe in everything, like a naïve child.”

“How can it be a fantasy, Vladimir?! After all, I could give hundreds of examples from the world you live in, and even from your own life, as to what power a word has when it projects the image connected with it!”

“Then give me an example I can understand.”

“An example? Here is one. A person is standing on the stage before an audience and speaking words. An actor, for

instance. He will repeat the same words people have heard many times before, but there is only one actor people will listen to with bated breath. Another they will not adore. The words are the same, but there is a vast difference in how they are declaimed. What do you think? Why does that happen?”

“Well, that’s actors for you. They spend years studying at drama school — some are outstanding in their profession, others just so-so. They memorise their lines at rehearsals so that they can say them with expression.”

“They are taught at drama school, Vladimir, how to get inside the image that underlies the word. Then they try to reproduce that image during rehearsals. And if an actor succeeds in projecting even ten percent of the invisible images underlying the words he utters, the audience will then listen with their whole attention. And if he should succeed in projecting the images behind *half* of his words, you will indeed call that actor a genius. For his soul is speaking directly with the souls of those sitting or standing in the auditorium. And during the play people will laugh or cry as they feel in their soul what the actor desires to convey. Such is the instrument of the Grand Creator.”

“And you, whenever *you* speak, with how many words can you project the corresponding image — ten percent, or fifty?”

“With *all* of them. That is the way Great-Grandfather taught me.”

“All of them? Really?! All the words?!”

“Great-Grandfather said it is even possible to project the images contained in the letters of the alphabet. And I learnt how to come up with an image for each letter.”

“Why letters? Letters don’t mean anything.”

“Letters *do* mean something! Behind every letter in Sanskrit, for example, there are words, even whole phrases.

There are letters there too, and beyond them many written words, so that infinity is hidden in every letter."

"Well isn't that something?! And we just splutter out our words."

"Yes, that is what happens to words that have been passed down to us over thousands of years. They have passed through and penetrated time and space. And the forgotten images underlying them still today are once more attempting to knock on the door of the human race. And they watch out for our souls, and even go to war on their behalf."

"And what kind of words are these? Is there at least one that might be familiar to me?"

"Of course there is. At least as a sound you have heard. But people have forgotten what underlies these words."

Anastasia lowered her eyelids and sat silent for a while. Then, very quietly, almost in a whisper, she asked me:

"Vladimir, please pronounce the word *bard*."

"*Bard*," I said.

She shuddered, almost as though in pain, and said:

"Oh, the indifference and banality in your pronunciation of that majestic word! You blew a cold gust of emptiness and neglect upon the candle's restless flickering flame. A flame that has been connected through the centuries and possibly even addressed to you or someone else living today by a distant forebear. Forgetfulness of our derivation is the cause of our modern devastation."

"And just what didn't you like about my pronunciation? What should I be remembering in connection with that word?"

Anastasia fell silent. Then in a quiet voice she began uttering phrases straight out of antiquity:

"Long before Christ's birth there lived certain people on the Earth — our forefathers, who were called Celts. Their wise teachers were known as Druids. Many peoples inhabiting

the Earth at that time knelt before the Druids' knowledge of the material and spiritual worlds. Not a single Celtic warrior would dare unsheathe his sword in the presence of a Druid. To be awarded the title of Druid even at the starting level, they had to undergo at least twenty years of arduous training at the hands of a spiritual teacher — a Druid priest. Those who were consecrated in this domain were known as *Bards*. They alone had the moral authority to go out among the people and sing about and inculcate the light and truth contained in their song, using words to project images and heal people's hearts.

"The Celts fell subject to attacks by Roman legions. Their last battle took place at a river. The Romans noticed that there were women walking among the Celtic warriors — women with long, flowing hair. Experienced Roman commanders, though knowing what this meant — that they would have to outnumber the Celts six to one in order to defeat them, were unaware of the reason why. Nor do modern historians and researchers have a complete explanation. It all had to do with these unarmed women with their long, flowing hair.

"The Romans surged in with a mighty force, outnumbering the Celts nine to one. Aligned with their backs up against the river, the last family of fighting Celts was on the verge of defeat.

"They stood strong in a semicircle. Behind them was a young woman, breast-feeding a wee baby girl, and singing. The young mother sang a bright and cheerful song, so as not to instil doleful fear in the little one's soul — so that she would be left with images of light.

"Whenever the little one tore herself away from her mother's breast, their eyes would meet. The woman would cease her singing and each time tenderly utter her baby's name: *Barda*.

"Soon there was no longer any semicircle to defend the pair. All that stood between the nursing mother and the flood of Roman legionnaires making their way along the narrow

path was a young and blood-gored Bard armed only with a sword. He turned to look at the woman, their eyes met and they smiled at each other.

"The wounded Bard managed to stave off the Romans while the woman went down to the river and put her wee baby girl into a little boat and pushed it away from the riverbank.

"With one last great effort of will-power, the bleeding Bard threw down his weapon at the woman's feet. She took up his sword, and fought for four hours straight with the legionnaires on the narrow path, preventing them from reaching the shore. Their strength became spent and they spelled each other off on the narrow path.

"The Roman commanders looked on in silent astonishment, but could not understand how strong and experienced soldiers could not come close enough to even scratch the woman's body.

"For four bruising hours she fought the flood of Roman attackers. Then the woman's lungs gave out, dried up with dehydration as no liquid had touched her tongue, and drips of blood began oozing from her cracked, beautiful lips.

"Slowly sinking to her knees, her strength waning all the while, she still managed one more faint smile in the direction of the little boat carrying away her wee Barda, a future songstress, downstream with the current. And one more gleam of the word and its image which have been carried down through the millennia for the benefit of many living upon the Earth today.

"Man's being is not only in the flesh. Man's invisible feelings, aspirations and sensations are immeasurably sharper and greater than what can be discerned by the eye or ear. As in a mirror, they are but partially reflected in the visible material state.

"The baby Barda grew into girlhood, and later became a woman and a mother. She lived on the Earth and sang. Her

songs imparted to people only bright feelings and, like the all-healing Ray, helped them chase away the gloominess of the heart. Many of life's afflictions and deprivations tried to extinguish the source of this Ray. The hidden forces of darkness tried to break through to it, but could not overcome the one obstacle in their way, the Bard and his wife who stood looming before them on the narrow path.

"Man's essence is not in the flesh, Vladimir. The Bard's bleeding body projected into eternity the smile of his soul's blessed light, reflecting the unseen essence of Man.

"And the lungs of the young mother holding the sword gave out after a while, blood dripped, then poured from the cracks in her lips, which had caught the Bard's bright smile.

"And now, Vladimir, believe in me. Understand and see! And you will hear the ring of the invisible sword of the Bard, beating back the attack of the dark and angry forces on the path to the hearts of his descendants today.

"Now, please pronounce the word *Bard* once again, Vladimir."

"I can't. Not until I can say it with the proper meaning. Then I shall most certainly pronounce it."

"Thank you for not attempting it, Vladimir."

"Tell me, Anastasia — after all, *you* are able to tell. Who among those living today are the direct descendants of that nursing mother and the girl — the songstress Barda? Of the Bard-warrior who stood on the narrow path? Who can forget something as important as his ancestry?"

"Tell me, Vladimir, why this question came to your thought."

"I want to get a good look at that person or persons who have forgot such things. Those who do not remember where they came from. Those without feeling for the same."

"Perhaps you want to make certain that *you* are not the one who is forgetting?"

"Now what does that...? Never mind, Anastasia, I've got it now. You needn't give it another thought. Let each person figure it out for themselves."

"Fine," she replied and fell silent, looking at me.

And I too kept silent for a time, reflecting on the pictures Anastasia had painted, and then I asked her:

"Why did you choose that particular word as an example?"

"To show you how the images underlying it in the real world will soon take visible form. Guitar strings in swarms are now vibrating under the fingers of today's Russian bards. Even back when I was dreaming about it all in the taiga, these bards were the first to feel the images. Their hearts and their souls..."

"At first it was only in one of them that flared a flickering burning flame and the delicate resonance of a guitar string, but then the souls of others caught the rhythm and joined in. Soon their songs will be heard by many both near and far. These are the bards who will help us behold the new dawn. The dawn of enlightenment of human hearts and souls. You shall hear their songs. And these will be new songs, songs of the awakening dawn."¹

¹Since this book was first published in 1997, Russian bards have written *hundreds* of songs inspired by Anastasia. Numerous song festivals have taken place throughout Russia, and multiple song albums have appeared. Many of the bards have become wanderers, travelling in groups of up to fifty singers and giving free concerts all over Russia, spreading the message of light, happiness and the healing of the Earth.

CHAPTER ELEVEN



A sharp about-turn

Returning to the ship after my three-day stay with Anastasia, it was some time before I was in a frame of mind to take charge of company business. At first I was unable either to decide on the ship's next destination or answer the many radiograms coming in from Novosibirsk. And the hired workers, and even some of my crew, apparently sensed my inattention to the daily routine and began stealing. They were arrested by the police from Surgut (the town where the ship was docked) working with my bodyguards, and detention papers were drawn up, but even this was not something I felt like delving into at the time.

It's hard to say at the moment just why my talks with Anastasia had such a strong effect on me.

Before this my firm had received many visits from representatives of all sorts of religious denominations. They claimed they wanted to do something good for society and always asked for money. Sometimes I would oblige just so they would go away, without looking too deeply into the cause they were collecting for. And what was the point of asking them more questions if the conversation always ended up with a request for money?

In contrast to all these so-called 'religious' people, Anastasia never asked for money. In any case, I couldn't even imagine what I could give her. Outwardly it seemed she had nothing, and yet I gradually got the impression that she had everything. I gave orders for the ship to proceed full speed to Novosibirsk and holed myself away in my cabin to think.

My more than ten years' experience in business and team-management had taught me a lot. The highs and lows I had gone through had given me the skills I needed to seek and find a way out of all sorts of tricky situations. This time, however, I felt I was at rock bottom. All the troubles imaginable came upon me simultaneously. The failure of the firm appeared imminent. One of the so-called 'well-wishers' had already started a rumour, now increasing in currency, that something had happened to me and that I was no longer capable of making sound business decisions. So, people concluded, it was *saufve qui peut*, every man for himself. And that's exactly what happened. Upon my return I saw how people were saving themselves. Even my relatives had their hand in it, pilfering what they could from the company. "It's all going to go broke anyway!" they figured.

There was just one small group of my long-time employees who had tried to withstand the onslaught. But after the arrival of the lead ship, upon seeing what kind of literature I had my nose into, even they became worried about my mental state.

I myself had a perfectly clear and sober perspective on what was happening. I was fully aware that I was no longer in any position to manage this team effectively. Even those I had earlier trusted as my tried and true supporters were now starting to cast doubt upon any decision I took.

Even though I very much wanted to tell everyone who would listen about Anastasia, it hardly seemed possible to count on anybody's understanding. It might even land me in the loony bin. My family were already starting to talk about what kind of treatment I needed.

Without saying so in so many words, those around me were demanding I get back down to earth and come up with a business plan, and a successful one at that. They dismissed my latest distraction as either madness or a nervous breakdown.

I had really begun thinking about all sorts of things in this life of ours.

“What’s going on here?” I thought. “You hustle through one commercial operation and even earn big money, but where’s the satisfaction? You immediately want more. And it’s been going on like that for over ten years now! Where’s the guarantee that this race won’t last my whole life long without so much as a whiff of satisfaction?! One person gets upset because he doesn’t have enough money for a bottle of vodka. A billionaire gets upset because he doesn’t have enough for some major acquisition or another. Maybe it’s not the amount of money that counts?”

One morning two old acquaintances of mine — both entrepreneurs in charge of big commercial firms — came to see me at my office. I started talking with them about setting up a commonwealth of pure-minded entrepreneurs, about the purpose and goals of our business activities. After all, I just had to share all this with *somebody*. They played along, nodding now and then in agreement. It was a long conversation, and I ended up thinking to myself: can it be that they actually grasped it? — they did spend a lot of time discussing it, after all! Later my driver told me:

“You know, Vladimir Nikolaevich,¹ they were *asked* to come and see you. By people concerned about your health. They wanted to know what you’ve been preoccupied with all this time, what’s been on your mind. In short, to make sure you haven’t lost your mind. They wanted to know whether they should call in a psychiatrist or simply wait and let it pass.”

¹*Nikolaevich* (most often pronounced *ni-ka-LIE-yitch*) — Vladimir Megré’s patronymic (a middle name derived from one’s father’s first name). In Russian the combination of the first name and patronymic is the standard polite form of address among business acquaintances, especially to a superior.

"And what do *you* think of my mental state?"

He fell silent for a while, and then said quietly:

"For ten years your work's gone along just great. Many in the city have said you're a successful businessman. But now all your employees are afraid they may be left without a paycheque."

It was only then I realised the extent of people's concern about me, and I said to the driver:

"Turn the car around."

I went back to the office. I called an emergency staff meeting. I appointed supervisors for the company's various activities and gave them full authority to act in my absence. I then told the driver to pick me up early the next morning and take me to the airport. Just as I was about to go through the boarding gate, he handed me something wrapped in a towel. It was warm. I asked:

"What is it?"

"*Pirozhki*."²

"So, you're giving me these out of compassion for a crazy person, eh?"

"They're from my wife, Vladimir Nikolaevich. She couldn't sleep, and baked all night. She's never baked anything before, she's still a pretty young woman, but last night she plunged right in. She insisted I give them to you. She wrapped them in a towel — they're still warm. She says... you won't be back for a while. If you come back at all... This is good-bye."

"All right, then. Thank you very much."

He resigned from the firm a few days later.

²*Pirozhki* (pronounced *pee-rash-KEE*) — Russian pastry with a filling, akin to Ukrainian pierogies. A quintessentially home-made dish, *pirozhki* are often the highlights of family gatherings and celebrations. A gift of *pirozhki* denotes a loving attitude on the part of the giver.

CHAPTER TWELVE



Who sets the course?

Seated on the airplane I closed my eyes. The plane's course was set with precision. It was headed for Moscow. The course of the rest of my life was still to be set. But I was thinking more about entrepreneurs.

Many people today still tend to regard entrepreneurs as people who are constantly working out business deals, having amassed their initial capital by some illegal means and multiplying it at the expense of those around them. Naturally, just as in any other segment of our society, there are entrepreneurs and then there are entrepreneurs. However, having been right at the centre of entrepreneurial life in our country from the very beginning of *perestroika*, I can tell you that the majority of the first wave of post-communist entrepreneurs made their initial capital by looking for unorthodox solutions for producing new merchandise or goods which had been in short supply, and finding more efficient ways of structuring manufacturing operations.

It was a peculiar characteristic of Soviet and Russian entrepreneurs to make money from scratch — i.e., starting with nothing, not even credit. After all, the first wave of entrepreneurs had no access to privatised factories that the next wave enjoyed. They had to fly by the seat of their pants and hope they would be lucky. And they did make money from scratch. By way of proof, let me cite an example from my own experience.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN



Money from scratch

Back before *perestroika* I was in charge of a small unit in a photographic collective. It included lab technicians and a number of roving photographers. Everyone had both a salary and additional perks, which allowed us to make a fairly decent living for the time. Each member of our unit received a percentage of the total profits. Naturally we wanted more. But for that we had to find more clients. I managed to hit upon a solution. Anyone who wishes is free to copy it, even today.

One day while I was travelling on a highway in my hump-backed Zaporozhets¹ I got a tyre puncture. While getting the tyre repaired I watched the cars passing by one after another and thought to myself: “If only we could give all these drivers a chance to have their photo taken, there would be huge profits to be made!”

It took but a few minutes to formulate a plan of action in my head — a plan whose realisation in practice would soon quadruple our unit’s profits. It worked this way: one of our photographers would stand at the side of the highway with a camera. He had two assistants with green armbands bearing the *SB*² insignia and brandishing batons like those used

¹*Zaporozhets* — a popular and (relatively) inexpensive car manufactured during the Soviet period in the Ukrainian city of Zaporozhye. Its small size, low power, old-fashioned design and proclivity to break-downs have given it a reputation as an “inferior” vehicle, and both the car and its owners have become the butt of numerous jokes.

²*SB* — Initials for *Sluzhba byta*, the common designation for service industries in Russia.

by the traffic police. Motorists would stop, thinking it was the “Green” or some other patrol.³ Upon learning that it was simply a photo service being offered and that nobody was about to pounce on them or fine them or inspect their vehicle, drivers were happy to stand in front of their car (next to the licence plate) and have their picture taken. They gave the addresses where they would like the photos to be sent C.O.D. The licence-plate had to be showing just in case there was a mix-up in the addresses.

We ended up offering this service on all the major highways leading to Novosibirsk over a six-month period. Then more and more we started encountering motorists who had already used the service. But during these six months our unit managed to realise a fairly decent income.

Later I thought of starting a photo campaign to take pictures of residential houses, adding postcard phrases like “I live here”, “Home sweet home”, etc.

People from our unit took pictures of thousands of houses. The demand turned out to be enormous. It got so that the photographers didn’t bother asking which residents wanted it — they would simply walk along and take pictures of every house on the street. A few days later the postal service would deliver the photos to each dwelling and collect payment. People would send these snapshots to their children. Many said the pictures inspired the kids to come home for a visit.

Before long the collective started having problems paying the members of our unit their salaries which, in the opinion of the management of the day, had exceeded all reasonable bounds. But there was little they could do about it, since everyone in the collective was entitled to an equal share of their unit’s profits.

³*Green patrol* — referring to teams of environmental control officers, set up to help abate air pollution in Russia’s largest cities, and responsible for checking automobiles’ exhaust emissions (CO, CO₂, CH, NO etc.).

During the early days of *perestroika*, our unit detached itself from the collective and formed an independent co-operative. I was chosen its first chairman.

This way we enjoyed greater freedom of movement. We had the opportunity to gather some seed money together and expand the scope of our operations. I began to think about new ventures to increase company profits.

One day I happened to have a conversation with an acquaintance of mine who worked at the Institute of Theoretical and Applied Mechanics. He was complaining that wages were being delayed or not paid at all, and that the lab unit was being threatened with dissolution. Where could they go, what could they do? They weren't needed by anyone, it seemed.

"What did your lab do before?" I asked him.

"We made thermal gauge tape. Nobody needs it anymore."

"What was it used for?"

"All sorts of things," he replied. He took a piece of a black tape out of his pocket and handed it to me."

"See for yourself," he said.

I took the piece in my hand, and all at once it turned green as I fingered it. I even threw it on the ground.

"What kind of junk is that? It turns green! Now I've got to wash my hands," I told him. To which he replied:

"Don't worry, it simply changed colour from the warmth of your hand. It's supposed to react to changes in temperature. If the temperature of your hands had been above normal, it would have turned red. The green colour indicates a normal temperature."

The concept took off quickly. Our company began producing flat thermometers and stress-indicators.

A piece of the tape was stuck onto a sheet of cardboard with bright coloured squares, each with a number beside it

indicating degrees of temperature, and, *presto!* — a new product was born. We had it distributed through the state warehousing agency to many regions of the old Soviet Union (this was before the collapse of the USSR in 1991).

Our production staff increased and everyone made a fairly decent living. Our seed capital was growing. The lab also came out of the red, since a share of the profits accrued to the Institute.

Our co-operative acquired new equipment along with two vehicles. And then something happened which gave us an incredible boost.

One afternoon I arrived at the company office and noticed both our telephones in use. My secretary was on one of them, listening and taking down notes. The other telephone was being manned by the cleaning lady. No sooner had one of the phones been hung up than it started ringing again. At one point my secretary managed to tell me:

“They’ve been ringing off the hook for over two hours already! One call after another non-stop! Everybody’s asking for our thermometers and stress-indicators. One fellow cursed us, calling us pre-*perestroika* dimwits. If we were willing to raise our prices, he said, he would buy them from us wholesale — at the higher price. They’re all placing bulk orders. They’re even ready to give us advance deposits.”

During the early days of *perestroika* in our country, if you remember, there was quite a proliferation of manufactured kitsch on the market — plastic clip-on earrings, posters and calendars featuring semi-nude girls. Everyone snapped these things up like crazy.

Against that background what we produced looked like a super novelty. But after six months of production, sales suddenly took off with a bang. Something had happened, but what?

It turned out that on a TV broadcast the previous night, foreign-affairs correspondent Vladimir Tsvetov was

commenting on how innovative the Japanese were, and showed a Japanese stress-indicator as an example. It looked just like ours. It was then that I realised for the first time the power of advertising and the nature of this beast called luck!

Our staff began working three shifts a day round the clock. We hired workers to do the packing, trimming and finishing in their own homes. Profits steadily increased. We acquired a small passenger ship. I also decided to manufacture seeding equipment for independent farmers. I even chartered a large cruise ship to organise business tours and trade expeditions to the regions of the Russian Far North.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN



A destructive force

As head of my very own co-operative I got to know first-hand what a destructive force — one capable of crushing any material state of well-being — impatience toward each other and the break-down of mutual understanding can be. Later I learnt that this is the very reason behind the failure of many collectives. And it can all start over a trifle.

Indeed, that's how it happened with my first co-operative. Not only was it torn apart itself, but several families were destroyed in the process. Even today I still don't know how to counteract this force which erupts spontaneously and is not subject to common sense!

It all began when I decided to procure for our firm a country house with its own estate. I entrusted the details to our acting inventory and supply manager Alexey Mishunin. He drew up all the necessary sale-purchase documents, while I went to take a look at the property. It included a large house, a fifth of a hectare of land, a bath-house, garage and greenhouse. We even got a cow and a flock of sheep in the bargain — not exactly a priority, but Mishunin said the owners had to go away and wanted to sell everything all at once. There was feed for the cow, and he had already arranged for a woman from the village to come in and do the milking.

A couple of days later I called a meeting of the members of the co-operative to tell them about our acquisition. I explained it was intended for entertaining guests, as well as being a place where the members of the co-operative could relax and celebrate special occasions. We would all have to work

together to fix up the place, do some renovations and modernise the kitchen.

The male half of the co-operative greeted the idea with great enthusiasm. But the women began whispering among themselves. It wasn't clear who the ringleader was, but my wife took on the role of spokesperson, saying the men had overstepped all recognised bounds of decency in respect to the women.

"We work with you as equals here," she declared. "After that we go home every day and clean house, cook meals and take care of the children. Does that seem trifling to you? And now you want us, in addition to all that, to work our asses off at this country house of yours, do renovations, and then be cooks and waitresses for your receptions and drinking parties?!"

That was when all hell broke loose. The women poured out on the men all their personal and family grievances and other pet peeves. I realised this when one of them cried out:

"All you do is fool around with dominoes and stare at the tube the whole evening long!"

I knew that none of the men at the co-operative played dominoes. It was her husband, a firefighter, who played. He didn't even work for us. But wives of the co-operative workers were especially 'pissed off'. One of them stupidly blurted out to her husband in front of everyone:

"You always smell of sweat and cheap cigarettes," — he was especially fond of the Prima brand — "and now you're going to be smelling of cow-dung too?!"

A silence hung over the room. The husband took a deep gulp of air, blushed and retorted:

"I shall especially smell of cow-dung. Especially so that you won't come near me, you slut!"

At this she burst into tears. The women gathered around to console her. And it made them even more 'pissed off'. They

started hurling all sorts of insults. One of our workers was named Zhenya Kolpakov — he'd invented all sorts of devices to increase productivity, and could fix anything that needed fixing. But now they told him:

"We have inventors here, but it takes a whole year to clean up after them!"

Then the discussion turned to politics:

"Gorbachev goes on television, but it's Raisa Maximovna¹ who makes all the decisions."

I declared a recess. I thought everyone somehow might come to their senses. After the break they all took their seats again, the outward restraint barely masking the inner tension. Once again my wife spoke in the name of the women. With a contrived tranquillity she threw out a venomous ultimatum:

"Of course, if you really want a country residence, go ahead, but not one of us women will step foot in it. In other words, it'll be yours alone. And since we share our funds in common and you have no right to spend them without our consent, as compensation we demand you give us one of the company cars with a driver, specially for our household use. We'll take turns using it."

"Great," came a chorus of male voices, "go ahead and choke yourselves! We'll give you anything you like as long as you promise not to show up there!"

"They're bound to find some farm hussies out there," one of the women observed.

"Let them look," retorted another. "Those hussies'll soon make themselves scarce. Who needs them?"

¹*Raisa Maximovna Gorbacheva (née Titorenko; 1932–1999)* — wife of the last Soviet leader (General Secretary of the Communist Party and President of the USSR) *Mikhail Sergeevich Gorbachev* (1931–). In contrast to the wives of Gorbachev's predecessors, Raisa Maximovna played an active role in the political life of the Soviet Union and was rumoured to 'run the country' from behind her husband's back.

None of the men whose wives worked at the co-operative went home that night. It was Friday, and we headed out to our 'hacienda'.

We took a good look around, and started making plans for settling in. The next day we heated up the bath-house. At Mishunin's request the village woman came to milk the cow. We watched how she did it. It was a pleasant time. The cow was quiet, not restless. She was ours now. The woman advised that she wouldn't always be able to come to do the milking. We'd need to look up somebody else.

After an early-evening cleansing at the bath-house, we cooked ourselves supper. It turned out we had quite a feast! Mishunin fried some fish. We put out bottles of beer and vodka, and sat down at the table. And all at once: "Moo-o-oo!"

It was the cow. We got up and headed for the barn. It was milking time, and there was no milkmaid around. We stood there — eight men — in front of the cow and had no idea what to do.

In any case, who can explain what sometimes happens to people at the sight of an animal? You live your life day after day without the slightest thought for non-human creatures. And then all at once you find yourself in a situation where one of them's in your home: a cat, or a dog, or some other animal, and you find you have the same kind of feelings come over you that you'd have in the presence of a child. You're nervous, you worry. Why is that? Maybe it's really true that the first man, Adam, when God gave him the job of naming all the creatures, looked upon each one with *love*, and this love is something we've all inherited — it hides for the most part deep down inside us and makes an appearance only from time to time. Nobody can say for certain whether that's true or not. Only each one of us, I'm telling you, had *some* sort of feeling for that cow, and I'm positive it felt something for us, too.

And this is what came out of it. Seryozha Khodokov said:

"The milk's likely bursting her udder. We've got to do something."

We started in pestering Mishunin. Why on earth, we said, did you buy a cow? And yet at the same time we felt bad about selling it — it had only been one day but we had somehow taken to it like one of our own.

The cow looked at us with her sorrowful eyes, silently. Then she stretched her head out toward me and let out a loud "Moo-o-oo!" She was mooing so pleadingly, and I told Mishunin:

"Better get to the milking right away, since you were the one who bought her!"

Mishunin quickly fetched the milk-pail, tied the kerchief around his head (the kerchief the milkmaid had left behind), and climbed into the cow's stall. He asked us not to leave, as God knows what this cow might do. She let him approach and start milking her. We brought the cow some water to drink, put fresh hay into her stall and gave her some bread.

Mishunin went on milking. At first he wasn't very successful — only very thin streams of milk came out and even they sometimes missed the pail, but then it got a little better. After fifteen minutes the milk was still coming. Mishunin said, whispering for some reason:

"Sweat. My sweat's getting in the way."

"We gathered up handkerchiefs from whoever had them, and Seryozha Khodokov climbed into the stall to wipe the perspiration from Alexey's forehead. He squatted down beside him to see how the milking was going, from time to time wiping the sweat from Alexey's face. And suddenly we could hear Seryozha's agitated whisper:

"What are you doing? You're hurting her! You've got a good stream coming from your right hand, but only a third of that from your left. You can permanently damage her udder that way."

"It's my fingers," Mishunin whispered. "It's 'cause my fingers have gone numb on my left hand. Maybe you'd better help."

Seryozha Khodokov approached the cow from the other side and they began milking together simultaneously.

After half an hour, maybe more, they had milked a whole pailful.

That night at supper we drank fresh milk, and I swear it was the best-tasting milk we'd ever had in our lives.

Early the next morning we were awakened by the milkmaid, who told us with some astonishment that she had tried milking the cow that morning, but for some unknown reason the cow wouldn't let her anywhere close to her.

Once again we trotted off to the barn. We did everything just the way we had the night before, and the cow started milking.

"Well ain't that the limit!" exclaimed the woman. "Since the cow seems to like you so much, *you* can milk her from now on. Happens that way, y'know. A cow can let some people come close, but others she jolly well won't."

Our cow, it turned out, was quite picky. Not only did she not let any of the hired milkmaids near her, whenever she was milked she demanded that one of us stand by her muzzle and feed her, and talk to her, while the milking had to be a joint effort on the part of two men together. That meant three of us had to go for each milking session. So that's how we drew up the schedule — three at a time. At least until we sold the cow, we thought. But it wasn't long before the rumours about our picky cow began flying around. Buyers would come and try milking her themselves, and nothing happened. And they'd refuse to take her, even for a pittance. Granted, I did make one condition — that she wasn't to be slaughtered for meat.

We called in a veterinarian, and he told us:

"That does happen, fellows. An animal gets used to someone, and may reject others for a long time. But tell me, what on earth possessed you to domesticate her that way?"

He didn't have any real advice to offer us, apart from telling us that our cow was calving — meaning she was pregnant. When the time came we would have to prepare for the birthing. The vet indicated the approximate date. We would know when the time was near when she stopped giving milk.

Since the men were obliged to keep watch three at once, we ended up spending a lot of time at our 'hacienda' — even staying overnight there.

Our wives had a hard time accepting that we were really having problems with the cow, since they had sworn never to set foot in our 'hacienda' themselves, and looked upon this whole story of the cow as a convenient excuse. The women and wives working at the co-operative completely lost all sense of self-control. They started telling obscene jokes. The one who complained about her husband's bad smell said:

"Only a sexual pervert could attract such a perverted cow!"

To which he retorted:

"I'd rather spend my whole life milking a silent cow than listening to your dumb remarks."

Soon afterward he moved out completely to live in the 'hacienda' and later got a divorce from his wife. He married a young country girl with a child and became quite a decent farmer.

Then the day came when the cow stopped giving milk. On the vet's advice we got everything ready for the birthing. But the cow gave birth all by herself and without incident. She bore a little bull-calf. A handsome son-of-a-gun. When we called the vet, he took one look at the pair and said:

"Well, that's great! Nothing more to be done here. She's taken care of it all by herself. Just keep the place clean. Make sure she's well fed."

Some time later we managed to find a good home for both the cow and her bull-calf. One day we went over to see what a handsome creature he'd turned into, our little bull. And everything was arranged nicely for his mother. Even now I still think of her. I wonder whether she remembers us. But while we got things settled for the cow, we didn't manage to restore a sense of harmony and mutual understanding in the co-operative.

So I ended up dividing the co-operative in two, reorganising part of it under a different name. I began using the chartered ship to make long trading voyages to the North along the River Ob. In between such voyages I conducted business cruises for Russian and foreign entrepreneurs.

I took the lesson home that one indispensable condition of success, among others, is a sense of mutual understanding and respect in a collective. You must have faith not only in your own abilities but in everyone's. Any kind of ability you have is multiplied by your faith in the people around you.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN



‘Herbalife’ entrepreneurs

It was only upon arriving at Moscow’s Vnukovo airport that I realised my funds were rather low — I had only 5 million roubles (\$1,000) left, and I did not even have a specific plan of action. It was hardly likely that either my employees or my family would be able to cope with my accumulated debts; they would have to sell the company’s assets, meaning I could not look to home for any assistance. Had I remained in Novosibirsk, of course, I could have worked things out. But that would have meant concentrating all my attention on the daily affairs of my business — something that was impossible after what had happened in the taiga and the promises I had made both to Anastasia and to myself.

Indeed, by this time it was hard to determine whether my actions were being guided by my own awareness and desire or by Anastasia’s influence.

One thing was crystal clear: I was bankrupt. Having witnessed countless similar situations among my colleagues, I knew there was nobody I could turn to — either friends, relatives, or former employees. They would all avoid you like the plague. You can spend ten years of your life being a hero and then just one little mistake can put you in the doghouse and make you a non-person, despised by everyone you know. It’s happened to a lot of prominent entrepreneurs. In a situation like this you can only hope in yourself and your own ability to find a way out of a dead-end predicament.

After leaving my bag (containing a sweater, some shirts and a few other trifles) at a hotel, I started tramping around the

streets of Moscow. I tried figuring out what it all meant — everything Anastasia had said about Russia's entrepreneurs.

The first thing that struck my eye in Moscow this time was the activity of the so-called 'Herbalifers'.

Neatly dressed people stood in the tunnels leading to metro¹ stations in the city centre, haranguing passers-by with job offers. "With a foreign firm," as they said. They were luring them with promises of huge earnings and opportunity for promotion. The word *Herbalife* wasn't even mentioned — probably because almost every classified advertisement in the papers posted by a job-seeker ended with the words: "No Herbalife offers."

Still they stood there, wearing "Work for you" buttons and handing out flyers from some foreign firm, stubbornly urging people to at least come for an interview. Later I learnt that those responding were subjected to intense psychological conditioning, with special emphasis on two points dear to the heart of the average Russian.

First, seminar speakers would make a big thing of telling how they or their relatives, for example, received a fantastic healing with the help of this 'Herbalife' from overseas, with the implication that any potential distributor could also engage in the noble practice of treating people's ailments. The system was so miraculous, they declared, that no medical courses were needed, just two or three training sessions, even if you were a simple painter or plasterer, and, presto, you are qualified to act as a consultant to ailing consumers.

Secondly, they made a point of telling stories with examples of how one could get rich through promoting and distributing 'Herbalife' products. This meant buying at least one package for starters (with your own money), then finding someone

¹ *metro* — i.e., the *Metropolitan*, referring to the underground or subway system operating in Moscow and many other Russian cities.

else and convincing him in a one-on-one conversation of the fantastic benefits of using ‘Herbalife’, then selling it to him at a slightly higher price. At the same time you needed to keep recruiting more distributors, getting a percentage from each new recruit. The more recruits you attracted, the higher you would rise in the hierarchy and the more money would accrue to you. You would reach a point where you yourself wouldn’t have to do any of the actual distribution work.

As an entrepreneur, I soon realised one thing very clearly: money *did* come showering down in a rain of gold, but only for the person at the very top of this pyramidal system and his closest collaborators. The whole long chain of distributors, divided into so-called levels, survived only thanks to each level benefiting from its own price mark-up, and it was all paid for by the one at the very bottom — the consumer who believed in the miracle properties of the product.

In some cases the price increased by twelve times!! The actual distribution keeps rolling along non-stop, thanks to the huge number of agents using their own accounts of healing to win the trust of their fellow-Russians and make them believe in the miracle properties of ‘Herbalife’. A system like this is capable of selling even the ashes from one’s stove. Any complainers are simply told that they have somehow misunderstood the instructions on the label or not followed them closely enough.

This system is especially effective in our country, where people are accustomed to getting the most reliable information from trusted friends and acquaintances rather than through official channels.

There is no point whatsoever in discussing the advantages or disadvantages of the ‘Herbalife’ products themselves. That is a long story. I can say only one thing with absolute certainty: all the fervour of the distributors telling about their own healings disappears as soon as they realise they’re not going

to get any money from you. In that case you'll start hearing a whole string of counter-examples, such as "It's nothing but a load of crap!"

This distribution system was invented in the West. Managed from the West, it lures in all sorts of unemployed Russians. But these are not *our* entrepreneurs. And now I shall tell you of yet another gimmick invented by Western businessmen.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN



Free holidays in Hawaii

If you should be stopped on a crowded Moscow street by smartly dressed young people (some of whom speak with an accent) inviting you to a presentation by a foreign firm with your own reserved table and free lottery tickets, offering you the opportunity to win a gold watch or even a free trip to Hawaii, you can be sure that you will be guaranteed a free trip. But it is best to bear in mind the old saying: "The only free cheese is in a mousetrap."

It's not hard to figure out just how this particular mousetrap works.

What you get 'for free' is the opportunity to stay in elegant lodgings. Upon arriving you discover that they really do look like the photos in the brochures. The catch is, you have to pay for the airline ticket, your food and all the 'incidentals'.

A few days into your stay you realise that this 'free' vacation is ending up costing you quite a bit more than the full price of a stay at some other comparable resort. It's all very simple: your 'free stay' is paid for by a host of surcharges on a range of food and other services. These surcharges cover, by the way, the agents standing on the street-corners and the so-called 'free' presentation, the colour brochures they hand you, not to mention the company's profit.

Of course, for those with lots of money to spare, it doesn't make too much difference. The only bad thing you might feel is the unpleasant sensation of being made a fool of. It is quite a different matter when an average Russian wage-earner of modest means, one who has spent a whole year saving for such

a trip, takes the bait and, instead of going to see his mother or for a holiday at a Russian resort, hands over his hard-earned savings to these foreign smart-asses and like a fool spends two weeks in lodgings designed for fools like him.

Gentlemen from abroad, where did this attitude of disrespect for us Russians come from? As I was looking at the sales kiosks on our streets filled with imported goods, even imported bottled water, I remembered how it had been the same way on my ships, but back then I had never really thought about what was behind it. I was listening to radio reports about the suspicious quality of the chicken legs on sale all over the country, as well as about bottled water with fancy labels promoting its healing mineral properties, belying the fact that this stuff, sold in our stores, was simply tap water with suspicious additives. I was noticing the huge number of signs advertising how you could refresh your strength with a 'hot dog', as if all of Moscow and even all of Russia had suddenly made these rubber sausages their national dish, and wondering why this had never struck me before as it did now.

I remembered the respect and enthusiasm with which we'd greeted visiting entrepreneurs from abroad at the beginning of *perestroika*. I remembered how I'd organised business cruises down the River Ob for them on my ship, and how the Siberian entrepreneurs tried as hard as they could to provide them with the highest-quality service. Of course not all the visitors were the same, but what did we gain in the long term?

So, where are you, entrepreneurs of Russia? The ones that should be making our country flourish?!

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN



The beginning of perestroika

At the very beginning of *perestroika*, when the first law on co-operatives in the USSR was enacted, many saw it as a call to action. And a lot of young people, as well as many not so young but invariably full of energy and desire to really do something for themselves and their country, literally threw themselves into the fray. And immediately found themselves surrounded by a hostile, pestering crowd.

“Down with them!” the crowd shouted. “Bourgeois smart-asses! What did we fight for, anyway?”

And even though many of Russia’s pioneer entrepreneurs ended up working round the clock, pouring in a colossal amount of energy, not to mention their unique wit and inventiveness, hardly any of their efforts met with so much as a ‘thank you’. The modicum of support they required was usually provided only by intercommunication and interaction with each other.

Then a concept was born — it literally came out of thin air — the idea of creating a Union of USSR Co-operators. I was part of the pilot group initiating the project, along with the well-known Russian entrepreneur Artem Tarasov.¹

¹ *Artem* [pronounced: art-YOM] *Mikhailovich Tarasov* (1950–) — a prominent Russian entrepreneur, one of the first Soviet ‘co-operators’. An engineer by profession, in 1989 he proclaimed himself the first legal millionaire in the USSR, and the following year he was elected as a deputy of Russia’s Supreme Soviet (nominal Parliament). He founded dozens of business ventures, including Russia’s leading business newspaper *Kommersant* and the *Transaero* airline. After years of suppression by the state, Tarasov emigrated to London. In 2004 he published a book of memoirs entitled *The millionaire*, exposing the corruption of Russia’s ruling élite.

Most of us at the time were Communists. At the first entrepreneurs' congress I was elected secretary of the congress's Party Committee. I tried to explain to our overseer from the Communist Party Central Committee, Comrade Kolosovsky, that it was incredibly difficult for entrepreneurs to work under such pestering. We needed first and foremost the Party's moral support. But I soon realised that we were going to be facing hostility and pestering from a segment of the ordinary public, as well as high- and low-ranking officials, for a long time to come. We could not look to the higher echelons of the Central Committee for any outward show of support, since they were afraid of losing popularity — already their power was greatly diminished compared to the heyday of Soviet communism. An internal struggle had apparently begun and was now in full swing.

In addition, entrepreneurs had begun to feel mounting pressure from a tax squeeze. And today, with maybe one or two exceptions, not a single business can keep afloat if it dutifully pays all the required taxes. Realising this, many of them have managed to escape the tax squeeze by using all sorts of tricky loop-holes. But in doing this they have landed themselves in an even more precarious situation — being outside the law. Attempt after attempt to make officials on various levels see the absurdity of the prevailing tax system have not exactly been crowned with success. Indeed, they could not be, since the ones who initiated the system (and this is my own personal assumption) understand better than anyone else the impossibility of paying all the taxes, but this was exactly what they needed. Needed for what? For power, of course! For extortion!

One false step and you can be instantly ground to powder, outlawed by tax police and inspectors.

I felt sorry for the first entrepreneurs of *perestroika*, as well as for Russia's current crop of businessmen. I decided to do for

them whatever lay within my powers. I went to the League of Russian Co-operators and Entrepreneurs, originally headed by Vladimir Alexandrovich Tikhonov,² whom we had elected to the post in *perestroika*'s early days. The League's executive Presidium still maintained a headquarters, but many of the offices were empty. Vladimir Alexandrovich had died a year and a half earlier. I was told that the Chairman of the Russian Business Round Table, Ivan Kivilidi,³ had been poisoned, together with his secretary, just six months ago. Artem Tarasov had resigned from the League, and the organisation's membership was only a shadow of its former self.

Thanks to my acquaintance with one of three remaining League executives, my request for space in one of the empty offices was granted, along with two telephones, a computer and a fax machine. Since the League had no organisational funds available, I was pretty much on my own. To save time and hotel expenses, I used the office for my sleeping quarters as well. I was awakened every morning at six o'clock by the arrival of the cleaning lady, and the absence of a TV allowed me to work most evenings right up 'til midnight. This sudden shift in living conditions — from a luxury ship's cabin (where anything I wanted to eat or drink was only a bell ring away) to a drab office not designed for living accommodation — in no way embarrassed me. In many respects it actually afforded me greater opportunities to pursue my work.

²*Vladimir Alexandrovich Tikhonov* (1927–1994) — academician of the Lenin Agricultural Academy and co-author of the innovative legislation on Russian co-operatives mentioned above.

³*Ivan Kharlampievich Kivilidi* (1949–1995) — an entrepreneur of Greek descent, at one time said to be the richest man in Russia. Kivilidi was an outspoken advocate of political and economic reform. In 1993 he founded an influential "Russian Business Round Table" to forward the interests of Russian entrepreneurial élite in the political arena. The poison which killed him and his secretary was delivered by a breath-activated substance placed in his office telephone receivers.

I spent my time thinking out and drafting a constitution for a Fellowship of Entrepreneurs, along with compiling letters of appeal — these I sent out by fax in the early hours of the morning, when the communication lines weren't as busy. By hook or by crook, making use of both newspaper adverts and chance encounters, I gathered together a secretariat of various Moscow professionals who shared my enthusiasm for the project and realised its significance.

The secretariat also included three Moscow university students. First there came Anton Nikolaikin, who had been called in to fix a broken computer. Later, after learning of our work on organising the Fellowship, he brought along two of his friends, Artem Semenov and Alexey Novichkov. They immediately began work on encoding the electronic version of the *Golden Catalogue of Russia*,⁴ for which they were able to put together a highly professional computer programme.

⁴*Golden Catalogue of Russia* (in Russian: *Zolotoi katalog Rossii*) — a reference to the Fellowship's proposed directory of member enterprises.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN



Fellowship of Russian entrepreneurs

The idea of a Fellowship meant that it would be open to any entrepreneurs who had been active in the Russian market for at least a year, and were sincerely striving to develop honest relationships not only with each other but with their clients and employees. Representatives of various non-profit societies tried to persuade me that today's entrepreneurs were cool to the idea of any form of organisation, that the age of faith-based euphoria had passed, and that membership in societies one could join simply by paying a modest fee had diminished catastrophically. They argued, furthermore, that the idea of organising a Fellowship with additional requirements involving the ethical standards of both the entrepreneur and the enterprise was simply absurd.

My old friend Artem Tarasov, having heard about my arrival in Moscow and what I was up to, came to one of the 'round tables'. He set to work on drafting documents, including an appeal to entrepreneurs. He laid out several thousands of dollars so I could make up glossy brochures to give out to delegates at a small-business congress¹ being organised in Moscow.

¹*small-business congress* — a reference to the First All-Russian Congress of Small Business Representatives held on 19–21 February 1996 in the prestigious Kremlin Palace of Congresses in Moscow. This high-profile event, organised by several government agencies and the Chamber of Commerce of the Russian Federation, featured an address by Russian president Boris Yeltsin. To the entrepreneurs' disappointment, however, many of the promises of government support to small business voiced during the congress were never fulfilled.

But the congress organisers decided not to allow any brochures on the Fellowship to be handed out, no doubt fearing competition from us. As a result, secretarial staff and students positioned themselves just outside the entrances to the Rossiya Hotel,² trying to hand delegates folders containing the brochures. They stood there withstanding both the cold and attempts to chase them away by the militia, who thought some kind of illegal selling might be taking place. Artem Tarasov still managed to take a package of brochures into the Kremlin Palace of Congresses, where the congress was being held — though, unfortunately, only a rather small quantity.

The operation we had placed so many of our hopes on ended in failure. Organising the Fellowship was proving to be an impossibility. The difficulty was that getting the necessary information out to all the entrepreneurs across the country required a huge outlay of roubles on printing and postage costs, since favourable responses were coming in from only ten percent of the people we managed to reach. The required funds were simply not available.

Besides, the League executive kept back a portion of the membership fees as office-space rent, as they had no other source of funds. Sensing some sort of snag, the League stopped giving out money for organisational expenses altogether, in spite of the fact that the membership fees had been specifically earmarked for organisational expenses.

The League needed to use the entrepreneurs' membership fees just to cover operating costs, they explained. Then they began holding back wage payments for the secretarial staff. I was obliged to vacate the League's premises, leaving behind my second computer which had been purchased with funds from the entrepreneurs who had joined the Fellowship.

²*Rossiya Hotel* — a large hotel complex in downtown Moscow, across from the Kremlin and Red Square, overlooking the Moskva River.

“How come?” queried the students in bewilderment — students who had spent hours working out computer programmes at their own expense. “We’ve been doing the work which this non-profit organisation, according to its own constitution, is supposed to carry out, and here they’re treating us like tenants, and spitting on the entrepreneurs in the process.”

The League executive argued: “The office rent must be paid.”

With what was left of the secretarial staff, I tried to carry on the work out of one of the entrepreneurial trades union offices, but the same situation repeated itself there.

After getting to know the leaders of several non-profit organisations, I suddenly realised that they all had titles, but no membership, something like the so-called ‘sofa parties’,³ existing only for the benefit of their executives. While this was not true of the Farmers and Peasants Association, headed by Vladimir Bashmachnikov (and there may be other exceptions), this was the general state of affairs at the time.

Even today there is no non-profit organisation in Russia bringing together any significant number of entrepreneurs, and those that do exist are of the ‘sofa party’ variety. Why? Among the possible causes I would include the anonymity of membership fees.

For some reason it always happens that once an executive body is created, it starts making decisions on behalf of entrepreneurs without consulting the majority.

Walking away from the trades-union office, I now found myself without any means of communication and without anything to live on. Artem Tarasov had by this time emigrated to London. He had tried to get himself on the ballot for the

³*sofa parties* (in Russian: *divannye partii*) — political parties (or non-profit societies) with the trappings of a registered organisation, but created merely to advance the interests of one individual or a small group.

Russian presidency and had spent billions of roubles collecting the required signatures, but when the Central Election Committee invalidated most of those signatures, Artem was obliged to look after repairing his own financial affairs.

The local residents working in the secretariat, not receiving any pay, were obliged to quit.

I was left all alone. Or rather, I thought I had been left all alone. But three Moscow students weren't about to abandon the work they had started: Anton, Artem and Lyosha. Anton actually used his own holiday savings to pay the monthly rent on an apartment for me. They were willing to wait until I sought and found a way out of my present circumstances and could continue my work on creating the Fellowship. They had got caught up by the whole idea. They believed in it. But I could see nothing ahead but a dead end.

It was right at this time that some news arrived from Novosibirsk.

CHAPTER NINETEEN



Suicide?

One evening a man from Novosibirsk dropped by to see me. He was in Moscow on some business of his own. He brought along a bottle of vodka and some light snacks. We sat in the kitchen of my one-room flat, and he told me about how things stood with my family and my company.

The situation was indeed deplorable. My firm had had to give up one of its offices in the centre of the city for lack of funds to pay the rent. Our automobile spare-parts store had had to close. The workers there tried selling shoes, but their debts only increased. The entire responsibility fell on my shoulders.

"And here you're up to goodness-knows-what. A lot of people are saying you've gone mad. You should have worked out things at the company first and then gone off and done your own thing, whatever it is. Nobody there has faith in you any more."

As we were finishing off the bottle, he asked me:

"You want me to tell you my honest opinion — what they expect of you?"

"Go ahead," I replied.

"They would like you to do away with yourself, or at least disappear for good. You be the judge — it's impossible to start anything now without any seed capital, and here not only do you not have any seed capital, you don't even have enough to live on. And your debts have been building up like crazy.

"You know, nobody's ever heard of someone climbing out of a hole like that. But with you out of the picture, your death will settle everything, and they can divide up what's left of your estate.

"Your wife says that according to the horoscope you're a Leo, and you've just been wasting your whole life away, so you *should* die in poverty, just like in the horoscope.

"Come on, now, why did you undertake that second expedition? Nobody can figure it out."

In spite of the fact that we were both pretty drunk, when I awoke the next morning I had a clear recollection of the whole conversation. His arguments were forceful and convincing. Novosibirsk was a dead end; there was a dead-end situation here in Moscow too. People who had worked alongside me were suffering, my family was suffering. I couldn't possibly find a way out and fix everything — there was simply no way out. Only my death could put an end to the suffering.

Of course suicide is never the right thing to do. But according to the logic of events, my suicide would relieve the suffering of others, and if that was the case, then he was right, and I had no right to live. And so I decided to do away with myself. The thought of it even brought comfort to me. I was freed from the need to undertake a torturous search for a way out of my present situation, since I agreed that death *was* the way out.

I cleaned up the apartment a bit and wrote the landlady a note to say I wouldn't be back. I decided to go to the trades-union office to put the Fellowship files in order. Someone — okay, maybe not now, but later, perhaps — would carry on with the work.

The only question was: how would I do away with myself when I didn't even have enough money to buy the poison? Then I really began thinking: maybe it shouldn't *look* like suicide... Maybe I'll go take a dip in the river, just like the 'walruses',¹ and I'll jump through a hole in the ice and drown. So I headed off toward the Moskva River.

¹ *walruses* — the name given to the many hardy souls who brave the icy waters of Russia's lakes and rivers in the middle of winter (akin to 'Polar Bears' in Canada and America).

As I was making my way through an underground passageway at the Pushkinskaya metro station, my ear all at once caught a familiar melody. It was being played by two young girls on their violins. An open violin-case lay on the pavement in front of them and passers-by were tossing in money. A lot of buskers make extra money like that at metro stations. But the way these two girls were playing their sweet melody amidst the bustle of noisy pedestrians and the screeching of trains in the background caused many a passer-by to slow down and listen. As for me, I couldn't help but stop dead in my tracks. The violin bows were echoing a melody I had heard only once before — in the Siberian taiga — a melody sung by Anastasia.

Back there in the taiga, I had once asked her to sing something of her own — a song I'd never heard before, and she came out with this extraordinary, unusual captivating melody without words. She started by screaming like a newborn baby. Then her voice began sounding ever so quiet and tender. She stood beneath a tree, her hands clasped to her breast, and it seemed as though her voice was a lullaby, gently caressing a little baby, trying to tell him something. Her voice was so quiet it caused everything around to be still and listen. Then she seemed to be filled with delight at the little one waking from sleep, and her voice took off with rejoicing. The incredibly high-pitched sounds and cascading trills soared and took flight to the heavens, radiating through space and delighting all around...

I asked the girls:

"What were you playing?"

They exchanged glances and one of them said:

"I was just sort of improvising."

And the other chimed in:

"And I was just playing along."

Here in Moscow, caught up as I was with the idea of setting up the Fellowship of Entrepreneurs, which had become

the main focus of my life, I had almost completely forgotten about Anastasia. And now, on the last day of my life, as though to say farewell, here she was reminding me of her existence.

"Please, play some more, the way you were playing before!" I asked the girls.

"We'll try," the older one replied.

And there I stood in the metro station passageway, listening to the captivating melody of the violins and remembering the glade in the taiga and thinking:

Anastasia! Anastasia! It's much too complicated to make all that you thought up come true in real life. It's one thing to dream — quite another to turn the dream into reality. Some sort of mistake must have crept in as you were working out your plan: organise a fellowship of entrepreneurs, write a book...

I felt as though a flood had hit me. Repeating these last two phrases over and over again, I felt there was something out of place there, something wasn't right. Back there in the taiga — in the taiga... the words had been spoken not quite the same way, but how? How else could they have been said? As I continued repeating them, I happened to switch the word order and heard myself saying: "Write a book, organise a fellowship of entrepreneurs."

But of course! The book should have been written *first!* The book was supposed to settle all these questions and, most importantly, spread *information* about the fellowship! Yikes, how much time I realised I'd wasted and, in the meantime, look at how complicated my personal life had become!

All right, then. *I'll get busy*, I thought. At least now it's clear just what I should be busy *at*. It's absurd, of course — someone who doesn't know how to write, writing a book, especially one he expects people to actually read! But Anastasia had faith it would work out. She kept trying to convince me. Okay. That means I've really, *really* got to try now. And I've got to see it through to the end!

CHAPTER TWENTY



The Ringing Cedars of Russia

I decided to go back to my apartment. Moscow was already feeling the touch of spring. All that remained in the kitchen was half a bottle of sunflower-seed oil and some sugar. I needed to replenish my larder and decided to sell my winter *shapka*,¹ which was made of mink. It was a real mink hat, not imitation, and cost a great deal.

Of course, the winter weather was almost over now, but I thought I might get at least something for it, so I headed for one of Moscow's many outdoor markets. I went up to various merchants selling fruit and other goods. They looked at the *shapka*, but were in no hurry to buy it. I had already decided to lower the price when two men approached me. They turned the *shapka* over in their hands, feeling the fur.

"I need to try it on. Go see if you can borrow a mirror somewhere," one of them said to his companion and suggested I follow him off to one side.

We reached a secluded spot at the end of a row of stalls and stopped to wait for his companion with the mirror. We didn't have to wait long. He crept up stealthily from behind, and the blow on the back of my head first caused me to see stars, then my whole vision went blurry. I managed to grab hold of a fence to stop myself from falling to the ground, but when I came to, my 'buyers' were nowhere to be seen. The *shapka*,

¹*shapka* — a warm fur hat, often with ear-flaps (tied up on top when not too cold); the commonest form of headgear during Russian winters.

too, was gone. Only a couple of women were there, making sympathetic *oohs* and *ahs*.

"Are you okay? Awful bastards, those. Here's a crate — you can sit down for a bit."

I stayed standing against the fence for a while longer and then slowly made my way out of the market area. A spring drizzle was falling. I was about to cross a street and stopped on the kerb to look both ways. There was a painful ringing in my head. I wasn't watching, and a passing car sprayed me with water from a puddle, thoroughly wetting my trousers and windbreaker flaps.

I was trying to figure out what to do next when a truck whizzed by, covering me with more spray from the same puddle, and this time the spray flew right into my face. I stepped back from the kerb and took refuge from the rain under the awning of one of the commercial kiosks, and tried to think my next plan of action.

There was no way, I realised, I could get into a metro station looking like this. It was three stops to my apartment. Sure I could walk it, but the way I looked I still might get picked up by the police, thinking I was a drunk, or a tramp, or just a suspicious person. Then you stand there, trying to explain and justify yourself while they investigate your case. What could I tell them anyway? Who am I now?

And then I saw this man.

He was shuffling slowly along the sidewalk, carrying two cases of empty bottles. He looked like one of those tramps or boozers who often circulate among kiosks that sell spirits on tap. Our eyes met. He stopped, put down his cases on the sidewalk and struck up a conversation with me.

"What are you standing there looking at? This is *my* territory. On your way!" he said quietly, though not without an air of authority.

Not wanting to argue with him or cross him — indeed, not

having the strength to do so, I replied:

"I don't need your territory. I'll just gather myself together and leave."

But he continued:

"And where will you go?"

"None of your business where I'm going. I'll just leave. That's it."

"And will you make it?"

"I'll make it, if I'm not interfered with. Leave me alone!"

"The way you look you won't either stand very long or walk very far."

"What's that to you?"

"You haven't got a home to go to?"

"What?"

"A novice, eh? Okay, wait here a moment."

He picked up his cases and walked off. He came back a moment later with a wrapped parcel and again started speaking to me.

"Follow me."

"Where are we going?"

"To a place where you can rest for a couple of hours, or maybe 'til morning. You can get yourself dried out. Then you can proceed on your way."

Following after him, I asked:

"Is your apartment close by?"

Without turning his head he responded:

"You couldn't get to my 'apartment' if you walked your whole life long. I don't have any apartment. I have my 'deployment quarters'."

We walked up to a door leading to the basement of a multi-storey block of flats. He told me to stand over to one side while he looked around, waiting until none of the tenants were to be seen, then stuck something that looked like a key in the lock and opened the door.

It was warmer in the basement than on the street. Heat came from hot-water pipes which had been deliberately stripped of their insulation, probably by tramps. On the floor in one corner stood a pile of rags, illuminated by a dim light filtering in through a dust-covered basement window. But we went on past them into a far corner which stood empty.

He unwrapped the parcel and brought out a bottle of mineral water and uncapped it. Taking a swallow of water in his mouth, he sprayed it all around, as though from an atomiser.

"That's to keep the dust down!" he explained.

Then he slightly moved a divider standing in the corner to one side. From the narrow space between the divider and the wall he took out two sheets of plywood covered with plastic, along with several pieces of plastic-covered cardboard. He used them to lay out two makeshift bunks on the floor. Taking an old food tin from the corner, he lit the candle it was holding. The lid of the tin was not completely detached; it was clean and bent slightly upward in a semicircle to serve as a reflector. This primitive device illuminated the edges of the bunks and the half-metre of space between them. Here he spread out a sheet of newspaper, on which he started laying the contents of the parcel — cheese, bread and two packages of *kefir*.²

Neatly slicing the cheese, he issued an invitation:

"What are you standing there for? Come on, sit down. Take off your jacket, hang it over the pipe. When it dries out, we'll clean it. I've got a brush. Your trousers will dry out without taking them off. Try not to wrinkle them."

Then he brought out two drams³ of vodka, and we sat down to eat. In contrast to the dirty basement floor all around us, the corner my companion had managed to set up for himself had an air of cleanliness and coziness.

²*kefir* — a popular drink made of thick fermented cow's or goat's milk, often sold in cardboard packages.

After we clinked glasses, he introduced himself:

“Call me Ivan. Nobody here bothers with patronymics.”

The way he improvised the bunks and set out the food on the newspaper, despite the dirty floor, created a clean and cozy atmosphere in his basement corner.

“I don’t suppose you have anything softer to lie on?” I asked after supper.

“You can’t even keep rags down here — they only get dirty, and then they start to smell... I’ve got neighbours over in that corner. Two of them... they show up from time to time. They’ve made one hell of a dirty mess.”

We got involved in conversation. I started answering his questions, and in doing so I ended up inadvertently telling him about my meeting with Anastasia — her lifestyle and her abilities — about her ray, her dreams and aspirations.

He was the first person I had talked with about Anastasia! I myself don’t know why I told him about all her eccentricities, about her dream and how I promised to help her. I had indeed tried to set up a fellowship of pure-minded entrepreneurs, but had made a major mistake. I should have written a book first.

“Now I’ll set about writing one and try to get it published,” I affirmed. “Anastasia said the book would be needed first.”

“Are you really confident you can write it and get it published without any funds?”

“I don’t know whether I’m confident or not. But I shall certainly work in that direction.”

“That means you have a goal, and you’re going to go for it?”

³In the mid-1990s ‘drams’ of vodka were actually sold in what appeared to be plastic yoghurt cups, complete with a metal foil cover. This packaging enabled heavy drinkers to dispense with the need for a glass or to find a co-drinker to split the cost of a bottle, and thereby gained tremendous popularity.

"I'm going to try."

"And you're sure you'll make it?"

"I'm going to try."

"Yeah, a book. You'll be needing a good artist to do the cover. Someone who can do it with heart. In line with the meaning of the book, with the goal. And where're you going to find an artist if you haven't got any money?"

"I'll have to do without an artist. Without a fancy cover."

"You should do it up brown, with a cover that really fits in with the book. If I had good paper, brushes and paints, I'd help you. Only those things cost a lot now."

"You mean to say you're an artist? Professional?"

"I'm an officer. But I've loved drawing and painting since childhood. I joined various art groups. Whenever I could steal some time, I'd paint pictures and give them to friends."

"Well, why did you go and become an officer if you still wanted to paint all these years?"

"My great-grandfather was an officer, my grandfather and my father too. I loved and respected my father. I knew — I felt — what he wanted me to be. So I tried to be that. And I made it all the way to colonel."

"Where did you serve?"

"Mainly in the KGB. That's where I resigned from."

"Through attrition or were you forced out?"

"It was my decision. Just couldn't take it any more."

"What couldn't you take?"

"You know the popular song: *Oh officers, officers, your heart is under fire*."⁴

⁴*Oh officers, officers, your heart is under fire* (in Russian: *Ofitsery, ofitsery, vashe serdtse pod pritsemom*) — from an extremely popular song written by singer-songwriter Oleg Gazmanov (1951–) in 1994, which stayed several years at the top of the charts. The song extols the virtue of soldiers defending their country, and takes note of the challenges faced by Russian officers in a post-communist era.

"They tried to kill you? They made an attempt on your life? Did they shoot at you, maybe to settle some kind of score?"

"Officers often get shot at. It's an age-old story, officers meeting up with bullets. Going to the defence of those behind them. Going along, not suspecting their own hearts were under fire, not suspecting the fatal shot to come from behind. An accurate shot. An exploding bullet. And straight to the heart."

"How so?"

"Remember the pre-*perestroika* times? The celebrations — First of May, Seventh of November?⁵ Huge columns of people crying "Hurrah!", "Glory to...!", "Long live...!" Me and the other officers, not just those from the KGB, were proud of the fact that we were the defenders of our people. We were protecting them. For most officers, this was their whole reason for living.

"Then came *perestroika*, and *glasnost*.⁶ Other shouts began to be heard. And it turned out that we, the KGB officers, were bastards, executioners. We were defending the wrong people and the wrong things. The ones that earlier marched in Soviet columns under red banners had gone over to march

⁵*First of May, Seventh of November* — two of the biggest Soviet holidays: 1 May: International Workers' Solidarity Day, a communist version of Labour Day, originally commemorating the Chicago General Strike of 1886; first celebrated in Russia (St. Petersburg) in 1891. 7 November: the date of the Bolshevik Revolution. Parades on these days featured huge banners with communist slogans such as "Glory to the Communist Party of the Soviet Union!" and "Long live the brotherhood of nations of the USSR!"; these slogans would be shouted out on cue by the parading masses of workers and soldiers.

⁶*glasnost* — literally, 'openness', 'transparency', meaning greater freedom of speech and especially greater availability of information on socially important matters, access to which had previously been reserved for the ruling elite. This and *perestroika* ('restructuring') became universal buzzwords to describe Gorbachev's liberal policies.

in other columns under different banners, and *we* got left to take the blame.

"I had a wife, nine years younger than me, a real beauty. I loved her. Still do. She was so proud of me. We had a son, an only child. He came along... rather late, how shall I say it? Now he's seventeen. In the beginning he too was proud of me, he respected me.

"Then, after this whole business started, my wife became very quiet. She wouldn't look me in the eye. She began to be ashamed of me. I handed in my resignation and took a job as a security guard at a commercial bank. I hid my KGB uniform where nobody would find it. But there were unasked questions still hanging in the air over my wife and son. You can't answer questions which haven't been asked. They saw the answers in the papers and on TV screens. Turned out, we officers were involved in nothing but our dachas — and, of course, oppression."

"But," I interjected, "they showed on TV some pretty fancy dachas of the military élite — and they showed the real thing, not just faked pictures."

"Yeah, they showed the real thing, not just faked pictures. Only those dachas were sleazy chicken-houses compared to what many of those who accused their owners have themselves today. Look at you — you had a whole ship at your disposal. That's a lot bigger than a general's dacha. And don't forget, that general was once a cadet, he dug trenches. Then he became a lieutenant, got shifted about from barracks to barracks. And naturally he wanted to have a house and a dacha for his family, just like everyone else. And who knows how many times he had to jump out of his warm bed in the middle of the night in that same dacha, to go out on an emergency mission.

"Officers used to be respected in Russia. They were rewarded with an estate. Now it's been decided that a simple dacha with 1500 square metres of land is too much for a general!"

"Everybody lived differently before," I observed.

"Differently... Yes, everybody... But you can't tell me it wasn't the officers who were singled out for blame ahead of everyone else.

"It was the officers who demonstrated on the Senate Square.⁷ They were thinking of the people. These officers were later sent either to the scaffold or to the mines in Siberia. Nobody stood up to defend them.

"Later Russian officers fought for the Tsar and the Fatherland in the trenches against the Germans. And back home 'revolutionary patriots' were already getting bullets ready for their hearts more terrible than the leaden ones. *White Guards*,⁸ *Monsters* — that was what they called the officers returning from the war — officers who were simply trying to maintain order. There was chaos all around, everything was falling apart. All our former values, both material and spiritual, were being either torched or trampled upon. It was so hard for them, those White Guard officers. So they put on clean underwear under their uniforms⁹ and went on a psychological attack. You know what's meant by 'psychological attack'?"

"It's when you try to scare the hell out of your opponent. I've seen it in films. In *Chapaev*,¹⁰ for example, the White

⁷*Senate Square*, now known as Decembrists' Square — a large square not far from the Winter Palace in St. Petersburg, where a significant number of military officers demonstrated (unsuccessfully) against the Tsarist government in December 1825. The officers were either exiled or executed for treason.

⁸*White Guards* — the name given to military personnel who fought against the Bolshevik Revolution and during the subsequent Civil War (1918–23). The pro-Bolshevik soldiers were known as the *Reds*.

⁹*clean underwear under their uniforms* — a sign that the officers expected to be killed in battle that day.

¹⁰*Chapaev* — a classic Russian film, made in 1934, telling the story of Vasily Ivanovich Chapaev, a Red Army hero of the Russian Civil War.

Guard officers are advancing in formation, and they get strafed by machine-gun fire. Some fall, but the others close ranks and keep advancing.”

“Yeah, that’s it. They fall and still keep advancing. But the thing is that they weren’t really ‘attacking’ to begin with.”

“How so? What was the point of advancing then?”

“In military practice the whole reason for, the goal of any attack is either the capture or the physical annihilation of the enemy — preferably with the least possible loss in the ranks of the attackers. To keep advancing against strafing from machine-guns concealed in trenches — that was only done when there was *another* goal set, either consciously or subconsciously.”

“What goal?”

“Maybe, and this goes against the logic of the art of war, it was to demonstrate something to the enemy even at the cost of one’s own life — to make the soldiers firing the guns and killing the advancing marchers stop and think, to realise something and not fire at others.”

“So, in that case their death would be something like Jesus Christ’s death on the cross?”

“Something like that. We still manage to remember Christ, somehow. The young cadets and generals who advanced against their attackers, we’ve forgotten. Maybe even now their souls, dressed in clean underwear under their officers’ uniforms, are standing in front of the bullets *we’re* firing, and pleading with us, calling on us, to stop and think.”

“Why would they be calling to us? When they were being fired on, we weren’t even born.”

“No, we weren’t. But bullets are still flying around today. New bullets. Who, if not us, is doing the firing?”

“Indeed. Bullets *are* still flying around today. And just why have they been flying around all these years? Why did you leave home?”

"I couldn't stand the way he stared at me."

"The way *who* stared at you?"

"We were watching TV one night. My wife was in the kitchen, and my son and I were watching together. Then one of those political programmes came on, they started talking about the KGB. You know, a real smear campaign. I deliberately picked up a newspaper and made it look like I was reading, as though I wasn't interested in what they were saying. I was hoping my son would switch to another programme. He's never been interested in politics. He likes music.

"But he didn't change the channel. I rustled my paper, stealing glances at him out of the corner of my eye. And I saw him sitting in the chair, his hands gripping the arms of the chair so tight they turned white. He didn't move a muscle. I realised he wasn't going to change the channel. I held on as long as I could, hiding behind the paper. Then I couldn't take it any more. I smashed the paper into a ball and threw it to one side, got up sharply and yelled: 'Are you going to turn the damn thing off? *Are you?*'"

"My son also got up. But he didn't go over to the TV. He stood opposite me, stared me in the eye and said nothing. The TV programme was still going. But my son just kept on staring at me.

"Later that night I wrote them a note. I said I was going away for a while — had no choice. And then I left for good."

"Why for good?"

"*Because.*"

For a long time neither of us uttered a word. I tried to make myself a bit more comfortable on the bunk so I could drift off. But then the colonel started talking again.

"So, you tell me Anastasia said she'd bring people through 'the dark forces' window of time'? She'd bring them through, and that's it?!"

"Yeah, that's what she said. And she herself believes that she can make it happen."

"Ah, she should have a hand-picked regiment. I'd become a soldier again to serve in that regiment."

"What's this about a regiment?" I retorted. "You didn't get it. She *rejects* the use of force. She wants to persuade people by some other means. She's trying to do that with her Ray."

"I think, or rather I feel, that she's going to do it. There's a lot of people that will want to be warmed by her Ray. But not many of them will understand that they themselves will have to put in something from their own brain-power. Anastasia needs help. She's all alone. She hasn't got even a single platoon at her command. So, you see, she's recruited you, she's commissioned you — and here you are lying in a basement like a tramp. And you call yourself entrepreneur after that?"

"Well, you KGB-er, you're lying here, too."

"Okay, go to sleep, soldier."

"It's rather cold in your 'barracks'."

"Well, that's the way it is, isn't it? Curl up into a ball, conserve your heat."

Then he got up and took out from behind the divider yet another plastic bag. He got something out of it to cover me with. In the dim light of the candle I could see shining right under my nose three stars on the epaulet of a greatcoat. It was warm under the coat, and I fell asleep.

I was half asleep when I heard the tramps come in and head for their rag corner. They demanded the colonel hand them over a bottle for my overnight stay. He promised to settle it in the morning, but they insisted, threateningly, that he better pay up now, or else. The colonel then moved his bunk, placing it between me and the newcomer tramps, declaring: "You touch him only over my dead body!" And he lay down on his bunk, shielding me from the new arrivals. Then everything went quiet again. I felt warm and peaceful.

I was awakened by the colonel's shaking my shoulder.

"Get up. Turn out! We gotta get outa here."

The first rays of dawn were barely beginning to show themselves through the dim basement window. I sat up on my bunk. Not only did I have a splitting headache but I found I had trouble breathing.

"It's still early. The dawn hasn't even broken," I observed.

"A little longer and it'll be too late. They've lit some cotton-wool with powder. It's an old trick. A little longer and we'll be suffocated."

He went to the window and started working the window-frame loose with an iron bar. The tramps had locked the door from the outside. Taking out the frame, he broke the glass and crawled through the aperture. The basement window opened into a concrete well, covered with a grating. The colonel began fiddling with the grating, trying to dislodge it, but somehow it wasn't working.

I stayed leaning against a wall. My head was spinning. The colonel stuck his head back through the window opening and ordered:

"Squat down. Less smoke near the floor. Try not to move. Breathe in less air."

He forced the grating out with his shoulders. He moved it off and helped me clamber out.

We sat on the cement kerb outside the basement window, silently filling our lungs with the pre-dawn air of an awakening city. The spinning in my head gradually lessened. The air started feeling cold. Each of us sat there, thinking his own thoughts.

Then I said:

"Your neighbours aren't very friendly. They're the ones in charge here?"

"Everyone's in charge of himself. They got their own business. They bring in a new homeless person, and make him pay

for staying overnight. If he refuses to pay, they slip something into his drink or suffocate him in his sleep, like they tried to do to us, and then they take whatever they like from him — if he's got anything worth taking, that is."

"And you're telling me that you, a KGB-er, are indifferent to it all? You could earn yourself some pretty points by giving chaps like that the once-over. Or were you just a pencil-pusher, sitting in an office all day? Maybe you didn't know how to work the street?"

"I worked in an office and I worked outside the office. I knew what to do. But to know the moves — that's not the same as applying them. A criminal, an enemy — that's one thing. But here we're dealing with human beings. I might calculate wrong, use too much deadly force."

"You call *those* human beings? While you're rationalising away, they're out there robbing people blind. They're even ready to commit murder!"

"Yeah, they're ready to commit murder. But you won't stop them by physical means."

"You sit there philosophising, but we almost died. We barely managed to escape, others might not be so lucky."

"Yeah, others might not be so lucky..."

"There, you see? Then how come you're philosophising and not acting?"

"I can't use violence on people. You see what I mean, I could calculate wrong... You may as well get going to your own 'deployment quarters'. It's dawn already."

I got up, shook his hand, and left.

I had gone but a few steps when he called after me:

"Wait! Come back here a moment."

I approached the homeless colonel sitting on the concrete kerb. He was just sitting there, his head lowered, not saying a word.

"Hey, why did you call me?"

After a moment's pause he spoke:

"So, you think you'll make it okay?"

"I think I can. It's not far. Three metro stops, that's all. I'll make it."

"I meant, d'you think you'll reach your goal? Are you sure? Writing a book, getting it published?"

"I'll give it a try. First I'll try writing."

"So, Anastasia said it should work out for you?"

"That's what she said."

"Then why didn't you do that right off?"

"The other seemed more important."

"So, that means you're not good at following orders properly?"

"Anastasia didn't *order* me, she *asked* me."

"She asked you... So, she worked out the tactics and strategy herself. And you thought you'd do it your way, and you just loused things up."

"That's how it turned out."

"That's how it turned out... You gotta pay closer attention to your orders. Here, take this."

He held out something wrapped in a small plastic package. I unwrapped it and saw, through the clear plastic, a golden wedding band and a silver cross on a little chain.

"A dealer will give you half-price for these. Let him have them for half-price. Maybe it'll help see you through. If you've got nowhere to stay, come back here. I'll take care of *them*."

"What are you talking about? I can't take these!"

"Don't rationalise. It's time for you to go. So go. Look to it! Just go!"

"I'm telling you, I can't take them."

I tried to give him back the ring and the little cross, but I was met by an authoritative and, at the same time, pleading stare.

"About— face! Forward— march!" he commanded in a whisper that was restrained, yet brooked no contradiction. A moment later came another plea:

"Just be sure you make it."

Arriving at my flat, I felt like going to sleep and even got to the point of lying down. But I couldn't get the homeless colonel out of my head.

I got dressed in some clean clothes and went to see him. Along the way I thought: Maybe he'll agree to move in with me. He's adaptable to anything. He's practical and he's neat. Besides, he's an artist. Maybe he'll do a picture for the book's cover. And it'll be easier to find some rent money if we're together. I had no money for the next month's rent.

As I approached the basement window we had climbed out of earlier that morning, I saw a group of people — tenants from the building, a police car and an ambulance.

The homeless colonel was lying on the ground, his eyes closed and a smile on his face. His face and body were splattered with wet dirt. One dead hand was clenched around a piece of red brick. A broken wooden crate stood against the wall.

A court medical assessor was writing something down on a notepad. He was standing beside the corpse of another man, dressed in shabby, rumpled clothing, with a disfigured face.

In the little crowd that had gathered, no doubt comprised of the building's tenants, one woman was rattling on excitedly:

"...I was walkin' me dog an' I saw him, the one smilin', perched on the crate, his face to the wall, an' the three of 'em — tramps, by the look of it — two men an' a woman with 'em — comes at him from behind. The man gives the crate a kick an' he falls off the crate to the ground. They starts kickin' him, cursin' all the while, they did. I yells at 'em. They stops kickin' him. Old 'Smiley' here, he gets up, see. He has a pretty hard time gettin' up too. An' he tells

'em to sod off an' not show their faces around here again. They starts cursin' again, an' then they comes at him full force. As they gets closer, he gives a straight chop with the back of his hand right to the throat of the bloke what kicked the crate. It's not that he's wavin' his arms about or anythin', he just lands the other bloke a chop so's he doubles up an' can't breathe. I yells at 'em again an' two of 'em runs straight off, see. First the woman, then the man after her. 'Smiley's now clutchin' at his heart. He oughtta sit down or lie down straight off, if it's his heart what's givin' out, but no, he goes back to his crate. Moves ever so slowly, he does. Puts his crate back against the wall. Then he gets back up on it. I can see he's in a really bad way. He starts fallin'. An' he slides down, still drawin' on the wall with that red brick of his, an' keeps on drawin' 'til he lands himself on the ground. An' he's lyin' there face up, right against the wall. I runs over, looks, an' he ain't breathin'. Not breathin'. But he's *smilin'*!"

"Why did he climb up on the crate?" I asked the woman.

"Yeah, why did he climb up if his heart were givin' out?" echoed a voice from the crowd.

"He wanted to keep on drawin'. And when those three blokes came at him from behind, he was *drawin'*, that's what he was doin'... That's prob'ly why he didn't see 'em comin'. I'd been walkin' me dog for a long time, an' there he is, standin' on his crate an' *drawin'*... He didn't turn 'round, not even once... You can see what he drew — up there, on the wall!" And the woman pointed to the building.

On the grey brick wall of the building could be seen the circular outline of the Sun, and in the middle of it a cedar branch and, around the perimeter of the Sun-circle, some letters printed rather unevenly.

I went closer to the wall and read: RINGING CEDARS OF RUSSIA. Apart from that, there were rays emanating from the Sun. There were only three of them. The homeless

colonel didn't manage to draw any more. Two of the rays were short and straight, while the third was wavy and fading away, and extended right down to the base of the wall, where the dead homeless colonel was lying on the ground, smiling.

I looked at the smiling face smeared with dirt and thought to myself: Maybe in the last moments of his life Anastasia managed to touch him with her Ray, and warm him up. At least warm his soul up a little and carry it off to a bright infinity.

I watched as the corpses were loaded into the ambulance. 'My' colonel was thrown carelessly in the process, his head striking the floor of the ambulance. I couldn't take it. I tore off my jacket, ran over to the ambulance and started demanding they put my jacket under his head. One of the orderlies swore at me, but the other took the jacket without a word and placed it under the colonel's greying head. The vehicles drove off. Everything was empty, just as if nothing had happened.

I stood there a while, looking at the drawing and inscription illuminated by the morning sun. My thoughts began getting all mixed up. I had to do something, at least *something* for him, for this KGB-er, a Russian officer who had perished on this spot! But what? What, indeed?

Then it came to me: *I'm going to put your drawing, my dear officer, on the cover of my book.* The book I most definitely will write. Even though I don't yet know how to write, I'll still write one, and not just one. And on all of them I'll put your drawing — it'll be my emblem. And in the book I'll tell all Russians:

"My fellow Russians, don't shoot at the hearts of your officers with invisible exploding bullets, bullets of cruelty and heartlessness.

"Don't shoot from behind at any soldiers — be they White or Red, or even blue or green, ensigns or generals. The bullets you fire at them from behind are more terrible than the leaden ones. My fellow Russians, do not shoot at your officers!"

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE



Untitled

I wrote quickly. From time to time Anton, Artem or Lyosha, the student programmers, would drop by and bring me a bite to eat. I still had not told *them* about Anastasia. But I explained to them that the organisation of the Fellowship could be facilitated with the help of the book I was to write. And so they set about keyboarding the text of the book into the computers. It was mainly Lyosha Novichkov who worked on this. He showed up every three days, bringing a print-out of his latest keyboarding and taking home a new chapter of the manuscript. This went on for about two months.

One day Lyosha showed up with the last printed chapter of Book I, a diskette with the full text, two bottles of beer, frankfurters and some other kind of food, along with a little money, and set it all down on the kitchen table.

"Where did you get all this bounty, Lyosha?" I asked in amazement.

He lived alone with his mother, on very limited means. He didn't always have enough money to buy metro tokens or even sandwiches.

"It's exam time, Vladimir Nikolaevich," Lyosha responded. "I do drafts for some of the students, I make up computer programmes for them. For students who can't do them themselves or are too lazy. They pay me for them."

"And will you make it through the exams yourself all right?"

"Will do. I've got just one exam left, and in a couple of days I'll have to go off for a month on military training, to

Kineshma.¹ It's good you managed to get *Anastasia* finished. If there are any corrections to be made now, Artem will take care of them. Anton's already off on training."

"Tell me, Lyosha, how did you possibly manage to sit exams, do drafts and make up computer programmes for others, and still keyboard and print out *Anastasia* every day?"

Lyosha didn't respond. I turned to the kitchen table to serve up the steamed frankfurters. Lyosha's head and arms were resting on the table, on top of the printed pages containing the *Anastasia* text. He was fast asleep.

¹*Kineshma* — an industrial centre and port on the Volga River.

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO



Unravelling the mystery

Standing in the kitchen of my small Moscow apartment, standing next to the table with the frankfurters getting cold and Lyosha Novichkov's head resting on the pages containing the text of *Anastasia*, I made a promise to myself: to find a way of regaining my capital and getting back my ship with a view to taking it on the same journey as last year when I first met Anastasia. But not on a trade mission, as before. I wanted to go there during the 'white nights' of summer, so that Lyosha, Anton and Artem — as well as all those who had worked like dogs, in spite of all the setbacks and often to the neglect of their own material well-being, to organise a fellowship of purer-minded entrepreneurs — could enjoy a decent holiday aboard my ship in the most luxurious quarters.

And what was this grand idea all about, in any case? What kind of hold did it have on people? Why was I, too, drawn into it so closely? What kind of mystery did it conceal? I just *had* to figure this out, in concrete detail, and unravel its mystery and purpose. And why are people so turned on by this dream of a taiga recluse? What lies hidden there? How can I unravel the mystery?

Moskovskaya Pravda correspondent Katya Golovina tried unravelling it by asking the students to explain what motivated them, what their personal stake was in all this. But they couldn't give a definitive answer, saying only that it was something worth doing. In other words, they were working on *intuition*. But what was behind this intuition?

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE



Untitled

At Moscow Printshop Number Eleven two thousand copies of the first slim volume about Anastasia were printed at the shop's own expense. Why did the manager, Gennady Vladimirovich Grutsia, decide to print a book by an unknown author? Why would he do this and, in spite of the printshop's current financial difficulties, use offset paper instead of the usual newsprint?¹

The first books I sold myself near the entrance to the Taganskaya metro station. Then I got some help from some of the book's first readers. An elderly woman would daily stand and sell copies outside the Dobryninskaya metro station. She would take great pains to explain in detail to anyone interested what a wonderful book it was. Why?

Then readers began selling it as well in vacation centres on the outskirts of Moscow. They would print out announcements and organise readers' gatherings for people holidaying there.

Then the business manager of the Moscow Publishers' Clearance House, Yuri Anatolievich Nikitin, suddenly decided to offer the printshop an advance on an additional two thousand copies. His actions were strange and unexpected.

He drove over to see me in his car and told me:

"My son and I are leaving the country today to go to a tennis tournament. Our plane goes tonight. I need to hurry to get my payment in."

¹ *newsprint* — This has long been the norm for printing most paperback books in Russia.

He paid for the second print-run in full. When the time came for him to pick up his books, Nikitin told me:

“You know, during the summer we don’t do a lot of book-selling. I’ll take several packages, the rest you take care of yourself. When money starts coming your way, you can reimburse me.” Again, why?

Right from the moment I started working on the manuscript there have been many *whys?* associated with the book, even to this day. It’s almost as though the book were alive, drawing people unto itself and using their help to break through into life. I used to think that the events connected with it were pure coincidence. Only those ‘co-incidences’ started tying themselves together into a pattern. Now I have no idea, in all that has happened, just what is coincidence and what is in conformity with a law. The two have become exceedingly difficult to tell apart.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR



Father Feodorit

The moment arrived when I finally managed to pay a visit to Father Feodorit. Back in the taiga, in response to my question as to whether there were any people in our world with knowledge and abilities similar to hers, only living closer to home, Anastasia had replied:

“There are people in various corners of the Earth whose lifestyle is not caught up in the prevailing technocracy. They all have different abilities. But in your world there is also one person whom you will find it easy to approach, whether it be winter or summer. The power of his spirit is very great.”

“Do you know where he lives? Can I see him and talk with him?”

“Yes, you can.”

“Who is he?”

“He is your father, Vladimir.”

“What do you mean? Oh, Anastasia, Anastasia! I so much wanted to hear proof that you’re right about everything, and here it’s all coming out the wrong way! My father died eighteen years ago and was buried in a little town in the Briansk region.”

Anastasia sat on the grass, her back leaning against a tree, her knees drawn up close to her chest, and silently looked me in the eye. She seemed a little sad, as though she were taking pity on me. Then she lowered her head to her knees. I thought she might be feeling upset over her mistake regarding my father, and I tried to comfort her.

"Don't get too upset, Anastasia. It's probably because, as you said yourself, you don't have that much strength left."¹

Anastasia didn't speak for a while, then raised her head and, once more looking me right in the eye, said:

"My strength has indeed lessened, but not to the point where I could be mistaken."

She then proceeded to relate events that had taken place twenty-six years ago. She recounted the past not only with great accuracy and in minute detail, but was even able to convey nuances of inner feelings.

It is understandable how one can pick up clues from the outward appearance: a barely noticeable facial expression, a body position, even the eyes, can all give clues as to what an interlocutor is thinking. But how she was able to discern the past as though it were simply a documentary newsreel is still a mystery to me.

Anastasia herself was not able to explain this phenomenon in a standard, comprehensible manner. But this is what she had to say:

"Not far from Moscow is the Trinity-Sergiev Monastery complex in the town of Sergiev Posad. Behind Trinity-Sergiev's massive, ancient walls there is a seminary, an academy and several cathedrals, in addition to the monastery proper. The cathedrals are open to the public, and anyone who wishes can come and pray in this holy place of Rus.² It was not destroyed even during the campaigns of persecution against believers; indeed, right through this period, the institutions

¹*Author's note:* This conversation took place after she lost consciousness in saving the man and the woman from being murdered. I described this situation in my first book.

²*Rus* (pronounced: *ROOS*) — the name of the Old Russian territory, which by the 9th century A.D. was centred around Kiev. From Rus came the Russia, Ukraine and Belarus we know today.

behind these walls continued to function uninterrupted, providing a place where the monastic brethren could serve God.

"Twenty-six years ago, on the very day I came into this world," she continued, "a young man in his late teens walked through the gates of the Trinity-Sergiev Monastery. He toured the museum, and then proceeded to visit the main cathedral, where a sermon was being read by a tall, grey-haired monk. Both the monk's height and his rank were well above average. This was Father Feodorit, archimandrite of the Trinity-Sergiev Monastery. The young man listened to his sermon. Later, when Father Feodorit withdrew, he followed him into one of the treasury-rooms, unhindered by the temple staff. Going up to Father Feodorit, he started talking to him about the sermon. And Father Feodorit spoke with him for a long time. The young man had been baptised, but did not have much inner faith. He did not observe the fasts, did not take communion, and did not attend church regularly. But that day marked the beginning of a friendship between Father Feodorit and the young man.

"The young man started paying visits to the monastery. Father Feodorit would talk with him and show him the sanctuaries normally off-limits to ordinary parishioners. The monk gave him books, which he lost. The monk placed a little cross on a chain around his neck, and it was lost as well. The monk gave him a second cross, a most unusual one — it opened like a tiny case, but it too was lost.

"The monk would even take the young man into the refectory and seat him at the same table as the monks. Each time he would give him a little money. He never rebuked him for anything and always looked forward to his arrival.

"This went on for a whole year. The young man visited the monastery every week, but one day he left and did not return the following week. He did not come after a month, even after a whole year. The monk still waited. Now twenty-five

years have passed already. The monk is still waiting. Twenty-five years, Vladimir, your spiritual father has been waiting for you — that great Russian monk, Father Feodorit.”

“I went far away from the monastery. To Siberia. I sometimes thought of Father Feodorit,” I responded, as though justifying my actions to myself or to someone else.

“But you did not write him even one letter,” observed Anastasia.

“I want to see him.”

“And what will you tell him? Perhaps about how you made money, were happy in love and simply went astray? How many times were you at death’s door, but at the last moment you were delivered from your woes? He will see all that for himself, just by looking at you. He prayed for forgiveness of your sins and time after time saved you through his prayers. He still believes, just as he did twenty-five years ago. He was hoping for something different from you.”

“What was it, Anastasia? What does Father Feodorit know, what does he want?”

“I cannot comprehend it, at least not now. It was something he felt intuitively. Tell me, Vladimir, do you remember the conversations you had with him, do you remember what you saw in the monastery treasury-room?”

“It’s all very fuzzy in my mind. After all, it was so long ago. I can only remember isolated scenes.”

“Try to remember them. I shall help you.”

“Father Feodorit would talk with me each time in various places in the monastery. I remember some underground rooms — at least they were partially underground. I remember the refectory, the long table where the monks took their supper, and I had supper with them. It was during a time of some sort of fast. The food was especially prepared for the fast, but I liked it.”

“Did you have any unusual impressions or feelings during your visits to the monastery?”

"Once after supper I left the refectory and went through a passageway to an inner courtyard of the monastery complex, heading for an exit. The gate was already closed to parishioners. The courtyard was empty. Those massive high walls blocked out the noise from the city beyond. All I could see around me were the cathedrals. Everything was completely silent. I stopped. It seemed as though I could hear solemn music playing. I needed to leave. There was a monk on duty at the gate to let me out and bolt the gate shut after me. But I just stood there and listened to that music, and eventually, slowly, made my way over to the gate."

"You never heard that music again? You never experienced the same impression?"

"No."

"Did you ever try to hear that music — to call up the impression of it from within?"

"Yes, but I never managed to. I even tried standing on that same spot the next time I came, but, alas..."

"Try thinking of something else, Vladimir."

"Now you're interrogating me. You recounted everything so accurately — everything that happened to me twenty-six years ago — *you tell me* how I felt back then."

"That is not possible. Father Feodorit did not formulate any specific plans, he was hoping for something intuitively. But he did do something great and significant for you. Something known only to him. I can only feel it intuitively myself: he thought up something significant and did a lot toward this end. A great deal, in fact. But why he associated his desire with *you* — you who did not have the basic abilities to come quickly into the faith — remains a mystery. And why he has not broken this faith even after twenty-five years of your profligate life — that too is a mystery. And why are you, who have received so much, still sitting on your hands? Why? I cannot understand that. After all, nothing in the Universe ever

disappears without a trace. Please see if you can remember even isolated scenes from your meetings and conversations with your spiritual father."

"I remember a salon, or perhaps it was some sort of treasury-room, in the academy or seminary, or maybe it was one of the underground rooms in the monastery itself. Some kind of monk opened the door for Father Feodorit, but didn't go in himself. The Father and I went in alone. There were some pictures on the walls, and things standing on little shelves."

"You experienced two surprises there. What were they?"

"Surprises? Yes, of course, it did surprise me. Astounded me..."

"What did?"

"A particular picture. It was black and white, as if drawn with a pencil. It was a meticulously executed portrait of some person."

"So, what surprised you about it?"

"I don't remember."

"Think, Vladimir! Please, try to recall it — I shall help you. There was the small salon, you were standing alone there with Father Feodorit in front of this picture. You were standing just a little way in front of him, and he told you: 'Step a little closer to the picture, Vladimir.' You took one step forward, then another..."

"I remember! Anastasia!"

"What?"

"This picture of a person was drawn with a single line. A fluctuating spiral line. It was as though the artist had put his pencil or whatever in the middle of a blank sheet of paper, and without taking it off the paper, had made it go in a spiral, alternately pressing hard on it to make the line thicker and easing up, barely touching the paper, to make a fine, delicate line, but still continuous. The spiral line ended at one edge of the page. The result was an amazing picture, the portrait of a person."

"This picture," Anastasia advised, "should be put on public display for all to see. Someone will be able to decipher the information concealed in it. That pulsating line portraying a person has something to say to people."

"How?"

"I do not know yet. You are aware, for example, how dots and dashes can represent an alphabet or musical notation. I can only guess it could be one or the other of those, or something else besides. When you return, ask them to put it on public display or to publish it somewhere. Someone will turn up who is able to decipher that spiral line."

"But who will listen to me?"

"They *will* listen to you. But back then you experienced a second most unusual feeling. Can you recall what it was?"

"It was in the same room or in the next room... Yes, it was a rather small room where a beautiful carved wooden chair was standing on a raised platform. Perhaps it was an arm-chair, something like a throne. Father Feodorit and I stood and looked at it. The Father said that nobody ever touched it."

"But you touched it. And even sat on it."

"It was Father Feodorit himself who suggested I sit on it."

"And what happened to you when you did?"

"Nothing. I sat there, looking at Father Feodorit, and he stood there silently looking me in the eye. Just looked, that's all."

"Please remember, Vladimir, try to recall your inner feelings. They are most important."

"Well, there was nothing special... It was just that, you know, some thoughts began running through my head lickety-split, like an audiotape in fast-forward mode, and the words all blurred into a stream of unintelligible sounds."

"And you never tried deciphering them, Vladimir? Did you ever have the desire to stop that tape so you could listen to it at normal speed and understand what it was saying?"

"How could I?"

"By pondering the essence of your being."

"No, never tried that. You're not making any sense."

"And the things that Father Feodorit told you, did you understand everything? Can you recall precisely even a single phrase, even a phrase without any connection to the rest?"

"Yes, but I really can't remember what it was connected with."

"Tell me what it was."

"... You will show them..."

At this point Anastasia, who had been sitting under the tree, suddenly sprang up, her face beaming. She put her hands on the trunk of the cedar, and pressed her cheek against it.

"Yes, of course!" she exclaimed, waving her arms with joy and delightedly crying out:

"You are truly great, Monk of Russia! You know, Vladimir, there is one thing I can tell you for certain about Father Feodorit. He has made a mockery of a lot of the world's teachings by showing what is the most essential thing."

"He and I never discussed any teachings. We talked about everyday things."

"Yes, of course! Everyday things! Father Feodorit spoke about things you were interested in. He showed you sacred creations, and treated them with veneration, but avoided making a big show of it. Even though he had risen to a high rank, he was a very simple man, most importantly, a thinking man — perhaps he was even meditating during the time you were with him. And he was not one to expound dogmas. How silly the preachers of conventional dogmas that flocked to Russia from abroad look by comparison with him! They only distract one's attention from the most essential thing. He was so successful at protecting you from dogmas that you see me too as a naïve recluse. It does not matter who I am. What matters is that you stick to the most essential thing."

“What most essential thing?”

“The thing that is in every Man.”

“But how can every Man know the teachings of the gurus of the West and the East, India and Tibet, if he has never even heard of them?”

“All essential information has been included in Man, Vladimir, in every man right from the start. It is something he is given on the day of his creation, just like arms, legs, hair and a heart. All the teachings of the world, along with all discoveries, are taken exclusively from this Source. Just as parents try to give their child everything, so the Grand Creator gives everything to each one right off. Nothing man-made. Not a multitude of books, nor the latest computers and the computers of the future all taken together, can ever encompass even a part of the information contained in a single Man. One has only to know how to use it.”

“Then why doesn’t everybody make discoveries? And why doesn’t everyone formulate teachings?”

“Let us say one person manages to extract a grain of truth from the whole. And he keeps talking about it enthusiastically, thinking it was given to him alone. And that it contains the most essential thing. He talks it up to others, trying to make them see it as the one and only important thing. But by talking like this, he is blocking the basic complex network of information already existing within himself. Knowledge of the truth consists not in proclaiming it but in living it.”

“And what way of living it is characteristic of those who best know the truth?”

“A happy one!”

“But to know the truth, one must have a conscious awareness and purity of thought?!”

“That is visionary! Fantastic!” Anastasia shrieked with laughter, and merrily added: “You read my thoughts?”

"Nothing visionary there, it is simply an attentive attitude to Man. You're always relating everything to purity of thought and conscious awareness."

"Visionary! Visionary!" she repeated, still laughing. "You read my thoughts. Oh, how fantastic!"

Upon hearing her cheery laughter, I too could no longer restrain myself and broke into peals of merriment. Later I asked:

"What do you think, Anastasia, will my spiritual father, Father Feodorit, receive me if I go see him? Will he talk with me? He won't be upset?"

"Of course he will receive you! He will be most happy to see you there! He will accept you any way you are. Only he will be even happier to see you if you have done at least something using the information within you, if he perceives some indication that you are aware of it. Stop the fast-forward, Vladimir, and you shall understand a great deal."

"Does my spiritual father still live in the same place? At the Trinity-Sergiev Monastery?"

"Your spiritual father, that great elder of Rus, is now living in a small monastic priory in the forest, not far from the Trinity-Sergiev Monastery. The priory's regulations are stricter than those in the monastery, and your spiritual father is the prior there. The priory is situated in the forest, in a compellingly beautiful setting. There are just a few little houses there, each with its own monastic cell.

"This priory situated in the green forest has a small wooden church. It is not ornately decorated and it does not have a gilded dome, but it is very, very beautiful, cosy and clean, heated by two stoves. Candles are not bought or sold there, as in most other churches. In fact nothing is bought or sold there. There is nothing and nobody to desecrate it, and parishioners are not allowed access. Even to this day your spiritual father, Father Feodorit, is praying in this church. He is

praying for the salvation of everyone's soul, including yours. He is praying for children who have forgotten their parents, and praying for parents forgotten by their children. Go to him and bow before him. Ask for forgiveness of your sins. The power of his spirit is very great. And give my deepest respects to Father Feodorit."

"Fine, Anastasia. I shall do that. And, you know, I shall first try and do what you have asked me to."



Upon arriving at Sergiev Posad, the town outside Moscow which used to be called Zagorsk, I entered the gates of the Trinity-Sergiev Monastery just as I used to do twenty-seven years ago. I first headed for the gate to the active part of the monastery. Before, all I had to do was introduce myself and ask for Father Feodorit. But this time the monk on duty replied that the archpriest was no longer Father Feodorit. There was a Father Feodorit at the monastery, living in the forest outside the monastery grounds — but parishioners did not go there.

I told the monk that I was an acquaintance of Father Feodorit's, and in proof of this I named the monastery sanctuaries which the Father had showed me so many years ago. Then I was told where the forest priory was situated, and with an inexplicable shiver of excitement I approached the little wooden church in the forest. It was indeed extraordinarily beautiful, and blended in harmoniously with the natural environment. There were paths leading to the church from several little wooden cell-houses situated around it.

Father Feodorit met with me on the small wooden porch of the forest church. I was a bit at a loss for words. I remembered Anastasia's counsel: "Only do not be embarrassed and try not to act surprised when you meet your spiritual father!" Still, I couldn't get over an inexplicable feeling of trepidation. Father Feodorit was old and grey, but no older than he had appeared twenty-seven years ago.

We sat on some blocks of wood on the porch of the little forest church without a word between us. I tried to speak, but couldn't manage to come up with the right thing to say. It seemed as though he already knew the whole picture and there was no sense in uttering words. It was as if the twenty-seven years since we last met had not gone by at all. It seemed as though we had parted only yesterday.

I had brought along a copy of my book on Anastasia to give to Father Feodorit, but I felt reluctant to actually hand it to him. I had been showing the book to various clerics. Some just took one look at it and said they didn't read books like that. Others asked what it was about, and after my brief explanation pronounced Anastasia an infidel. I didn't feel like upsetting Father Feodorit and certainly didn't want *him* to reject her out of hand. Each time someone had tried to speak ill of Anastasia, a feeling of resistance had welled up in me. I even had a row about it with the deacon of the Novospassky Monastery.³ He pointed out two women wearing dark clothing and black head-scarves and said:

"That is how God-fearing women should be."

I responded:

"If Anastasia is happy and enjoying life, that may well be pleasing to God. It is more pleasant to see people enjoying life than being dull and downcast like that."

³*Novospassky Monastery* — claimed to be the oldest monastery in Moscow, dating back to the founding of Moscow in 1147 by Prince Yury Dolgoruky.

So it was with some trepidation that I finally got out my book and handed it to Father Feodorit. He took it quietly and held it in the palm of one hand.

He began gently stroking it with his other hand, as though feeling something with his palms, and asked:

"Do you want me to read it?" And, without waiting for an answer, added: "Fine, leave it with me."

Two days later, I paid a morning visit to Father Feodorit. We sat there in the forest on a tiny bench near the Father's cell. And we talked about all sorts of things. While his manner of speaking was pretty much the same as twenty-seven years ago, one thing bothered me: why did Father Feodorit look just a bit *younger* than twenty-seven years ago? And all at once he broke off his train of thought and said:

"You know, Vladimir, your Father Feodorit has passed on."

At first I was speechless, but then managed to ask:

"Then who are you?"

"I am Father Feodorit," he replied, looking at me with just a faint trace of a smile. I then asked him:

"Tell me, where is his grave?"

"In the old cemetery."

"I'd like to see it. Can you tell me how to get there?"

He didn't say anything about the grave, only:

"Come and see me again whenever you have the time."

And then an incredible experience began taking place.

"Time for dinner," said Father Feodorit. "Come, I'll give you something to eat."

In a small hut which served as a refectory I sat down to table. The table was set out with a tureen of borsch, mashed potatoes, fish and a drink with stewed fruit. He poured some borsch into a bowl for me, and I began eating. The Father himself did not eat. He simply sat at the table.

As soon as I started in on the potatoes, I felt a delightful taste in my mouth. It brought back memories. The potatoes

tasted exactly as they had done in the monastery refectory twenty-seven years ago. I had remembered it all my life since then. My head began spinning. On the one hand, here was a different Father Feodorit sitting beside me; on the other hand, he talked and behaved exactly as I remembered from before.

I recalled how one time, many years ago, when we were together in one of the rooms of the monastery, Father Feodorit had suggested I have my picture taken with him. I agreed. He called over one of the monks who had a camera and he took our picture. Now I decided to use this to introduce some clarity to my present situation. I knew that monks did not like to pose for pictures. And the thought came to me to ask Father Feodorit if he would mind if I had a colour picture taken of us and that I also wanted to take one of the little forest church. If he refused, that would mean he was not the same Father Feodorit, not *my* Father Feodorit. And so I suggested:

“Let me have my picture taken with you.”

Father Feodorit did not refuse, and we had our picture taken. And I also took a snapshot of the little church. It turned out rather well, even though I had a very simple camera.

As I was leaving, Father Feodorit gave me a small travel Bible. It was not laid out in verses, like all the other Bibles I had seen, but simply in running text, as in an ordinary book. He advised me:

“When you cite the Bible in your book, you should indicate the precise chapter you are quoting from.”⁴

I asked him whether he would be open to receiving and talking with people who wished to meet with Anastasia, so

⁴The Russian edition of *Anastasia* includes no chapter-and-verse references; those in the English edition of Book 1 were added by the translator and editor.

they wouldn't have to travel such a long distance to the Siberian taiga. To which he replied:

"You know, I still haven't fully understood myself. So, for now, just come alone, whenever you have the time."

I was disappointed by Father Feodorit's refusal to see other people, but I wasn't about to press the matter. My conversation with him on a variety of subjects led me to the following conclusion: in Russian monasteries there are to be found certain elders whose wisdom and simplicity of expression far surpasses the art of countless numbers of denominational preachers, either of the home-grown or imported variety.

But why are you silent, you elders of Russia that have been endowed with such wisdom? Is this something to which you have been led on your own, or are there dark forces of some kind that are preventing you from speaking out? People come to a church service, and it turns out to be in a language they don't understand.⁵ And then people flock in droves and even pay money to hear preachers talk in a language they *can* understand. Maybe that is why so many Russians flock to foreign holy places and ignore their own.

I always felt a sense of peace in my heart after speaking with Father Feodorit. The way he talks is a lot simpler, clearer and more understandable than the vast majority of the preachers I went to hear after meeting with Anastasia in my efforts to make some sense of what she said. I want others to have a good experience, too. But when will you speak out, wise elders of Russia?

⁵Russian Orthodox services are conducted in Old Church Slavonic, which is an ancient distant relative of Russian but barely comprehensible to today's Russian speakers.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE



The Space of Love

After the sale of the first print-run of the book about Anastasia I received a royalty payment. I went to VDNKh,¹ now known as the All-Russian Exhibition Centre. For some reason, I always enjoyed being there. This time I walked past the multitude of snack bars and shashlik buffets, tempting me with their delicious aromas, and fought against my inclination to buy all the delicacies in sight. Even though I had money in my pocket, and a fair amount at that, I decided I would now spend it more wisely. And all at once, another incredible thing happened. It wasn't loud, but, unmistakably and distinctly, I heard Anastasia's voice.

"Buy yourself something to eat, Vladimir. Buy whatever you like. You do not have to scrimp on food any more."

I kept on walking a few steps past the open snack bars, and again came the voice:

"Why are you walking on past? Please, have something to eat, Vladimir."

"Come on now, I'm having hallucinations!" I thought.

I walked over to a bench alongside a broad pathway, where there was hardly anyone else around. I sat down and whispered quietly, bending over so people wouldn't think I was talking to myself.

¹VDNKh (pronounced *veb-deb-en-KHA*) — the Russian initials denoting the former Economic Achievements Exposition, a huge exhibition and recreational complex (complete with a large park, fountains and unusual architecture) covering 140 hectares in the north-east sector of Moscow.

"Anastasia, am I really hearing your voice?"

And I heard the answer distinct and clear:

"You are hearing my voice, Vladimir."

"Hello, Anastasia. Why didn't you talk to me earlier? So many questions have been piling up. Questions people have been asking at readers' gatherings, including a lot I can't answer."

"I *have* been talking to you. I have been trying all this time to talk with you. But you have not been hearing me. Once, when you decided to do away with yourself, I even cried out, I was so worried, but to no avail. You did not hear me. I figured out what I needed to do and started singing. It was this song that the two girls picked up and played on their violins at the metro station. They heard it and started playing. As soon as you recognised the same melody you had heard me sing in the taiga, you remembered me. I was so worried at the time, I thought my milk was going to give out."

"What milk, Anastasia?"

"My breast-milk. The milk for our son. After all, I did bear him, Vladimir."

"Did bear... Anastasia!... Was it hard? How are you doing there all alone in the taiga? How is he? You told me — I remember your saying — it wouldn't be at the right time."

"Everything is fine. Nature awakened early and is now helping me. And our son is fine. He is a strong lad. He is already smiling. Only his skin is a little dry, just like yours. But that is nothing, it will pass. Everything will be fine. You shall see. It is more difficult for *you* now than for us. But take one more step. Finish the writing. I know how hard it has been for you, and it will not be so easy in the future either. But keep going. Keep going on your own path."

"But Anastasia..."

I wanted to tell her that writing a book is harder than running a business. I wanted to tell her about how things stood with my family and the firm. About all the ups and downs of

the past year. About how I no longer have a home and family, and almost ended up in the loony bin. I wanted to give her a good talking to about those dreams of hers, so she wouldn't aim too high with them, wouldn't keep on tempting people. But then I thought: why upset a nursing mother? — her milk might indeed turn bad.

And so I said:

“Don't you worry about trifles, Anastasia. I don't have any particular difficulties at the moment. What's the fuss? I've written a book. And it was easier than drawing up a business plan. When you draw up a business plan, there are a lot of different factors you have to foresee in advance. But here you simply sit down and describe what's already happened. Just as in the jokes about the Chukchi: ‘I sing what I see.’²

“And besides... you know something, Anastasia? Those dreams of yours, which I thought were sheer fantasy, they're starting to come true. It's incredible, but they are coming true. Look, the book is finished. You dreamt about it, and now it exists. People are really reading it enthusiastically. The Moscow papers are already writing about it. Readers are writing poetry about you, about Nature, about Russia.

“I found the picture we talked about in the archives of the Trinity-Sergiev Monastery. The picture has been preserved, it's entitled “The One and Only by a Single Line”.³ I shall publish it.

²*I sing what I see* — a reference to a song of the Chukchi (the native people of the Chukotka Peninsula in Siberia), where the singer sings about whatever he happens to see. This particular phrase has given rise to many Russian jokes. In this case the author is light-heartedly applying the phrase to his own writing activity.

³*The One and Only by a Single Line* — this picture in the private collection of the Trinity-Sergiev Monastery is a copy of a famous engraving by Claude Mellan (1598–1688), *Veil of St Veronica* (1649). It represents the face of Christ Jesus (‘the One and Only’) surmounted by a crown of thorns and is executed by a single spiral line in 166 revolutions.

"And, can you imagine, the bards... you remember telling me about the bards?"

"Yes, I remember, Vladimir."

"Surprising as it is, this too is starting to come about. I was at one readers' conference where I was approached by this chap with dark blond hair. He handed me an audiocassette and said, in terse, military fashion: 'Songs for Anastasia. Please accept.'

"The journalists, readers and two of the staff of the Moscow Research Centre, Alexander Solntsev⁴ and Alexander Zakotsky, who had come to the conference — they all listened in silence to the tape. Later a number of people began making copies of it. They made copies and at the same time tried to track down the man who had given it to me — whose looks, apart from his dark-blond hair and short stature, didn't have much to say for themselves. He had appeared, it seemed, out of nowhere, and disappeared just as mysteriously. He turned out to be a submarine officer from St. Petersburg, a scientist by the name of Alexander Korotynsky.⁵ He later told me how the submarine he was on managed to rise to the surface after an accident. How he had been confidently led by a series of coincidences in connection with this cassette. Led to hand

⁴*Alexander Vasilievich Solntsev* (1951–) — a Siberian entrepreneur, a former acquaintance of Vladimir Megré's. After spotting a small book with Megré's name on the cover, Solntsev (who by this time had relocated with his family to Moscow and lost sight of his former colleague) contacted the author and in March 1997 became founding director of the Moscow-based "Anastasia" Research Centre, managing the publication of Megré's books, organising readers' conferences, clubs, trips to dolmens, etc. More recently Solntsev has devoted himself to setting up an eco-village in the Smolensk Oblast and reinvigorating the tradition of cultivation of flax. He has also authored a book on the Caucasus, entitled *Dolmens*.

⁵Since this book was published Alexander Korotynsky has released several song albums inspired by the Ringing Cedars Series.

it to me. Not only that, but Korotynsky turned out to be a bard as well. And his song *Kbram* (The Church) contains whole phrases which you said to me. Remember these, for example?

*Believe not others' words —
Once said, they're gone as wind.
Many will see the Church
But few will enter in.*

*Our life may be a race:
From floor to floor we're thrown.
But every one must face
The choice he's made his own.*

"Besides, Korotynsky doesn't really have a singing voice. He practically recites when he sings. But that very fact goes to prove what you said about the power of the word connected to the soul by invisible threads. Korotynsky the Bard is a living example."

"For all the bright joy you have been giving to people, for the purification of souls, I thank you, Bard, I thank you," said Anastasia.

"Just think — another officer!" I mused. "Grutsia, who first printed the book — he was an officer. And the homeless colonel who drew the picture for it. And then there was a pilot, a regimental commander, who's been helping me sell the books. And now the first one to bring me songs turns out to be an officer. What is it about your Ray that seems to set officers' hearts afire in particular? Do you shine your Ray on them more than others?"

"Many have been touched by my Ray, Vladimir, but it sparks aspirations only when there is something there to set aflame."

"Your dream, Anastasia, is indeed turning more and more into reality. People are grasping hold of it, they understand it. The homeless colonel understood. He was a chance acquaintance — pity he's gone. I saw him lying dead there. His face was all smeared with dirt, but he was smiling. Dead, but still smiling. Did you do something there with your Ray? What does that mean, when someone dies with a smile on their face?"

"That Man that was with you... he is now with the Bard, treading the invisible pathway. His smile is saving many hearts from bullets more terrible than the leaden ones."

"Your dream, Anastasia, is entering upon our world, and it really seems as though our world is beginning to change. There are certain people who feel and understand you — they show evidence of new strength coming from somewhere, and that is changing the world. The world is becoming just a little better.

"But you, Anastasia... there you are as before, in the taiga, in your glade. I would not be able to live in such conditions, and you would not be able to live in our world. What then is the point of your *love*? Your love is meaningless, and I still do not understand my relationship to you. But what's the point since it's so clear we can never be together? Never close."

"We are together, Vladimir. Close."

"Together?! Where are you? When people love each other, they strive to be always close to each other. To embrace and caress each other. You're too different. You don't need that."

"I *do* need it. Just like everyone else. And I am making it happen."

"But how?"

"Right now, for example. Can you not feel the gentle touch of the breeze, feel its caressing embrace? And the warm touch of the Sun's glistening rays on your face? Can you not

hear the birds singing so cheerfully and the leaves rustling on the tree you are sitting under? Listen — it is a most unusual rustling!”

“But that — everything you just mentioned — that’s for everyone. In any case, are you responsible for all that?”

“Love dissolved in Space for one can touch the hearts of many.”

“Why dissolve Love in Space?”

“So that close to a loved one there will always be a Space of Love. This is the essence of Love, this is its designated purpose.”

“It’s all pretty confusing to me. And your voice... Before, I never heard anything at a distance, but now I do. Why?”

“It is not the *voice* that you hear at a distance. You need to listen not with your ears, but with your heart. You need to learn how to listen with your heart.”

“Why should I bother learning? You can just talk with me the way you’re doing right now, with your voice.”

“I shall not be able to do that indefinitely.”

“But you’re doing it right now. After all, I can hear you.”

“Grandfather is helping us at the moment. You go have a talk with him. I need to go feed our son, and there are so many other things to do. I do want to get them all done.”

“So, it works with your grandfather, but not with you. Why?”

“Because Grandfather is somewhere in your vicinity right now. Very close to you.”

“Where?”

CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX



Anastasia's grandfather

I looked about me. There was Anastasia's grandfather, standing right close to the bench, using his walking-stick to push a piece of litter someone had thoughtlessly tossed on the grass toward a rubbish bin. I jumped up. We shook hands. His kindly eyes were sparkling with cheer, and he talked in simple terms. Not like his father. When I saw Anastasia's great-grandfather back in the taiga, he hardly said a word, and his eyes kept staring into space, as though they were looking right through you.

Grandfather and I sat down on the bench, and I asked him:

"How did you get here? How did you find me?"

"It wasn't much of a problem getting here and finding you with Anastasia's help."

"She's really something, eh?! She's had a child! She said she would have one, and she did. Alone, out there in the taiga, not in any hospital. It must have been painful for her. Did she cry out?"

"Now why would you think it was painful for her?"

"Well, women, when they give birth — it's painful. Some of them even die during childbirth."

"It's painful only when a child is conceived in sin. As a result of fleshly lusts. Women pay for this with pain in childbirth and torments afterward in life. If the conception takes place with higher aspirations, the pain only intensifies the feeling of the great joy of creation on the part of the mother."

"Where does the pain go, then? How can it intensify joy?"

"When a woman is raped, what does she feel? Of course she feels pain and revulsion. But when she gives in of her own free will, that same pain is transformed into different sensations. The same is true in regard to childbirth."

"Does that mean Anastasia experienced a painless childbirth?"

"Of course it was painless. And she chose a suitable day, a warm and sunny day."

"What do you mean, she *chose*? Childbirth happens quite unexpectedly."

"Unexpectedly, if the conception simply takes place by chance. A mother is always capable of delaying or accelerating her baby's appearance by a few days."

"But weren't you aware of when the baby was due? Didn't you take steps to help her?"

"We did feel something happening on that day. It was a splendid day. We walked over to her glade. Saw the she-bear sitting at the edge of the glade, moaning because her feelings were hurt. She kept moaning and pounding her paw on the ground with all her might. Anastasia was lying on the same spot where her mother had given birth to her, and there was this little ball of life lying on her breast. The she-wolf was licking him."

"And why was the bear moaning? How had her feelings been hurt?"

"Anastasia had called the wolf over instead of her."

"She could have gone to her on her own."

"They do not approach Anastasia without an invitation. Just think what would happen if they all came uninvited, whenever they felt like it."

"I wonder how she's managing with the baby now."

"Why don't you go and see for yourself, if you're interested?"

"She told me I shouldn't communicate with him until I purge myself of something. First of all I have to go 'round to the holy places. But I don't have enough money for that."

"Don't go by what she said — she doesn't always make sense. You're the father, after all. You should do what you think best. You could buy a whole bunch of rompers and other baby clothes, packages of diapers, a little jacket, a rattle maybe, and demand that she dress the baby normally, and not make him suffer. He's all naked out there in the forest."

"I've been wanting to do that ever since I heard about my son. I *will* do it. As for not making sense, I think you hit the nail right on the head. That's probably why I don't really understand my feelings toward her. First it was amazement, now some kind of feeling of respect has appeared, and something else besides which I can't grasp hold of. But not on the order of love for a woman. I still remember the kind of feelings I had when I loved a woman before. This here's something quite different. It's quite possible that she cannot be loved in the ordinary sense of the word. Something gets in the way. Maybe it's her illogicality, her failure to make complete sense all the time."

"Don't take Anastasia's illogicality, Vladimir, for stupidity. It is her seeming illogicality that is drawing forgotten laws out of the depths of the Universe, and possibly creating new laws.

"The forces of both light and darkness are occasionally astounded at her *apparent* illogicality, and then all at once the simple truth of being that everyone knows starts flaring up more brightly. Even *we* don't always comprehend our Anastasia. Even though she's our own granddaughter and great-granddaughter. She grew up under our very eyes. And since we don't always understand, we are not always able to be of significant help. And so she's often left alone with her own aspirations. Very much alone.

"Take *you*, for example. Here she's gone and met with you, opened up her whole self to you, and to others, thanks to the book. We wanted to stop her. We wanted to stop her from loving. To us her choice of *you* seemed incomprehensible, even absurd."

"I still don't understand her choice myself," I admitted. "My readers, too, wonder. 'Who are *you*?' they keep asking. 'Why did Anastasia choose you?' I can't give them an answer. I realise that, according to all logic, she should be in the company of some kind of intellectually- or spiritually-minded person. He would no doubt be able to understand and love her. They could be more useful together. But me, I have to change my whole life, I have to deal with a whole lot of questions which for other more educated people have long been clear and comprehensible."

"Do you regret now how your life has changed?"

"I don't know. I'm still trying to make sense of it all. As to why she picked me out in particular, I can't answer that. I look for an answer but can't find one."

"And how are you looking for an answer?"

"I'm trying to understand things within myself — who I really am."

"Maybe there's something special there, eh?"

"Could be there's something there. After all, they say: like attracts like."

"Vladimir, did Anastasia talk to you about pride and self-conceit? Did she speak about the consequences of this sin?"

"Yes, she said it was a mortal sin, leading people away from the truth."

"Well, she didn't pick you out, Vladimir. She didn't pick you *out*, she picked you *up*. She picked you up like a worn-out good-for-nothing. We didn't realise that ourselves at first. I hope you're not too offended?"

"I don't entirely agree with you. I had a family — a wife and a daughter, and my business wasn't doing too badly. So, I may not have been anything special, but I wasn't at the bottom of the heap, either — not someone to pick up like a tramp or a useless piece of garbage."

"You haven't been in love with your wife for quite a while. You have your own life and interests, she has hers. It was only the daily routine that kept you together, or rather, the inertia of past feelings, which have been getting weaker and weaker over time. Neither have you had anything to talk about with your *daughter*. She's not interested in your business dealings. That's something that seemed important only to you. It brought in a financial income. But today's income may well be nothing tomorrow, or a loss, or a bankruptcy even. And then you were ill. You practically killed your stomach. With that dissolute lifestyle of yours there was no way you could climb out of your hole of disease. It was all over. And nothing was left."

"So what's it to you people? What am I to her? An experiment? Is she looking for some kind of fringe benefit?"

"It's simply that she's fallen in love, Vladimir. Genuinely, sincerely, just as with everything else she does. And she's happy that she hasn't taken anyone out of your world capable of bringing happiness to another woman. She has not placed herself in any privileged position. She's glad to be just like other women."

"So, it's just a whim of hers, eh? She wants a typical husband from *our* world — one who smokes, goes out carousing... Well, I must say, that's quite a self-sacrifice just for a whim!"

"Her love is genuine. It's not a whim, she's not looking for any fringe benefit. Even though she appeared illogical, at first, to the forces of both light and darkness, to us and to others, in reality she clearly illuminated the whole concept and meaning of Love. Not with words, doctrines or moral teachings, but with actual achievements in the lives of people in your world,

including your own personal life. The forces of light, the forces of the Creator, speak through her Love. And not only do they speak, they show clearly as never before: 'Look and see, see the power of a woman, the power of pure Love.' At the very last moment before death it is capable of giving new life. Capable of lifting up any Man, rescuing him from the tenacious paws of darkness and carrying him into the brightness of infinity. Capable of surrounding him with the Space of Love and giving him a new life, which is life eternal.

"Her Love, Vladimir, will restore to you the love of your wife, the respect of your daughter. Thousands of women will look at you with fervent glances of love. You will have complete freedom of choice. And if, from all the varied manifestations of the external appearance of love, you succeed in catching sight of that special one, Anastasia will be very happy. In any case you will be rich and famous, there will be no possibility of bankruptcy for you. The book you have written will circulate all over the world and bring you a return — and not just a monetary return, it will give you and others a power greater than mere physical or material strength."

"I must say," I observed, "the book is really starting to sell quite well. But I did write it myself, even though some people say Anastasia helped me in some way. What do *you* think — is it just my book, or did she have a hand in writing it?"

"You did everything a writer is supposed to do. You got the paper, your hand controlled the pen and you described what happened. You put down all your deductions in your own language. You saw to the publication of the book. What you did was no different from a writer's usual course of action."

"So, the book is mine alone? Anastasia didn't do anything?"

"No, she did not. She did not manipulate the pen on the paper."

"But you talk as though she still facilitated its appearance in some way. If so, explain in more detail. What exactly did she do?"

"To make it possible for you to write this book, Vladimir, Anastasia gave her life."

"Okay. Now everything's got obscured again. How come? How is it possible for her, living in the forest, to give her life for some book? Who *is* she? She herself says: *Man*. Other people call her an alien, or a goddess. Now that all ends up in some serious confusion. I really want to straighten this out for myself."

"It's all very simple, Vladimir. Man is the only creature in the Universe who can live on all planes of existence at once. In their earthly existence most people see themselves only as an earthly, materialised manifestation. But there are those who perceive other levels of being, levels invisible to the material senses.

"Calling Anastasia a goddess is not a sin against the truth. The main difference between Man and all other forms of existence lies in Man's ability to create the present and the future by his thoughts, inventing forms and images which are afterward materialised. The clarity, harmoniousness, pace of thinking and mental purity of Man as a Creator is what determines the future. And in this sense Anastasia *is* a goddess. For the pace at which she thinks, the clarity and purity of the images she formulates, are such that she alone has proved capable of withstanding the whole dark mass of opposing forces. *She alone*. Only there is no way of telling how long she'll be able to hold out. She's still waiting, believing that people will realise what is happening and will help her. Believing that they will cease producing darkness and hell."

"Who's producing darkness and hell?"

"Prophets who believe in and talk about the end of the world — they themselves are producing mental visualisations of the end of the world. The whole mass of teachings foretelling the ultimate doom of mankind, are hastening the day with their visualisations. There are a lot of them, a whole lot of

them. And these people have no idea, while they seek salvation for themselves and search for the Promised Land, that a hell is being prepared specifically for them.”

“But the people that are talking about the Last Judgement or a global catastrophe, they actually believe in it, they’re sincerely praying for the salvation of their souls.”

“They are motivated not by faith in the light, in the Love that is God, but by *fear*. And this fearful scenario is something they are fashioning for themselves. Think, Vladimir! Try to imagine. Here we are, you and I, sitting on this bench. You see lots of people before your eyes. All at once some of them start to go into fits of convulsion from terrible pain, as though they were sinners. All around us on the Earth millions of corpses are rotting, while you and I sit here untouched by it all and watch. It’s as though we are sitting on a bench in Paradise. But doesn’t it wrench your heart to see all the horrifying images of what’s going on? Wouldn’t it be better to die or fall asleep the moment before witnessing such tragedy?”

“What if all the righteous who are saved,” I wondered aloud, “are in the Promised Land, where there are no rotting corpses around, no frightful images?”

“When you get news, even from the other side of the world, about the death of a loved one, or a relative, don’t you feel grief and sorrow in your heart?”

“Anyone in a situation like that would surely be distressed.”

“Then how can you imagine Paradise for yourself, realising that most of your fellow-countrymen, your friends and relatives, have already perished, and others are dying in frightful torment?! How hardened must a heart become, how deep a pit of gloom must it fall into, to feel pleasure under such circumstances? Such souls are not needed in the kingdom of light. For they themselves are the creatures of darkness.”

“But why do the great teachers of mankind,” I queried, “—the ones who’ve put or are now putting various doctrines down

on paper — talk about the end of the world, the Last Judgment? Who, then, are *they*? Where are they leading people? Why do they talk that way?”

“It’s difficult to define precisely what they’re getting at. It’s possible they will bring about a change in people’s conscious awareness simply because the crowds of people they draw find their ideas so attractive.”

“Those who are alive today can effect such a change,” I observed. “But what about those who came before and left their teachings for us as a legacy?”

“They might have indeed prepared the *way* for a change, in the hope that their followers would make the change happen and discover the truth. Perhaps they’re waiting for the course of history to show the vast majority of mankind the hopelessness of their present path, and counting on ensuing events to help them turn their followers and believers to the light.”

“If you people knew all this before, why did you sit there in the forest and remain silent all these years? Why didn’t you try to explain it to somebody earlier? Anastasia said your people have been living this way of life for generations, over thousands of years, preserving the truth about Man’s pristine origins.”

“In various corners of the Earth,” the grandfather replied, “there are people who have preserved a way of life apart from technocracy, making use of capacities which are inherent only in Man. From time to time they have made attempts to share their conscious awareness with others. And each time those who tried perished before they could say anything substantial. Even though they presented powerful thought-forms and images, they were resisted by the vast majority of mankind.”

“You mean to say they would trample on Anastasia and crush her?”

“Anastasia has somehow managed to stand up to them. At least so far. Maybe it’s *because* of her illogicality!”

The old fellow fell silent, thoughtfully tracing the point of his walking-stick on the ground to form incomprehensible symbols.

I sat there, deep in thought. Finally I asked him:

"Then why did she keep repeating to me all the time: *I am Man! I am a woman!* — if she's really a goddess, as you say?"

"In her earthly, materialised sense of existence she is simply *Man*, a human being, a woman. And even though her lifestyle is somewhat unusual, she is still capable, just like anyone else, of experiencing feelings of joy and sorrow, loving and wanting to be loved.

"But all the abilities she has are inherent in *Man*, in every *Man* — that is, in *Man* in his pristine state. The abilities she had which seemed so extraordinary will no longer seem so exceptional to you once you learn what your modern science has to say about them. And as to the other abilities she has which are still not understood, rest assured an explanation will be found. And it will all go to show that she is simply *Man*, a female of the human species.

"There is one phenomenon you will soon encounter, however, which you won't be able to understand. Nor will your scientists be able to explain it. Even my father doesn't know exactly what kind of phenomenon it is. Your world calls such things *anomalies*. But I beg of you, Vladimir, don't identify this phenomenon with Anastasia. It will appear right beside her, but it is not in her. Try to find the inner strength to see, to feel in her what is simply *Man*.

"She tries to be like everyone else. For some reason, she feels it's important — she feels a need — a need to prove that she is *Man*. This is difficult for her, since in doing so she must still keep her principles intact. But, then, don't we all have principles that are sacred to us?"

"But what kind of phenomenon are you talking about — this thing you won't define and which science can't explain?"

CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN



The anomaly

“When we buried Anastasia’s parents, she was still very young,” Anastasia’s grandfather began. “She wasn’t yet able to walk or talk. My father and I dug a hole in the ground, with the animals’ help. We placed branches at the bottom, put the bodies of Anastasia’s parents in the hole and covered them over with grass and earth. We stood there a while on the burial mound without saying a word. Little Anastasia sat a short distance away in the glade, watching a bug crawling along her arm. We thought it was just as well that she wasn’t yet able to be fully aware of the misfortune that had befallen her. Then we quietly walked away.”

“What do you mean, you walked away? You just walked off and abandoned this poor, ignorant little girl to her own devices?”

“We didn’t abandon her. We left her in the same spot where her mother had given birth to her. You have a concept known as *Shambala*,¹ or Motherland. The meaning of these words is becoming more and more abstract. *Motherland* — that is literally MOTHER-LAND.² *Mother!* In anticipation of their

¹*Shambala* — a Tibetan word indicating ‘the source of happiness’ in Oriental religions, and signifying the legendary ‘land of the gods’ — a place through which the Earth is connected with the Divine.

²*Motherland* — the closest English equivalent of the Russian word *Rodina*, derived from the name of God the Creator *Rod* in the ancient Slavic tradition (the word *rod* also signifies ‘origin’, ‘derivation’ or ‘birth’) and the root *na* signifying ‘mother’. In the original Russian text, the word is printed as ‘ROD I NA’.

child's appearance in the world, parents ought to create a Space for him. An environment of kindness and love. And to give him a piece of the Motherland, which, like a mother's womb, both preserves the body and caresses the soul. It imparts the wisdom of creation and assists in obtaining the truth.

"And what can a woman give her child who is born amidst stone walls? What kind of world has she made ready for him? Or has she given any thought at all to the world in which her child is to live? In that case the world will do with him as it likes. It will strive to subject this little human being unto itself, making him a mere cog, or a slave. And the mother will simply become an observer, as she has not made ready for her child any Space of Love.

"You see, Vladimir, Nature — the Nature surrounding Anastasia's mother, the creatures large and small — treated her as they would treat any Man who lived the way she did: as a friend, as a wise and good deity, one who had created around her a world of Love. Anastasia's parents were happy and kind people, they very much loved one another, loved the Earth, and the Space around them responded to them with Love. Little Anastasia was born into this Space of Love and at once became its centre.

"Many creatures will not touch a newborn. A mother cat may nurse a puppy, or a mother dog a kitten. Many wild animals are capable of nursing and taking care of human offspring. But these animals have become wild to people in your world. To Anastasia's mother and father they played quite another role. The creatures treated *them* entirely differently. Anastasia's mother gave birth to her in the glade, and many creatures were witness to the birth. They saw how the woman they revered became a mother and bore another Man, another human being. When they witnessed the birth, their feelings toward their human friend, their love for her, intertwined with their

own parenting instincts, giving birth to a new exalted manifestation of light.

“Everything, absolutely everything in that surrounding Space, from the tiniest bug and blade of grass to the seemingly ferocious beast, was ready, unhesitatingly, to give its life for the sake of that little being. And there was nothing in that surrounding Space of Motherland, created and bestowed by its mother, that could possibly have threatened that being. Everything would look after and cherish this human being.

“To Anastasia the little glade is literally a mother’s womb. The glade is her living Motherland. Powerful and kind. And inextricably tied by a natural, living thread to the whole Universe. To the whole creation of the Grand Creator.

“The little glade is her living Motherland. It came from her mother and her father. And from the One and Only, the Original Father. We could never be a substitute for *it*. That is why, after burying her parents, we walked away.

“Three days later, while we were approaching the glade, we felt a tension in the air, we heard wolves howling. Then we saw...

“Little Anastasia was sitting quietly atop the burial mound. One of her cheeks was smeared with earth. We realised she had been sleeping on the mound. Tiny tears were streaming from her eyes and falling onto the ground. She was crying, noiselessly, with only an occasional sob. And she kept stroking and stroking the burial mound with her little hands.

“She wasn’t able to talk, but she did say her first words on this mound. We heard them. At first she simply uttered syllables: *Ma-ma*, then *Pa-pa*. She repeated this several times. Then she added a syllable to each: *Ma-moch-ka*, *Pa-poch-ka*, *Ma-moch-ka*, *Pa-poch-ka*.³ *I am Ana-sta-SI-ya. I now have you no more. Eh? Only my grand-pas? Eh?*

³*Mamochka, Papochka* — in Russian, common diminutives of *Mama* and *Papa* respectively.

"My father was the first to realise it: even as we were burying her parents, little Anastasia, sitting there in the glade and watching the bug, was fully aware of the whole depth of the misfortune that had befallen her. She used her will-power to refrain from showing her feelings. With her mother's milk she had been imbued with the wisdom and strength of her pristine origins. Nursing mothers have that capacity, Vladimir. The capacity to pass along to their baby, together with mother's milk, the conscious awareness and wisdom of the ages, right back to their pristine origins.

"Anastasia's mother knew how to do this, and used this method to full advantage. To the fullest possible advantage.

"Since Anastasia didn't want us to see her crying, we didn't go out into the glade, and didn't approach the mound, but we couldn't tear ourselves from the spot. So we just stood there, observing what was going on.

"Supporting herself on the burial mound, little Anastasia attempted to stand on her little feet. She didn't do it on the first try, but still, she managed to stand up. She stood there swaying back and forth, stretching her arms out a little to each side, and finally took her first timid step away from her parents' grave, then a second step. Her little feet got mixed up in the grass and her little body lost its balance and started to fall. But the fall — well, that was something quite unusual.

"At the moment she fell, a barely noticeable bluish glow came flooding over the glade, and changed the Earth's laws of gravity just on that particular spot. It touched us too with some kind of mellow languor. Anastasia's body didn't fall, but gradually and smoothly descended to the ground. Once she got up on her feet again, the bluish light disappeared, and the normal gravitation field was restored.

"With careful and hesitating footsteps, Anastasia went over to a little branch lying in the glade and was able to pick it

up. We realised she had started cleaning up the glade, as her mother had done many times. This wee little girl then carried the dry branch to the edge of the glade. But once again she lost her balance, began to fall and dropped the branch.

"During her fall, once more the bluish glow sparked into life, changing the Earth's gravitational field, and the branch flew over to the little pile of dry branches lying at the edge of the glade.

"Anastasia got up, looked around for the branch but couldn't find it. Then, throwing up her little hands, with shaky steps she slowly made her way over to another branch. No sooner had she started bending over to pick it up than the branch itself began rising from the ground, as though a breeze had blown it to the edge of the glade. But there wasn't enough of a wind around to do this. Some invisible presence was carrying out little Anastasia's desires.

"But she wanted to do everything herself, as her Mama had done. And, no doubt in protest against this help from her invisible ally, she thrust her little hand into the air and waved it gently above her head.

"We looked up and saw it. Over the meadow we saw hanging a small spherical mass, pulsating and glowing with a pale-blue light. We could see a whole multitude of fiery discharges inside its transparent covering, giving the effect of multi-coloured lightning. Indeed, it was very similar to large ball-lightning. But it was intelligent!

"We couldn't tell what it was made of and what kind of intelligence we were dealing with.

"We could feel some kind of unknown and unseen power in it. But there was no sense of fear of this power. On the contrary, it seemed to be radiating a pleasant, languid grace. We didn't feel like moving. We just felt like being."

"But what made you think it possessed untold power?" I interrupted.

"My Papa noticed that. Even though it was a bright sunny day, the leaves on the trees and the petals on the flowers turned in its direction. In its bluish glow there was more power than in the Sun's rays. And it could change the Earth's gravitational field at the moment Anastasia fell — just in the right place and at just the right time. The change was so precise that her body descended smoothly, but yet was not torn away from the Earth.

"Anastasia spent a long time collecting branches. Sometimes she would crawl, at other times walk all over the meadow with slow steps, until she had cleared them all away. And the fiery sphere, still pulsating, hovered over the wee little one. But it no longer helped her pick up the branches. The powerful fiery sphere seemed to understand the gesture of her little hand and obeyed it.

"Expanding and dissolving in Space, contracting and producing internal discharges (like flashbulbs) of some kind of energy from goodness-knows-where, the sphere would momentarily disappear and then reappear, as though it were somehow excited, and this excitement caused it to sweep through space at incredible speed.

"The time came when Anastasia normally lay down to sleep. We never compel our children to sleep, rocking them back and forth until they become dizzy. At this time Anastasia's mother would simply lie down herself in the usual spot and pretend to doze off, to show her child by example. Little Anastasia would crawl over to her, snuggle up against her warm body and peacefully fall asleep.

"And this time Anastasia went to the spot where she was used to sleeping during the day with her mother. She stood and looked at the place where she had always slept with her Mama at this time, but now there was no Mama around.

"It was not clear just what she was thinking at that moment, only once again a tiny tear glistened in a sunbeam on

Anastasia's face. And right away the bluish glow came pulsating across the glade, flashing at irregular intervals.

"Anastasia raised her little head, saw the pulsating mass of light, sat down on the grass and began staring at it continuously. It remained still under her gaze. For some time she just sat there staring like that. Then she held out both her little arms in its direction, as she was wont to do when summoning one of the creatures to her side. At that point the fiery sphere sparked up in a multitude of powerful lightning bolts, reaching out beyond its blue covering, and... made a dash for her little arms like a fiery comet. Looking as though it had the ability to sweep away everything in its path, it took only a split second to reach Anastasia's face, start rotating and with one of its lightning flashes wipe away a tiny tear glistening on her cheek. And at this point it extinguished all the discharges and became a pale blue, faintly glowing sphere in the arms of the little one sitting on the grass.

"For a time Anastasia sat there holding it, examining it and stroking it with her hands. Then she got up, lifted up the blue sphere, and with careful steps carried it over and put it down on the place she used to sleep with her mother. And again she caressed it gently.

"The sphere took up a position on the ground and pretended to doze off, just as Anastasia's mother had done. And the little girl lay down beside it. She fell asleep. She slept there on the grass, all curled up into a ball. The sphere took flight, disappearing into the heavenly heights, then spread itself low over the glade, as though it were a blanket. Later, once more contracting into a small, pulsating ball, it took up a position next to Anastasia, who was still sleeping on the grass, and began stroking her hair. It was a strange and unusual caressing. With the most delicate luminescent and flickering threads of lightning, it took each individual strand of hair, lifted it and caressed it.

“On subsequent visits to Anastasia in her glade, we saw it again on several occasions. We realised that to Anastasia it was something quite natural, just like the Sun, or the Moon, or the trees and animals around her. And she had conversations with it, just as she did with everything else around her. But it was evident she made a distinction between it and the other things in her environment. The distinction wasn’t too noticeable in terms of outward expression, but there was a definite impression that she treated it with just a little more respect than other things, and sometimes she would even play up to it. She never played up to anyone else, but for some reason she allowed herself to behave this way with the sphere. It reacted to her mood and even played along.”

“The morning Anastasia turned four,” Grandfather continued, “we were standing at the edge of the glade waiting for her to wake up. We wanted to quietly watch and see how she would delight in the new spring day that was unfolding.

“The sphere appeared just a moment before she woke up. It glistened faintly with its bluish glow, either spreading itself in a shower of light or dissolving over the whole Space of the glade. And we beheld a natural living picture made by no human hand — it was charming and magnificent.

“The whole glade was transformed — the surrounding trees, the grass, even the bugs. The needles of the cedars began shining in a host of soft hues. Behind the squirrels springing from branch to branch could be seen rainbow-trails sparkling and dissolving. The grass was lit up in a soft green glow. An even more pronounced multicoloured glow emanated from the multitude of bugs scurrying through the grass, forming an unusually vivid and beautiful carpet spreading its way across the glade, constantly morphing itself into new intricate and marvellous patterns. Upon awakening, Anastasia opened her eyes to behold an extraordinary living

panorama, full of enchantment. She jumped up and gazed all 'round.

"She smiled, as she always did in the morning, and everything around her responded to her smile with an even brighter glow and accelerated movement. Then Anastasia carefully knelt down and began meticulously examining the grass and the shining, multicoloured bugs scurrying about. When she lifted up her head, the slightly worried expression on her face betrayed a measure of concentration. She looked up and, even though nothing was visible up there, stretched her little arms to the sky. All at once the still air stirred, and in her hands appeared the bluish sphere. She held it up to her face, then put it down on the grass and tenderly stroked it. And we could hear their conversation. Anastasia was the only one who actually spoke, but we had the distinct impression that the sphere was understanding her and even silently responding. Anastasia spoke with it tenderly, with just a touch of sadness:

"You are good. You are very good. You wanted to delight me with your beauty. Thank you. But change it back, please change it back to the way it was before. And do not ever change it again.'

"The blue sphere emitted another pulse, then lifted slightly off the ground, and the lightning discharges flashed from within. But the glowing scene did not fade. Anastasia fixed her gaze upon it and spoke to it once again:

"Every little beetle, bug and ant has its Mama. Everyone has a Mama. All Mamas love their children just the way they were born. It does not matter how many legs they have or what colour they are. You have changed everything. How will the Mamas recognise their children now? Please, make everything as it was before!'

"The sphere gave a faint flash, and everything in the glade was restored to the way it looked before. Once again it descended to Anastasia's feet. She stroked it and offered a

‘Thank you!’. She stared silently at the sphere for a while, and when she spoke to it again, her words really impressed us. She told it:

“Do not come to see me again. I like being with you. You are always trying to do only what is good for everyone, always trying to help. But do not come visit me. I know you have a very large glade of your own. But you think very fast, so fast that I cannot understand all at once. Only later shall I understand a bit. You move faster than everything else. Much faster than the birds and the breeze. You do everything very fast and very well, and I know that is how you must do it to get everything done, to do good in your own very large glade. But when you are with me, it means you are not there. So, when you are with me, there is no one to do good in the other glade. Go away. You need to take care of the large glade.’

“The blue sphere contracted into a little lump, and took off way up high. It began sweeping through Space, sparkling more brightly than usual, and once more plunged down like a fiery comet to Anastasia, who was still sitting in the same spot. It stayed still by her head for a while, then a multitude of tiny flickering rays reached out to Anastasia’s long hair and stroked each strand individually, right down to the tip.

“‘What are you taking your time for?’ Anastasia said quietly. ‘You should get going back to those who are waiting for you. I’ll make everything all right here myself. And I will be happy to know that everything is all right in the large glade too. I shall be able to feel you. And I want you to think of me too, but just occasionally.’

“The blue sphere began ascending, but not with its usual carefree bounce. It rose from Anastasia in fitful bursts, and finally disappeared into space. But it left something invisible all around. And each time when something happened that affected Anastasia negatively, the surrounding space would grow still, as though paralysed. That is why you lost consciousness

when you tried to touch her without her consent. She pacifies this phenomenon by waving her hands in the air whenever she can. Just as before, she wants to do everything all by herself.

"We asked our little Anastasia:

"What was that glowing thing that was hovering over the glade, what do you call it?"

"She thought for a bit, and answered briefly:

"I would call it *Good*, Granpakins."

The oldster fell silent. But I still wanted to hear about how little Anastasia lived in the forest, and I asked him:

"What did she do after that, how did she live?"

"The same way," the old fellow replied. "She grew up just like anyone else. We suggested she help the dachniks. By the time she was six she was already able to see people at a distance, to discern their feelings and help them. She got involved with the dachniks. Now she believes that the phenomenon of the dachniks offers an easy transition to making sense of what constitutes our earthly existence. Here she's been continually shining that ray of hers for twenty years now. She's given warmth to plants on the small plots of land. She's treated people's illnesses. She's tried to explain to people, without imposing on them, how one should handle plants, and she's had terrific results. Then she started observing other aspects of human life. And destiny brought her together with *you*. And now she's come out with the idea of *carrying people through the dark forces' window of time*."

"And what do you think, she'll be successful?" I asked.

"Vladimir, Anastasia knows the power of thought inherent in Man as a Creator. Otherwise she would never have let herself make such a statement. From now on she will not deviate from this path — she'll stick to it. She's a stubborn lass. It comes from her father."

“So, she’s taking concrete steps,” I observed. “She’s trying to make her thought-forms into reality, and here we are just sitting and rationalising about the spiritual. Like kids wiping their noses... You know, there’s quite a few people that still ask me: ‘Does Anastasia really exist, or did I just dream everything up myself?’”

“That’s not a question people can actually ask. People touched by the book will feel her right away. She is in the book. Questions like that can only be asked by illusory people, not real people.”

CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHT



Illusory people

“But I’m talking about very real people — like those two girls over there, for instance. D’you see?” I pointed in the direction of two teen-age girls standing about five or six metres away from our bench.

The old man fixed his gaze upon them and said:

“I think one of them — the one that’s smoking — is unreal.”

“What d’you mean, unreal? If I went up to her and gave her behind a good slap, you’d hear a scream and curses that’d be more than real!”

“You know, Vladimir, what you are now seeing is simply an image before your eyes. An image created by the dogmas of the technocratic world. Look closely. The girl has on very uncomfortable high-heeled shoes. Besides, they’re a little too tight for her. She wears them precisely because someone else is dictating what shoes women should be wearing these days.

“And she’s wearing a short skirt of material made to look like leather but it isn’t leather. It’s harmful for the body, but she’s wearing it according to the dictates of society’s current fad. Look at all her gaudy make-up and how arrogantly she’s behaving. Outwardly she’s independent. But only outwardly. Her whole appearance is at odds with herself, her real self. She’s been ‘smitten’ by an image of someone else’s thought-forms, a soulless, illusory image has eclipsed her living soul and taken it captive.”

“You can say what you like about the soul, captivity and the dictates of some image or other,” I interjected. “But how can one tell whether that’s actually true or not?”

"I'm already an old man, you see. I can't get in tune with the slower pace of your thinking. I can't express myself convincingly, the way Anastasia does." The oldster sighed and added: "Do you mind if I try *showing* you?"

"Showing me what?"

"I shall now attempt to destroy, at least for a time, that illusory, lifeless image and free the girl's soul. You watch closely."

"Go ahead."

The girl holding the cigarette was in the midst of arrogantly berating her companion. The old fellow watched them closely and intently. And when the girl turned her glance away and fixed it on some of the passers-by, the oldster's eyes followed her gaze. Then he got up and, gesturing to me to follow him, headed toward the girls. I went after him. He stopped about a half metre from them and fixed his eyes on the girl with the cigarette. She turned her head to look at him, blew a puff of cigarette smoke in his face and said with some irritation:

"Hey, what's with you, Gramps? Begging for money, eh?"

The oldster paused, probably to recover from the cloud of smoke enveloping his face, and said in a soft and tender tone:

"Put the cigarette, dear girl, into your right hand. You should try holding it in your right hand."

And the girl obediently put the cigarette into her right hand. But there was much more to it than that. Her face suddenly became completely altered. Her arrogance had vanished. In fact everything about her was different: her face, the way she stood. And in a completely different tone of voice she said:

"I'll try, Grandfather."

"You should have your child, dear girl."

"It'll be hard for me. I'm all alone."

"Let him come to you. You go and think about that hand of yours, think about your child, and he will come. Go along now, dear girl, you must hurry."

"I'll go." The girl took a few steps, then stopped and called back to her companion in a calm, quiet voice, with no sign of her former irritation: "Come along, Tanya... come with me."

They left.

"Wow! Can you tame *any* woman like that?" I said, when we had regained our seat on the bench again. "That's terrific! Some sort of super-hypnosis, eh? Far out!"

"It's not hypnosis, Vladimir. And there's no far-out mysticism here. It's simply an attentive attitude to one's fellow-Man. And I mean to the Man, not to the dreamt-up image which obscures the real Man. And Man responds instantly to this, he finds his strength, when you appeal directly to him, ignoring the illusory image."

"But how did you manage to see the invisible Man behind the visible image?"

"It's all very simple, really. I watched them a bit. The girl was holding her cigarette in her left hand. She was also rummaging about in her purse with her left hand. Which means she's left-handed. And if a small child holds a spoon or does something else with the left hand, his parents try to get him to use his right. She got along fine with her parents. I realised this when I saw the way she looked at the man and woman walking along with a little girl in tow. I spoke to her the way her parents might have when she was little. I tried to use the same tone of voice her parents might have used. Back when she was little, unaffected, not under someone else's image. That little girl was the real Man, and it responded right off."

"But you were talking to her about childbirth — what was that all about?"

"She's pregnant, you see. She's been pregnant more than a month now. That alien image doesn't want the child. But the girl's inner being wants the child very much. They're struggling with each other. Now her inner being will win out!"

CHAPTER TWENTY-NINE



Why nobody can see God

“Anastasia told me, when I talked with her in the taiga,” I recalled, “that nobody can see God because His thoughts work with great speed and concentration. But I’m thinking, why doesn’t He slow them down so people can get a good look at Him?”

The old man raised his walking-stick and pointed it at a passing cyclist.

“Look there, Vladimir. Look how the bicycle wheels turn. The wheel has spokes, but you can’t see them. They are there, and you know it, but the speed of rotation does not allow you to see them. Or put it another way: the pace of your thinking and your visual perception does not allow you to see them. If the cyclist goes slower, you will see the spokes of the wheel, albeit blurred. If he stops altogether, you will see them clearly, but the cyclist himself will fall off. He won’t get to his destination because of his stopping, and for what? Just to let you see that the spokes are there? But where does that take you? Has anything changed in you? Or around you?”

“The only thing you’ll know for certain is: the spokes exist. And that’s it. The cyclist, of course, can always get up and continue his journey, but others may want to see, which means he’ll have to stop and fall again and again. And for what?”

“Well, so I can get a good look at him just once.”

“And what will you see? After all, a cyclist lying on the ground isn’t a cyclist any more. You will have to imagine what he looked like.

“Just so, a God who changes the pace of His thinking is no longer God. Wouldn’t it be better for you to learn how

to accelerate your own thinking? Imagine yourself talking with someone who has a slow time getting what you're saying — doesn't that irritate you? Isn't it a pain slowing down your own pace of thought to his level?"

"You're right, if you adapt yourself to a fool's pace, you might become a fool yourself."

"So in order for us to see God, He would have to slow down His own thinking to our pace, and become as one of us. But when He *does* this, sending us His sons, the crowd looks at them and says: 'You aren't God, you're not even the son of God, just a pretender. Perform a miracle or we'll nail you to a cross.'"

"But why shouldn't God's son perform a miracle?" I questioned. "At least so the non-believers would back off, and not crucify him."

"Miracles do not convince non-believers, they only tempt them," came the reply. "And those who perform miracles are burnt at the stake under cries of 'Burn the manifestation of the dark forces!' Besides, just look around you. God's miracles abound in countless numbers. The Sun rises every day, and then there's the Moon at night. An insect on a blade of grass is a miracle, after all, not to mention a tree..."

"Here we are, the two of us, sitting under a tree. Who could think up a more perfect mechanism than a tree like this? These are particles of His thought. All the materialised, living forms scurrying beneath our feet, flying above our heads in the ethereal blue, singing for us, caressing our bodies with a ray of warmth — these are all His, they are all around us, made for us. But are there that many people who are able not only to see, but to feel and realise the significance of all this? Maybe not even to improve, but simply to use and keep from distorting or destroying these living marvels of creation? As for His sons, they have one purpose — to raise people's conscious awareness by their words, slowing down

their own thinking, even at the risk of being misunderstood themselves.”

“But Anastasia emphasised that just speaking words was not enough to raise Man’s conscious awareness to a meaningful level. I too think that mankind has uttered an enormous number of different words, but what do they mean? The Earth all around is full of unhappy lives, and it may even suffer a global disaster.”

“Quite right. When the words do not come from the heart, when the threads linking them to the soul are torn apart, then the words are empty, imageless, faceless. Our granddaughter Nastenka¹ is capable of creating images not just in every word, but in the sound of every letter of the alphabet. Now the Earth-dwelling teachers, His sons that are in the flesh today, will attain such a degree of power that the human spirit will outshine the darkness.”

“Sons, teachers? What have they got to do with it? Aren’t the abilities hers alone?”

“She will share them, in fact she is already sharing them. Look here, you’ve even been able to write a book, readers have flooded the world with poems, and new songs have been sung. Have you heard the new songs?”

“Yes, I have.”

“So this will be multiplied many times with your religious teachers, just as soon as they come into contact with the book. And where you see simply words, they will feel the living images, and the power will be magnified multifold in them.”

“*They* will feel it, but what about me? What am I, completely devoid of feeling? If so, why did she talk with me and not with them?”

“Because you are incapable of distorting what you hear, and there is nothing you have of your own already that you

¹*Nastenka* (pronounced *NAH-sten-ka*) — a diminutive form of *Anastasia*.

can mix with it. On a clean sheet of paper the word is set forth more clearly. But not to worry, *your* thought will accelerate too.”

“Okay, let it accelerate in me too, so I don’t lag behind the others. I guess everything you say must be right. Here in Russia there’s the leader of one religious community — the community settlers refer to him as their teacher — who told his followers to read the book about Anastasia. ‘It will set your hearts on fire,’ he told them. And many of his followers went out and bought the book.”

“So, that means he understood, he felt something, and that is why he helped Anastasia and you. And did you ever thank him for his help?”

“I’ve never met him.”

“You can say ‘thank you’ in your heart.”

“Silently, you mean? Who’s going to hear that?”

“The one who listens with his heart will hear it.”

“There’s another element here. He said the book was really good, Anastasia too, but he went on to say that *I* wasn’t a real man, that I wasn’t a true male of the species. ‘Anastasia didn’t meet with a real man,’ he said. I saw this myself on TV, and then read it in the papers.”

“And what would *you* say you were — Mr Perfection?”

“Well, ‘perfection’, I admit, is stretching it.”

“Then you need not be offended. You can work toward being perfect. My granddaughter will help you. Those whom Love is capable of uplifting can rise to the heights. It’s not even meant for everyone to grasp the whys and the wherefores. An extraordinary speed of thinking is required for that.”

“What about *your* thought? What speed does it operate at? You don’t find it tiresome talking with me?”

“The thinking speed of anyone who leads a lifestyle such as ours is always significantly greater than that of people in the technocratic world. Our thought is not encumbered by

constant concerns about clothing, food and a lot of other things like that. But I don't find it tiresome talking with you, thanks to my Love for my granddaughter. She wanted me to talk with you. And I am glad to do something for her."

"And what is the pace of Anastasia's thinking? The same as yours and your father's?"

"Anastasia's is greater."

"By how much? By what ratio? What she can process in ten minutes, let's say, how long would that take *you*?"

"To make sense of what she can process in a *second*, we would require several months. That is why she sometimes seems to us illogical. That is why she is utterly alone. That is why we can't be of any significant help to her — why we can't grasp right off the logic behind her actions. My father has completely given up conversation altogether. He keeps trying to match her pace of thinking so he can help her. He wants me to do the same. But I don't even try. My father thinks that's because I'm lazy. But I love my granddaughter very much and simply trust that she is doing everything correctly. And if she asks me to do something, I'm delighted to do it. That's why I came to see you."

"But how then did Anastasia manage to talk with me for three whole days?"

"We wondered how, too — for a long time. After all, constantly making that kind of an adjustment could drive one crazy. It was just recently that we discovered the answer. You see, when she was talking with you, she did not slow her thinking down. On the contrary, she made it work even faster. She accelerated it and transformed it into images. Now, like your computer programmes, these images will play themselves out for you and for anyone who reads the book. They will expand and accelerate the pace of human thinking by leaps and bounds, bringing it closer to God. When we realised that, we concluded that in thinking up such a thing, she had created a new law

in the Universe. But now it's clear that she was simply using the opportunity afforded by pure and sincere Love, which we hadn't known about before. Love, after all, has remained one of the Creator's grand mysteries. And look how she has now opened up one of its great opportunities and powers."

"And does the pace of her thinking allow *her* to see God?"

"Hardly. After all, she lives in the flesh too. God is in the flesh as well, but only partly. And His flesh is all the people of the Earth. As one small particle of this flesh, Anastasia occasionally grasps something. It is possible that when her thinking reaches such incredible speeds, she feels Him more than others do, but this happens with her only for short periods of time."

"And what does it give her?"

"In a matter of a second she is able to comprehend the truths, the essence of being, the conscious awareness that the wisest people of your world have spent a lifetime perfecting and sharing with each other."

"And that means she has the knowledge of our Oriental lamas, the wisdom of Buddha and Christ, and knows yoga too?"

"That she does. She knows more than is said in all the treatises passed down to your world today. But she still considers them to be insufficient, since there is no universal harmony among those living on the Earth today, and the march toward global disaster continues.

"This is why she is working out her incredible 'combinations'. She is saying: 'Enough of teaching people dogmas, enough of tempting them with Adam and Eve's apple. They must be enabled to feel — really *feel* — what Man once felt, what he was capable of and who he was.'"

"So," I said, "what you're trying to tell me is that she has a real possibility of doing something good for all mankind? If that's so, then when will it begin — this 'good'?"

"It has already begun. Just little sprouts so far, but that it is only for the time being."

"Where are they? How do I see them? Or feel them?"

"Ask the people who read the book — the 'sprouts' are in them. Indeed, the book is awakening bright feelings in many people. That's something that can no longer be denied — many will attest to it. She's succeeded with those combinations of hers. Incredible, but she's done it.

"And you, Vladimir, think about who you were and who you've become. What has been happening, Vladimir, is that a programme of thought-images has been unfolding in you, and her soul has been unfolding in people's consciousness. The world is starting to change in you, and by doing so is changing the thought-images all around you. We cannot fathom completely how she manages to do that. What is evidently real on the surface is something we can still manage to decipher. What helps her to bring about this new reality remains a mystery.

"Naturally one can make vigorous efforts to delve into it, but we should be wary of taking away from the marvellous reality that is unfolding before our eyes. A breathtaking dawn of a new day is something to be admired. Once you begin analysing the whys and wherefores, instead of elation all you get is excavation, which doesn't lead to anything and doesn't change anything."

"Golly, I didn't realise it was so far out, so complex! I was still hoping that Anastasia was just a simple recluse, only extraordinarily kind, beautiful and a little naïve."

"You see what I mean, you mustn't go digging around and knocking your brains out. If it's all too complex, then let her remain for you a kind and beautiful recluse, since that's the image you have of her. Others will see something different. You've been given what you've been given. That's all your consciousness has room for at the moment, and that is perfectly well and good. Just try to admire the dawn, if you can. That's the most important thing of all."

CHAPTER THIRTY



Dawn in Russia

“The dawn will begin in Russia,” I observed, “when everyone will be better off financially. When the economy as a whole improves, and individuals see a rise in their incomes.”

“All the material things you see around you depend on Man’s spirit and conscious awareness,” Anastasia’s grandfather responded.

“Okay, maybe. But what’s the point in erudite philosophies, if people can’t afford to feed or clothe themselves?”

“They need to think about why that has been happening. Each one needs to figure it out for themselves. And stop trying to find a scapegoat. Only by *changing themselves within* will they change anything around them, including their financial situation. I agree with you that people will not be able to accept this all at once. But Anastasia said, after all: ‘You have to do without moral preaching. You have to show people how, that’s all.’ And she showed how.

“Now it’s up to you to carry out what she outlined. Then, within the space of three years, many communities throughout Siberia — large, small, forgotten and neglected, where there are only old people still living whose children don’t even come for a visit, will become richer, many times richer. Their life will bloom abundantly, and many children will return.

“And she will have much more than that to offer. She will reveal many secrets, she will restore people’s abilities and the knowledge inherent in our pristine origins. Russia will be a most wealthy land. And she will do this to prove that the spirituality and knowledge inherent in our pristine origins are

more significant than the futile efforts of technocracy. Russia will herald a new dawn over the whole Earth.”

“And what do *I* have to do to bring it about?”

“You can start by revealing the first secret related to you by Anastasia. You should write in your book how to produce healing oil from the cedar nut. And don’t hold anything back.”

I suddenly felt everything boiling up inside me. The wind was literally knocked out of me. I couldn’t sit, and jumped to my feet.

“Why? Tell me why! Why should I suddenly turn around and do that? For everybody. For free. Any sane person would think I was an idiot...”

“I set up an expedition, and I put into it everything I had. Now my firm’s been ruined. Anastasia asked me to write a book, and I wrote it. And now we’re even. Your aspirations, your philosophy — that’s not something I can readily comprehend. All I did was put it down on paper, as I promised Anastasia I would...”

“But the oil — well, that’s something that’s completely clear to me. I know now how much I can get for it. And I’ll never share the technology with anybody. I’ll scrape together a little money from selling the books and then I’ll start producing it myself. I’ve got to put everything back together again. I’ve got to get my ship back, the company too. I need to buy a laptop so I can keyboard the next book...”

“I don’t have a home any more. No place to live. I want to buy a trailer home. And when I’m rich, I want to erect a monument to Russian officers — the ones physically alive but with mortally wounded hearts. Our indifference keeps tearing their hearts apart, and their honour and conscience have been spat on by people — the same people officers in all ages have gone into battle to defend...”

“While you people sit nice and quiet there in the forest, here people are perishing. The country all around is full of

various ‘preachers’. They all just *talk* about spiritual matters, but don’t really feel like *doing* anything. At least I’m going to *do* something. But here you’re telling me I should give valuable know-how away just like that! To everyone! Not on your life!”

“Anastasia did determine a percentage for you too,” Grandfather interjected. “I know — three percent from the sale of the oil.”

“Sure, what’s a miserable three percent to me, when I can get three hundred for the oil?! I know what the world prices are now. And as for its healing properties, what they’re selling out there is considerably less effective. I did some checking. They don’t know how to produce it properly. Now I’m the only one who knows how to do it. Everything she said checked out. There’s nothing in the world that can compare with its healing impact. Besides, scientific studies confirm it. Pallas¹ said that it could even restore a person’s youth. And you want me to go give it away just like that.

“You must take me for a fool. I’ve looked through so much literature, even sent people into the archives to confirm what she said. And they did. A lot of money went to that too.”

“You checked into everything — which means you couldn’t bring yourself to trust Anastasia right off. That lack of trust is what cost you the time and money.”

“Yes, I did do the checking. I had to, you see. But now I’m not going to be a sucker any more. You talk about a ‘dawn for everyone’. Come on now — ‘dawn’? In that dawn of yours I’d still be a sucker. I wrote a book. I did everything just the way she asked me to. I remember her telling me: ‘Don’t hide anything, either the bad or the good. Humble your pride. Don’t

¹*Pallas* — a reference to Peter Simon Pallas (1741-1811), a member of the St. Petersburg Academy of Sciences and a prominent pioneer explorer of the Siberian taiga.

be afraid to look ridiculous, don't be afraid to be misunderstood.' I haven't hid anything. And what's come of it?

"The book makes me look like a complete idiot. People stand there and say that to my face. That I haven't got a spiritual ounce in my body, that there's a lot I still don't understand. They say I'm coarse and uncivilised. And even a thirteen-year-old girl from Kolomna² wrote me to say I've been doing things the wrong way. And a woman from Perm³ came to see me, right to my doorstep, and said: 'I wanted to see what Anastasia saw in him.'

"Don't hide anything, either the good or the bad. Humble your pride. Don't be afraid to look ridiculous, don't be afraid to be misunderstood.' She knew everything, didn't she? She comes out pretty good in the book — that's what people say — and how do I look? It's all her fault. If it weren't for the child, I could easily slap her one for what she did. Just think! I wrote everything down in good faith, just as she asked me to. And for that people tell me I'm insensitive and a coward to boot.

"Of course I'm a complete idiot. I've made myself into one. I obeyed her. I've written all that about myself, and now I'll never live it down the rest of my days. And after I'm gone they'll still make fun of me. The book's got a life of its own, as it's turned out. It'll outlive me! And even if I stop printing it, what difference will it make? The underground press is already grinding out more copies. They're trying to run it off on photocopy machines."

All at once I stopped short and looked at the old man. A little tear could be seen slowly making its way down his cheek.

²*girl from Kolomna* — The reference is to a young girl also named Anastasia, whose letter to Vladimir Megré is reproduced in Book 1, Chapter 30: "Author's message to readers".

³*Perm* — a major city of over a million inhabitants 1,500 km east of Moscow.

I sat down beside him. He was still silently looking at the ground. Then he spoke.

"You see, Vladimir, my granddaughter Nastenka is capable of foreseeing a lot. It's not that she wanted anything for herself. She didn't want fame, didn't want money. By taking part of the fame upon herself, she put herself in danger, but she saved you. And the fact that you come out the way you do in the book — well, that's her doing. You're right about that. But that was not to humiliate you — that's how she was able to save you. By taking upon herself a whole mass of dark forces. All by herself. And you respond to her with the pain of misunderstanding and irritation. Think — is it easy for a woman who creates out of love to hold on like that?"

"What kind of a love is it," I countered, "when her beloved is counted among fools?"

"Calling somebody a fool doesn't make him one. A fool is one who mistakes flattering words for the truth. Think for a moment of how you would like to be seen by others. As a figure exalted above all? As a brilliant intellect? And you could have made yourself a reputation like that with your first book. But then... pride and selfishness would have destroyed you.

"There are not even that many enlightened people who could hold out against sins like those. Pride creates an unnatural image of Man, it obscures the living soul. That is why the philosophers of the past and the geniuses of today can create so precious little. Because even after the first stroke of their pen they are so overwhelmed by a sense of self-conceit they lose right off what was given to them in the beginning.

"But Nastenka was smart enough to set up a protective barrier against flattery and worship which lead to pride. They won't touch you now. She is saving you from a multitude of ills. And is protecting both your spirit and your flesh. You will write nine books straight from your heart. The Earth will be radiant with its Space of Love. And then, once you have

dotted the final *i* in the ninth book, you will be able to understand who you are.”

“Come on! Isn’t it possible to tell who I am right now?”

“Who you are right now — that’s pretty obvious. You are who you are at the moment. You are who you feel yourself to be. Whoever you will become, only Anastasia, possibly, knows. And she will wait, living each moment by Love. The fact that people sitting in their comfortable apartments call you a coward — that’s nothing. You should take it with a grain of salt. And suggest *they* try heading off into the taiga for three days with no gear. Let *them* try sleeping with a bear in a cave. To get the full sensation, let them take a mentally deranged girl along — after all, wasn’t that how Anastasia seemed to you at first?”

“More or less.”

“Let any man who accuses you try sleeping with his mentally deranged companion. Out there in the backwoods, where they can hear the wolves howling. Could he really do that? What do you think?” the old fellow asked slyly.

And no sooner had I pictured to myself the scenario he described than I burst out in a hearty laugh. And the two of us had a good laugh together. Then I asked him:

“Can Anastasia hear what we’ve been saying?”

“She will learn about all your deeds.”

“Then tell her not to worry. I shall explain to everyone how to extract healing oil from cedar nuts.”

“Fine, I’ll tell her,” the old man promised. “But do you remember everything Anastasia told you about the process?”

“Yes, I think I do.”

“Right, tell it to me.”

CHAPTER THIRTY-ONE



How to produce healing cedar oil

It's not that difficult a task. The modern technology involved is already familiar and it needs no setting forth here. But there are some rather unusual nuances I should point out.

When gathering the cones¹ one should not beat against the cedars with logs or wooden bats, as the harvesters do today. This greatly weakens the healing properties of the oil. One should use only the cones which the cedar itself gives off. Either they fall with the wind, or you can knock them down with the resonance of your voice, as Anastasia does. They should be collected by people whose thought is free from evil. And it is especially good when the cones are picked up by *children's* hands. In any case, all the steps which follow should be carried out with kind and bright thoughts.

"Such people may be found in Siberian villages even now," Anastasia affirmed. Whether this really makes a difference is difficult to tell. But it also says in the Bible that King Solomon sought out people "skilled in felling timber".² Only it doesn't say how these people differed from anyone else in other respects.

The nuts obtained after the shelling of the cones must have their oil extracted within a three-month period; after that the

¹*cones* — Note that the term *cedar* (Russian *kedr*) is used throughout the Ringing Cedars Series to refer to either the Siberian cedar (or Siberian pine, *Pinus sibirica*) — as in this case — or to the Lebanese cedar (cedar of Lebanon, *Cedrus libani*).

²1 Kings 5: 6 (*New International Version*).

quality will significantly deteriorate. The kernel should not come into contact with any metal during the extraction process. In any case, the oil should never come into contact with metal.

The oil can be used to treat any diseases without diagnosis. It can also be used as a food product and added to salads. Or it can be taken one spoonful a day, preferably at sunrise, although the afternoon is also a good time. But definitely in daylight, not at night. That's the main thing.

"Only people may be offered a counterfeit," I voiced my concern to the old fellow. But he responded slyly and with just a touch of humour:

"Well, then, you and I will make a device to screen out counterfeits. And we'll work out those commissions of yours at the same time."

"How do we do that?"

"Have to think about it. You, after all, are the entrepreneur."

"I *was* one, but right now I'm not sure who I am."

"Let's think together, then. You correct me if something's not right."

"Okay," I agreed.

"The final product should be tested with measuring instruments by competent technicians. Doctors, scientists — in a word, professionals."

"That's right, they can issue certificates."

"But instruments can't catch everything. A taste test will also be needed."

"Possibly. Tasters determine the quality of wine, for example. There's no substitute for that. But the wine-tasters are acutely aware of the taste of different vintages. They have a superb sense for both fragrance and taste. But who will be tasting the oil?"

"*You* can check it."

"And just how am I supposed to do that? I've only tasted the usual sort of oil. When we made it ourselves, we didn't follow the technological procedures Anastasia recommended. Besides, I'm a smoker."

"For three days before checking the oil quality, you should abstain from smoking and alcohol. And don't eat meats or fats. And you shouldn't talk with anyone for those three days. Then you can check it and determine from the taste whether it is good or an imitation."

"And what do I compare it with?"

"With this."

Whereupon the old fellow put his hand into his canvas bag and drew out a small hollow stick approximately two fingers in width. Another stick protruded from one end, like a cork.

"This is genuine oil. Once you've tasted it, you won't mistake it for anything else. But first let me rid you of what has built up in you from smoking and other quirky habits."

"How are you going to get rid of it? The way Anastasia did?"

"Yes, more or less."

"But she said that only one who loves is capable of eliminating ailments in a loved one with the Ray of Love. And of warming his body, so that even his feet start perspiring."

"With the Ray of Love. Quite correct."

"But you cannot love me. Not the way she does."

"But I love my granddaughter. Let's try it."

"Go ahead."

The oldster screwed up his eyes and began fixing an unblinking gaze on me. I could feel a sense of warmth flow through my body. But quite a bit weaker than what I felt from Anastasia's gaze. Nothing happened. But he still kept trying. To the point where his arms were trembling. I could feel a little more warming in my body, but only a little. Still, the old fellow didn't give up, and I waited. And all at once my

feet broke out into a sweat, after which a feeling of freshness permeated my head, along with fragrances. I could feel the fragrances in the air.

"Ah, we've succeeded," he said, wearily leaning against the back of the bench. "Now give me your hand."

He opened the stick cork and from the hollow stick poured cedar oil onto the palm of my hand. I licked it off with my tongue. The warmth spread across my palate and through my mouth. And I suddenly caught a whiff of the cedar. And it was, indeed, hard to mistake for anything else.

"Think you'll remember it now?" asked Anastasia's grandfather.

"I'll remember. What's so hard about that? I ate potatoes once at the monastery. I remembered that for ages. Twenty-seven years later I still remembered the taste. Only how will people know that it has been checked? That it is genuine cedar nut oil? Right now it's too expensive on the market. For just one gram of the raw oil, diluted with something, they charge thirty thousand roubles.³ I saw it myself. It's packaged as an import. With prices like that it's all too tempting to sell fakes."

"You're right — money's the master of ceremonies at the moment. We'll have to think of something."

"You see? A dead end."

"Anastasia said that this money can be turned to a good purpose," Grandfather observed. "Let's think of something along that line."

"They've been trying to work out for some time now, for example, how to guarantee the quality of vodka against imitations. But... They've changed the labels and corks, they've come up with excise labels, but all to no avail. There were

³*thirty thousand roubles* — approximately US\$6 at the then current exchange rate.

imitations on the market before, and there still are. What with photocopiers and all, any label can easily be copied.”

“What about money, Vladimir — can it be copied too?”

“Money — that’s more difficult to fake.”

“So let’s stick money onto the back side of our bottles, like labels, so that these snivelling bits of paper can actually do some good for once.”

“What d’you mean, stick money on bottles? What kind of nonsense is that?”

“Give me a banknote, please. Any banknote.”

I gave him a 1000-rouble note.

“Well, then, it’s quite clear. You take the note and cut it in half. Stick one half on the box or something else. The other half you hide away in a file. You’ll think of a suitable place. Or put it in a safety deposit box at your bank. You see, on each half of the note there are identical numbers, and so anyone wanting to confirm the authenticity of the oil, can simply verify the number.”

Well, Gramps, I thought to myself, you’ve got a good head on your shoulders. And out loud I said:

“There’s no better defence against imitations. Way to go!”

He laughed. Still laughing, he added:

“So, give me a percentage, too. Come on, cough it up!”

“A percentage? What kind of a percentage? How much do you want?”

“I want everything to be just right,” said the old fellow, all at once serious again. Then he added: “Besides the three percent, take an additional one percent — in kind, as oil already packaged. And offer it for free to whoever you feel you should. Let that be a gift to people from you and me.”

“Right, I’ll do it. You’ve really thought of everything to a T. Way to go!”

“To a T? That means Nastenka will be very happy for us. And my father still thinks I’m lazy. So you think I’ve done a good job?”

"Of course you have!" And we both had another good laugh. And I added: "Tell Anastasia I say you would make an excellent entrepreneur."

"You mean it?"

"Certainly! You could become one of those 'New Russians'⁴ — and a great one, too!"

"I'll tell her. And the fact that you're telling everyone about the cedar nut oil, I'll pass that along, too. No regrets?"

"What is there to regret? It would be a tiresome process, anyway. I'll dash off the third book, as I promised, and then I'll get going with my business again, trade... or something else, something normal."

⁴*New Russians* — the name given to a class of Russian *nouveaux riches* who acquired considerable wealth after the collapse of the Soviet Union. They were popularly perceived as intellectually limited individuals, notorious for their criminal background, uncultured manners, offensive jargon and ostentatious display of wealth, all of which has given rise to a host of jokes.

CHAPTER THIRTY-TWO



Title!

(I don't know what to call it; whoever can,
come up with a title yourselves)

I decided to tell Anastasia's grandfather about my new assistants:

"A lot of articles are now being written about Anastasia. She's being talked about in both academic and religious circles. One production team, made up of very religious and considerate people, offered me a deal to grant them, in return for payment, the exclusive right to interpret and comment on Anastasia's sayings in the mass media. I agreed."

"And for what amount, Vladimir, did you agree to sell them Anastasia?"

The tone of his question and what he was getting at left a rather bad taste in my mouth. And I answered:

"What do you mean, 'sell'? I told them more about Anastasia than I wrote in the book. I told religious people so that they could offer their exclusive comments as well as their explanations of what she said. They want to meet with her. They're even ready to finance an expedition. I agreed. What's wrong with that?"

The old fellow didn't respond immediately. Since no reply was forthcoming, I added:

"They offered me money for an exclusive right — that's the way we do things — people offer services for money. They will earn even more from their publications."

The oldster lowered his head and remained silent for a while. Then, as if thinking things over aloud, he said:

"So, you, in your enterprising way, sold Anastasia and they, assuming themselves to be the most religious and competent people in the world, decided to buy her."

"Well, that's a pretty strange way of putting it. So, when it comes right down to it, what did I do wrong?"

"Tell me, Vladimir, didn't it ever enter your head or the heads of those 'religious' people to think of asking, finding out or realising just who Anastasia herself wished to talk to and when — and how? And do people in your world go visiting without so much as an advance request to the host? I don't recall her asking anybody to visit her."

"If she doesn't want to talk with them, she doesn't have to. She didn't sign any deal."

"But *you did!* She is ready to share what she knows with everyone, but it is her right to determine how she's going to do this. And if she's chosen to set it forth in a book and with your expression, who has the right to dictate or demand another? She made the choice herself, but somebody wants to change that, and the reason behind the effort to alter her choice is clear. She will not talk with people who put themselves ahead of everyone else. With people whose self-righteousness, she knows, will distort, overturn and adjust to their own way of thinking the truths she holds sacred."

"Why paint such a dark picture ahead of time? These people are interested in many different teachings. They are very religious."

"It is they who have determined that they are the most religious of all. Religious self-righteousness is the apex of the most deadly of sins — pride."

I began to be overwhelmed with an inexplicable sense of anger at myself. I had not yet received payment for the deal and so I was able to break it. And shortly afterward, not seeing anything amiss, I signed another deal with one of the religious centres for the exclusive right to my own interviews.

Once again I was taken in by their considerate attitude and the religious knowledge they displayed. Especially since this deal concerned me alone, and I could do with myself what I pleased. But once again both they and I fell into a trap, and once again it turned out that I had indirectly sold Anastasia, and they had bought her.

And this time it was not Anastasia's grandfather but a Moscow woman journalist who, after reading the new agreement, flustered:

"Boy, how stupid can you get? You've sold Anastasia real cheap. Take a closer look and see what the fine print says. You've signed over the right to others — an exclusive right — to exploit and use as they see fit, over the most powerful information channel there is, everything you said relating to Anastasia. You've denied yourself the right even to question their opinion, no matter what it is."

To what degree that's true it's hard to say. Maybe I'd better cite a few of the points of the agreement here:

1. Subject of agreement:

1.1 The AUTHOR gives exclusive rights to all videotaping of himself, as well as to the use of any other video materials connected directly or indirectly with the production of "Anastasia" television programmes (hereinafter referred to as "programmes"). The abovementioned transfer of rights to the CONTRACTOR extends to all countries of the world.

1.2 The CONTRACTOR undertakes, at his own expense, to prepare one copy each of three programmes — of between 30 and 40 minutes each — on a professional BETACAM recorder.

1.3 By mutual agreement between AUTHOR and CONTRACTOR, any interaction with video- or film-studios, television (including cable TV), as well as the shooting of any video on any equipment, as well as the use of video materials on the given subject, is to be effected only and exclusively by the CONTRACTOR.

While this Agreement is in force the AUTHOR waives the right to give video interviews and prepare any audio materials using the concepts or terms that are in the programmes, either directly or indirectly.

After analysing all the events connected with the writing, publication and distribution of the *Anastasia* book, I came to the conclusion that people who call themselves “strongly religious” have a dark side which they themselves fear, and thus keep trying to assure others and persuade them of their religiosity. They are probably afraid that people will discover their dark side.

It’s so much simpler with entrepreneurs. Their actions and goals are more open, less obscured, and consequently they are also more honest both to themselves and to those around them, to society. It’s possible I am mistaken. But you can’t get away from the facts.

Three Moscow students keyboarded the text of *Anastasia*. They had no expectations of compensation any time soon. They never talked about any religious matters.

The book was published by the manager of Moscow Printshop Number Eleven, a retired officer by the name of Gennady Vladimirovich Grutsia, at his own expense. The print-run was small and there wasn’t even a thought of breaking even. Grutsia, an entrepreneur, never talked of religious matters either. The next run was paid for by the business manager of the Moscow Publishers’ Clearance House, Yuri Anatolievich Nikitin, but then it turned out he wasn’t dealing in books at the time. He gave me the greater part of the print-run to sell. He set no deadline for getting a return on his investment. And he, too, never talked about religious matters.

And then the ‘religious’ people began putting in their two cents’ worth. And a print-run of 45,000 was released by an underground press. When this ‘religious’ firm was discovered,

they started proclaiming their religiosity and desire to produce bright things, and even promised to pay author's royalties. They still keep promising that. And that's not the only case. 'Religious' people generally seem to be very neglectful of accounts, especially when they're the ones who owe money.

As to the transfer of exclusive rights, I have decided to make it clear on the pages of this book: I shall no longer give exclusive rights for the interpretation of Anastasia's sayings to anybody. And if anybody challenges me on that, let people know that I have not given anything voluntarily!

Why do I say *voluntarily*? The Moscow journalist who helped me break the contract soon became the target of anonymous threats. Who made them? What did they want? What kind of 'religion' do they profess? They support their religion by extortion. Well, I know what the extortion racket is all about; after all there are human beings there too. And I want to warn them: be extra careful around 'religious' people. And before getting into anything, consider calmly and carefully where these 'religious' people are taking you.

There's more. In the first book I wrote that I had invited Anastasia to come to Moscow herself and appear on our TV, but she refused. I couldn't understand why at the time. But now it is clear to me what she foresaw. Even after the book came out, there have been many interpretations of what she said. Many quite different interpretations. Some are interesting, some are controversial, but among others one could clearly trace the desire on the part of certain people to interpret her in a manner that would serve their own interests.

Direct challenges were thrown my way, for example:

"So you think you alone have the right to talk with her?"

"You don't understand everything, let others speak with her, more will come out of it."

But she is not an object to hand over to someone. She is Man! And she herself has the right to decide how she will

act, whom she will speak with and what she will say. Now it's become clearer than ever that Anastasia is really being subjected to attack by a visible and invisible throng of dark forces in the guise of fanatics and self-seekers.

Back in the first book I quoted Anastasia as saying:

"I know what a terrible mass of dark forces will descend upon me... but I am not afraid of them. I will succeed in raising my son. I will succeed in seeing my plan come true. And people will be carried across the dark forces' window of time."

In Anastasia's world they instruct their children up to eleven years of age. In other words, she has at least another ten years she can hold out.

"And then what?" I asked her grandfather. "Is she bound to perish?"

"It's hard to say," the old fellow answered. "They all died quite a bit earlier, compared to her, and more than once she has embarked on a journey foretelling physical death, but each time, at the last moment, the law has flared up — forgotten it may be, but it is still strong enough to overrule anything else. It has illuminated the essence of the truth about earthly existence. And it has caused life to remain in her earthly body."

The old man fell silent and once again, preoccupied in thought, began tracing some sort of symbols on the ground with his stick. I too began thinking, wondering how on earth I got myself involved in a situation like this! But the thing was, I couldn't very well walk away from it now. It might have been possible earlier, but not now, because of the child.

Anastasia had given birth to a son. Even though she'd rather devote herself to caring for the child and raising him, she is not going to abandon her dream — to carry people across the dark forces' window of time. And she will not. Because she's really very stubborn. Someone like her will not walk away.

And who will help her, naïve as she is? If I should renege on my promise, she's got nobody left. She'd go to pieces. And

that's something that should not happen to a nursing mother. She's got to finish her breast-feeding, at the very least. And so I asked her grandfather:

"Is there anything I can do for Anastasia?"

"Try to figure out, for a start, what she's talking about and what she wants. Then aimless wandering will give way to understanding, and a wave of warmth will cheer the heart, and over the world will be unfurled a new dawn."

"Can you make it any more specific?" I asked.

"It's hard for me to formulate it in any more specific way. The whole important thing is sincerity in all. So start by doing what is dictated by your heart and soul."

"She told me about a particular Russian provincial town," I remarked. "Said something about it possibly becoming richer than Jerusalem or Rome. Because all around there are many sacred sites of our forebears. Sites more significant than the temples at Jerusalem. Only the local people do not have sufficient conscious awareness to discern them. I want to go there, and change their conscious awareness."

"That's not something that can be done quickly, Vladimir."

"Well, you see, I didn't know it couldn't be done, and so I promised Anastasia. And there must be some way of bringing about a change."

"Since you didn't know it couldn't be done, you shall change it indeed. More power to you! And now it's time for me to go."

"I'll see you off."

"Don't waste your time. No need to see me off. Think about what you have to do."

The old fellow got up and offered me his hand.

I watched Anastasia's grandfather recede into the distance along the tree-lined boulevard, and thought of my forthcoming trip to the city of Gelendzhik, remembering what Anastasia had told me about it. And it was no mere chance conversation.

CHAPTER THIRTY-THREE



Your sacred sites, O Russia!

I asked Anastasia:

“Do your people often come across ringing cedars?”

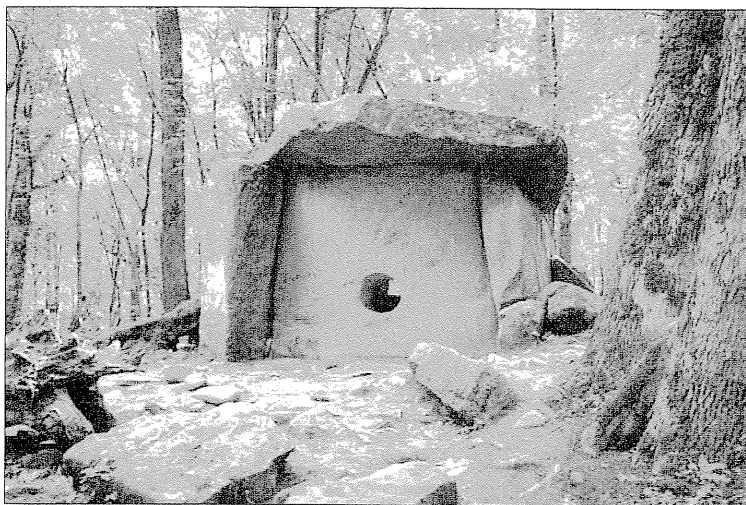
“Very, very rarely,” she replied. “Perhaps two or three in a thousand years. Right now, apart from this one that has been saved, there is one more, and it can be sawed up and used for its designated purpose.”

“What does that mean: ‘used for its designated purpose’? What is its purpose?”

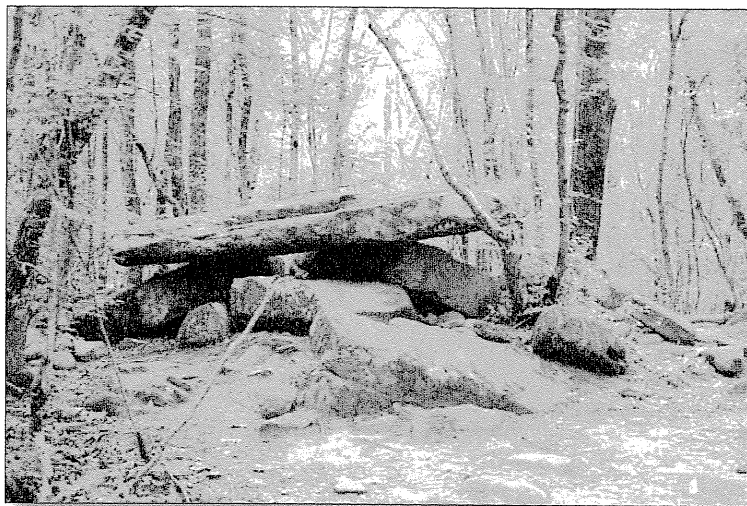
“The Great Intelligence of the Universe, God, Who created Man and his environment, no doubt had the foresight to give people the opportunity to restore their lost abilities, to use the wisdom accumulated in the non-material world. This wisdom has existed right from the start, but Man’s ability to perceive it has been lost through sinfulness.

“My grandfather and great-grandfather told you about the ringing cedar and its extraordinary healing properties. What they did not explain was that its pulsations and rhythms are close to that Great Intelligence.

“If they are merged and combined, as it were, with the rhythms already present in many people, then a Man who places the palm of his hand on the warm trunk of a ringing cedar and runs his hand over it as though caressing it, thereby attains the possibility of communicating with the infinite expanse of wisdom. Such a Man is capable of becoming aware of many things in the scope of his thinking at the moment of contact or thereafter. This happens in varying degree with each individual. I am telling you about the highest manifestation.”



With its hundreds of dolmens, Northern Caucasus (Russia) is a region with one of the highest concentrations of preserved megalithic sites in the world. Over the millennia, many of the dolmens were vandalised or destroyed. After Vladimir Megré's *The Ringing Cedars of Russia* raised public awareness of their momentous spiritual importance, millions of people have visited these formerly neglected and forgotten sites. Photos © 2004 by Alexey Kondaurov, Nizhny Novgorod, Russia.





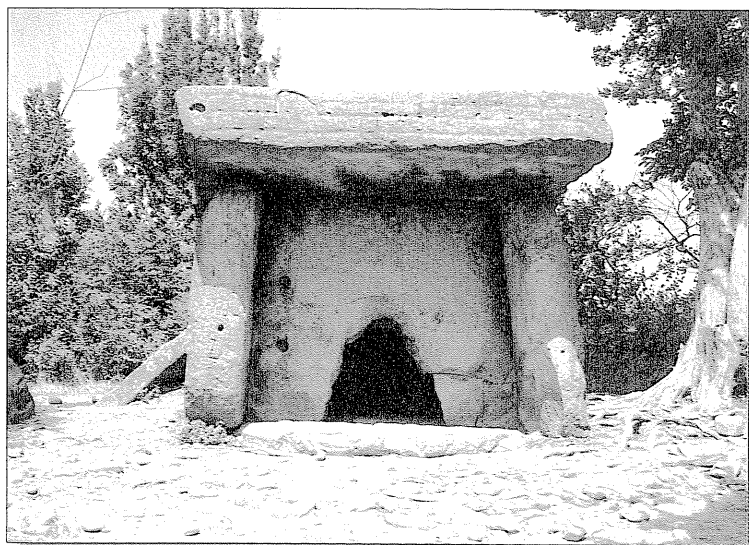
A map of the 'dolmen country' — Russian Northern Caucasus and the Black Sea coast (above) and a view of this region (below). Photo © 2006 by Olga Chernyshova, Sarov, Russia.

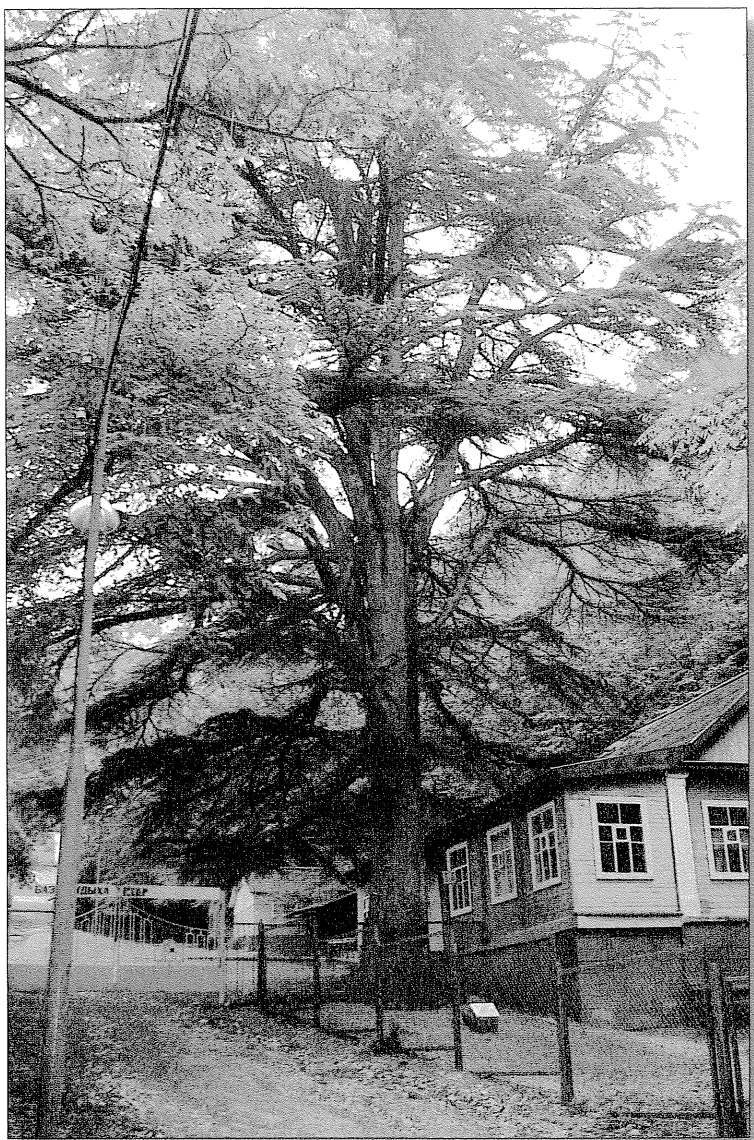




Above: a dolmen complex in the process of restoration, Northern Caucasus, Russia. Photo © 2004 by Dmitry Samusev.

Below: a dolmen near the settlement of Pshada, with its front vandalised and covered in modern graffiti. Photo © 2004 by Alexey Kondaurov, Nizhny Novgorod, Russia.





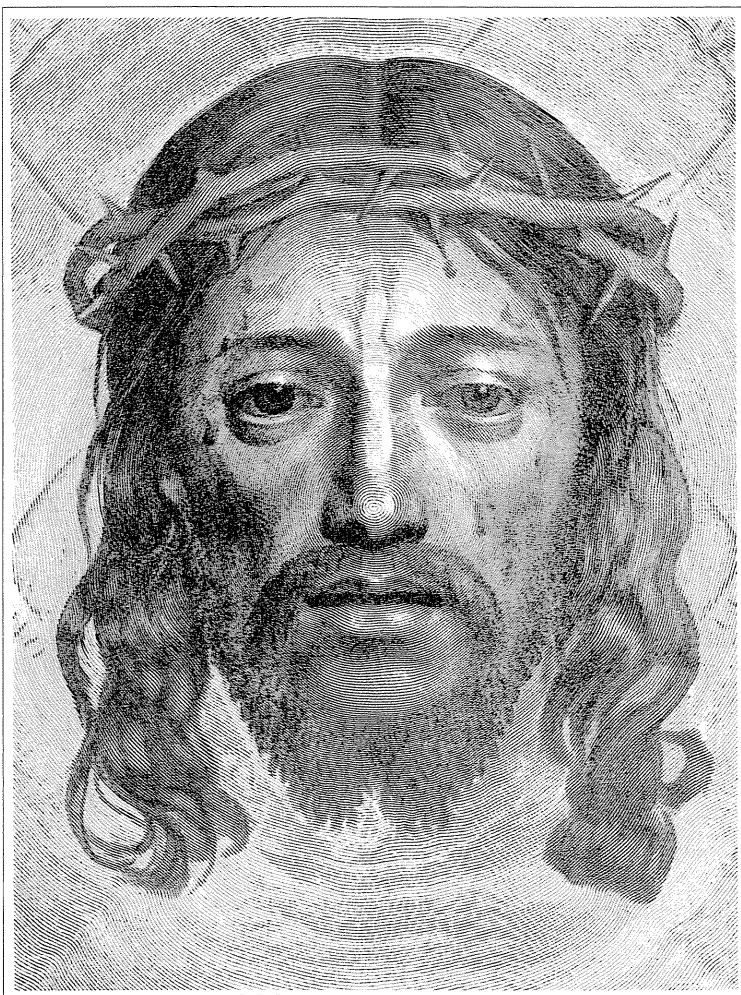
The cedar of Lebanon planted some 100 years ago by the hand of Vladimir Korolenko, near the city of Gelendzhik. For details please see Chapter 33: “Your sacred sites, O Russia!”.

Photo © 2006 by Olga Chernyshova, Sarov, Russia.



Above: eight women employees of *Druzhba* Sanatorium on a trip to a dolmen near Pshada in the Caucasus mountains, 26 November 1996 (see Chapter 33: “Your sacred sites, O Russia!”). The picture was taken by Vladimir Megré himself as these women were preparing to lay flowers in honour of their distant forebear. *Below:* Vladimir Megré’s photo of Father Feodorit’s church (see Chapter 24: “Father Feodorit”). Both photos appeared on the inside cover of an early Russian print-run of *The Ringing Cedars of Russia*. © 1996 by Vladimir Megré.



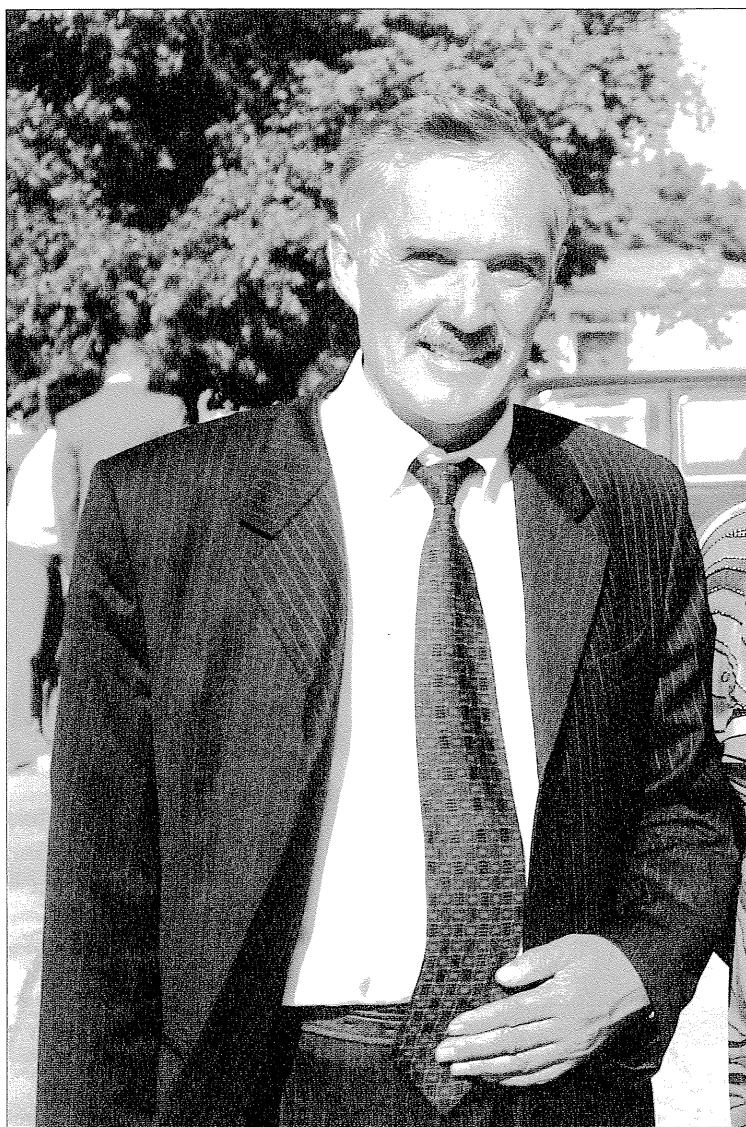


The One and Only by a Single Line — this picture in the private collection of the Trinity-Sergiev Monastery (Sergiev Posad, Russia) is a copy of a famous engraving by Claude Mellan (1598–1688), *Veil of St Veronica* (1649), above. The face of Christ Jesus ('the One and Only') surmounted by a crown of thorns is executed by a single spiral line in 166 revolutions. For details on Vladimir Megre's experiences connected with this image, please see Chapter 24: "Father Feodorit" and Chapter 25: "The Space of Love" in the present volume.



The Dachnik Day holiday — honouring the millions of gardeners and celebrating Man's connectedness to the Earth — is now celebrated on 23 July throughout Russia and beyond. Celebrations at the *Rodnoe* eco-village, Vladimir Region, Russia, 2006 (above) and in Licking, Missouri, USA, 2005 (below). Photos © Leonid Sharashkin.





Vladimir Megré arriving at the Ringing Cedars of Russia movement conference held in the city of Vladimir on 5 June 2004. The conference brought together over 400 delegates from 150 eco-villages from all over Russia and beyond. Photo © 2004 by Alexey Kondarov, Nizhny Novgorod, Russia.

"But why does it happen differently? Does the cedar choose to give its power to one person and not to another?"

"Its operation is identical in each case. Its rhythm and vibration are always the same. But some people can tune into it and feel it all to the full, while others detect just a light touch. Many people don't feel anything at all to start with. But conscious awareness will gradually come even to those without feeling. At least they have a greater possibility of feeling it."

"I still don't quite understand what kind of selection takes place."

"Vladimir, please try to 'read my lips': the difference is not in the power of the tree, but in the Man. Hmm... all right, I have found it — an example: *music*! You know, when music is playing... Music too, after all, consists of vibration and rhythm. But some people listen to it attentively, they begin to have feelings from it, sometimes even tears of joy and tenderness. Others listen to the same music but feel nothing, or do not care about listening to it at all.

"The same with the cedar. Only those who are capable of feeling and understanding will hear anything much at all. And this 'much' is something that will gradually unfold itself to them. It comes during the moments when Man feels like pondering it.

"Women can gain the strength and wisdom of their pristine origins, they can fulfil their designated purpose and make both themselves and their chosen men happy, as well as their children they give birth to in Love. And here the miracle is not in the cedar, but in human aspirations. The cedar simply assists them — it is not the major contributor to noble deeds."

"That's incredible! It's like some kind of tempting, beautiful legend!"

"You do not believe me? You think what I am saying is only a legend? Why then did you make such an effort to come here

and why were you so eager to have me show you the ringing cedar?”

“Well, I don’t think it’s *all* a legend. At first I too didn’t believe what your grandfather and great-grandfather said about the cedar. Later, after I returned home from the expedition, I read the popular scientific literature and got to know what scientists were saying about its healing properties, and I was struck by the fact that the scientists and the Bible were on the same wavelength. But I never found a hint anywhere of the cedar being used to feel a link with the Great Intelligence or God, as you describe it.”

“Either you did not pay close enough attention to what the scientists or the Bible were saying, or you missed the main point — otherwise you would not be doubting my words.”

“Then what could I have missed? There are only two references to cedars in the Bible: when God teaches how to treat people with their help, and then how to disinfect one’s home.”

“But the Bible also talks about King Solomon as one of the wisest rulers that ever lived, one revered by his people. King Solomon, you will agree, is an historical personage — he was no legend.”

“So?”

“And the Bible also says that this king built God a temple of cedar, and a house for himself beside it also made of cedar. And in order to get the cedar, he hired more than thirty thousand workers to bring it from another country. And to get the cedars cut down, Solomon asked another king named Hiram to give him people “skilled in felling timber”.¹ Getting this cedar cost Solomon twenty cities of his kingdom. Think: why did the wisest of all rulers need to go to such expense and build his temple and house out of material which was less sturdy than what he had on hand already?”

¹I Kings 5: 6 (*New International Version*).

“Why?”

“You can find the answer to that, too, in the Bible, where it says: ‘And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy place, that the cloud filled the house of the Lord, So that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud: for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of the Lord.’² You can find indirect proofs of this in the works of your prominent scientists.”

“That’s great. Something, I think, I can believe in. It means the cedar will reveal many secrets to people. Show me the ringing cedar that can be sawed up. I’ll bring it to a city with easy access for people from all over the world wishing to touch it.”

“Where will you find a city on the Earth where the inhabitants will not simply desecrate this sacred cedar, but actually ensure its protection and provide a suitable exhibition space and access for visitors?”

“I’ll try to find one. Tell me, why have you concluded that it’s going to be such a difficult task?”

“People’s consciousness today is too bound up with the programmes of the technocratic world. They are becoming biological robots.”

“What kind of biological robots?”

“The technocratic world is structured in such a way that Man keeps on inventing all sorts of mechanical devices and social orders supposedly to make his life easier. But in fact, any saving of labour is an illusion.

“Man himself is becoming a robot of the technocratic world. He never has enough time to contemplate the essence of being or listen to what another is saying, and no time, either, to reflect on his own destiny. He is literally a programmed robot. Here you are seeing everything with your own eyes,

²1 Kings 8: 10, 11 (*Authorised King James Version*).

and hearing it with your own ears, and you still find it hard to believe.”

“Anastasia, with me it’s a different story. I cannot call myself a strong believer. I believe... in general. But probably not the same way other people do. In our world right now there are a lot of people who truly do believe. Many read the Bible. They will grasp it immediately they see how much the Bible talks about the cedar. They will believe and take good care of your little piece of cedar.”

“There are different kinds of belief, Vladimir. It often happens that a Man will hold in his hands the Koran, or the Bible, or another book containing the wisdom of the ages, and say that he believes, and even try to teach others, whereas in fact he is simply attempting, as it were, to make a deal with God: ‘Look here, I believe in You. Remember that in case anything happens.’”

“What then *is* belief, or faith?” I enquired. “How should it be expressed?”

“In one’s way of life, in one’s perception of the world, in the understanding of one’s essence and designated purpose, in one’s corresponding behaviour and relationship to the environment, in one’s thinking.”

“So, just believing is not enough?”

“Just believing is not enough. Imagine an army. All the soldiers, down to the last one, believe in their commander. But they do not go into battle. They have such strong faith in him that they trust he will win in any case. So the soldiers sit back and watch as their commander goes up alone against the enemy forces. They sit there in a state of frenzy and call out: ‘Go, go, go! We believe in you, we know you can do it!’”

“That’s no help, Anastasia. You didn’t make a real analogy. Those kinds of absurdities simply don’t happen.”

“Those kinds of absurdities *do* happen in real life, Vladimir.”

"Then give me an example from the concrete realities of our life, and not something made up."

"Fine. There is a city in Russia called Gelendzhik. It has a noble purpose — to be a place where people can go to relax from their daily grind, a place to meditate and touch sacred sites.

"There are many sacred sites in and around this city, which are more significant than those found in Jerusalem, more significant than the pyramids of Egypt.

"This city could be one of the richest cities in the world. Richer than Jerusalem or Rome. But the city is dying. It is a resort town. All its houses and hotels are becoming empty and decaying. The materialistic consciousness of the local authorities prevents them from seeing the treasures which are capable of making the city flourish. When they talk about the city, they emphasise the sea, the artificial treatment facilities available, and the fact that the local hotel rooms are equipped with bedside tables and fridges. They do not even mention the sacred sites. They know little about them themselves, and do not want to know. Their priorities lie elsewhere.

"There are many people living in this city who call themselves believers. People of many different denominations. Some of them actively engage in proselytising. What faith do they proselytise? With their attitude to their surroundings they have been and still are violating the very commandments contained in their sacred books. In the Bible, for instance, where it says: 'Love thy neighbour as thyself.'³

"But you have to *know* your neighbour before you can love him. You cannot love whom you do not know. But they, the ones who call themselves believers, do not know their neighbours, or even their forebears who lived in that sacred land

³Matth. 22: 39 (*Authorised King James Version*).

and left them the inexhaustible treasure of the sacred sites as their legacy. Our ancestors have carried with them over the millennia waves of wisdom and the light of their own soul. Many people call themselves believers yet do not notice what is sacred around them. The sacred sites which have been left them by their ancestors to help them.”

“What kind of sacred sites could possibly be found in a city like that?”

“You see, Vladimir, near the city of Gelendzhik can be found growing the Lebanese cedar mentioned so many times in the Bible. And this living, direct creation of God, talked about so much even before Christ Jesus’ coming to Earth, is located right next to this city. It is only a hundred years old. It is still but a stripling, though already very beautiful and sturdy.

“It has grown there because it was planted by a worthy Man. He was a writer named Korolenko.⁴ Thanks to his erstwhile popularity, the cedar has been protected with a surrounding hedge. But today the house where he lived is in a state of decay and people are not paying attention to the tree he planted.”

“And what about the believers?”

“Many of the people in the city who call themselves believers pay no attention either to the tree or the other great sacred sites of their forebears. They are destroying them. And the city is dying.”

“That means God’s punishing them in some kind of vengeance, eh?”

⁴*Vladimir Galaktionovich Korolenko* (1853–1921) — a Russian writer known for his short stories and his autobiographical narrative “The story of my contemporary”. His writings, permeated with ideals of democracy and humanitarianism, were critical of both the tsarist and communist régimes.

"God is good. He is never vengeful. But what can He do when His creations are ignored?"

"That's amazing! Can such a tree really exist? I must look into that."

"It exists. And there are many other sacred sites around the city. But people treat them from a technocratic point of view, like the pyramids of the wise pharaohs."

"What? How do you know about the existence of the Egyptian pyramids?"

"Thanks to generations of my forebears the ability has been preserved within me to communicate with the dimension where thoughts and wisdom reside. This communication gives one the opportunity to learn anything one might wish to know, anything that captures one's interest."

"Hold on a moment. Let me test you. Answer me, do you know the *secrets* of the Egyptian pyramids?"

"I do. Just as I know that those who investigated those pyramids were constantly working from a material standpoint. They were basically interested in how they were constructed, the dimensions and relations of the sides to each other, what treasures were hidden inside, what things were to be found there. They considered people living at the time the pyramids were built to be superstitious. They regarded the pyramids only as a means of preserving the pharaohs' valuables, their bodies, their glory. Thus they distanced themselves from what was fundamental, from what was consciously designed."

"I don't understand you, Anastasia. What conscious design where they distancing themselves from?"

Anastasia didn't speak for some time, staring, it seemed, somewhere off into infinity. And then she began telling her remarkable story:

"You see, Vladimir, way back in ancient times people living on the Earth had the capacity to use wisdom and intelligence far surpassing the abilities of modern Man. People at the time

of the Earth's pristine origins enjoyed ready access to all the information in the entire database of the Universe. This information filling the Universe was created by the Great Intelligence, God. With contributions both from Him and from people themselves — their thoughts. It is so superb that it is capable of answering any question, unobtrusively. The answer would appear instantaneously in the subconscious of the Man asking the question."

"And what did it give these people?"

"These people needed no spaceships for travelling to other planets. All they had to do was wish for it, and they could see what was happening there.

"These people needed no television, telephone or communication wires ensnaring the Earth — not even literacy, since all the information you derive from books they were able to obtain instantaneously by other means.

"These people needed no industries producing medicines or drugs, they could get all the best remedies possible simply by a gentle wave of the hand, since whatever they needed is available in Nature.

"These people needed none of your modern transportation devices. They did not need cars or food-processing complexes, for everything was supplied to them.

"They knew that a change in climatic conditions in one part of the Earth was a signal to them to move to another part, so that the part they were leaving might refresh itself. They had an understanding of the Universe along with their own planet. They were thinkers and knew their designated purpose. They worked to bring the planet Earth to perfection. They had no equals in the Universe. In terms of intelligence they were second only to the Great Intelligence of the Universe, or God.

"Approximately ten thousand years ago, in the human civilisation that then populated what is now Europe, Asia, the

northern part of Africa and the Caucasus, individuals arose in whom the link with the Intelligence of the Universe was partially or wholly deadened. This point marks the beginning of mankind's movement toward a disaster of global proportions. The exact nature of the disaster is immaterial — ecological, nuclear or bacteriological, either as forecast by scientists or foretold allegorically by ancient religions."

"Hold on, there, Anastasia! I don't at all see how the appearance of such 'invalids' can be related to a global disaster."

"Your choice of that modern term *invalids* is very apt. Yes, they were invalids, handicapped people. Now when someone is deprived of sight, what do they need?"

"Someone to guide them."

"And someone deprived of hearing?"

"A hearing apparatus."

"And someone with no arms or legs?"

"Prostheses."

"But there was something much greater that they lacked. They did not have a link to the Intelligence of the Universe. Hence the loss of the knowledge which would help improve the Earth and govern it.

"Imagine what would happen if the crew of a super-modern spaceship suddenly lost ninety percent of their mental capacity. Not comprehending anything, they might start taking apart the panelling and building a fire in the cabin, or pull instruments out of their consoles to use for toys or decoration.

"Well, these people can be compared exactly to a demented crew like that. And these were the people, these were the 'handicapped invalids' who first invented the stone axe, then the spear, then... And it is their thoughts that 'progressed' over time to the invention of nuclear warheads. It is their thoughts that even today continue with incredible stubbornness to tear down already perfect creations and substitute their own primitive artifacts.

"Their descendants started inventing more and more, and in doing so kept tearing apart the super-modern, natural mechanisms of the Earth and creating all sorts of artificial social structures. Then people started fighting with each other.

"These mechanisms, these machines, were incapable of existing all by themselves, like natural ones. Not only could they not reproduce themselves, but they could not restore themselves after a breakdown as a tree can, for example. And then they, the technocrats, required a vast army of workers to service these mechanisms, virtually transforming a segment of the general populace into biological robots. These biological robots, lacking as they do, any individual capacity to learn the truth, very easily lend themselves to manipulation.

"For example, they were all too easily injected, through artificial information media, with the programme 'We must build communism' — symbols were created for it, including lapel pins and flags of a certain colour. Then later, through these same media, the programme 'Communism is bad' was inculcated in another segment of the populace, and other symbols and colours were brought to the fore. And then these two groups with different programming end up hating each other, right to the point of physical annihilation.

"But this all began ten thousand years ago, at the time of a significant increase in the number of people deprived of a link to the Great Intelligence. Indeed, you could even call them demented, since there was not a single living creature capable of polluting the Earth the way they did.

"In those far-off times a few people were still left who had free access to the wisdom of the Universe. They hoped that when mankind reached the point that the polluted air made it difficult to breathe and the water became dangerous to drink, and all its artificially created life-support systems — technological and social — proved themselves too awkward

and more and more often only led to disastrous imbalances, mankind would start having second thoughts.

“People standing on the edge of an abyss *will* start thinking about what being is all about, they will start pondering the meaning of their existence and purpose. Then many of them will desire to understand the truth of their pristine origins, and this is possible — but only under the absolute condition that the abilities inherent in Man’s pristine origins be restored.

“Few of the people who lived ten thousand years ago still possessed these abilities. It was basically those heading up social groups, leaders of tribes. They began — or rather, at their behest people began — to construct special facilities made of heavy stone slabs. These enclosed an interior chamber about one-and-a-half by two metres in area and two metres in height — sometimes more, sometimes less. The slabs were placed at a slight angle, leaning toward the centre at the top. Occasionally these chambers would be hewn out of a single monolith. Other chambers might be hidden underground and covered over by mounds of earth. On one of the walls of the chamber, a cone-shaped opening was cut into the slab, approximately thirty centimetres in diameter and covered with a specially fitted stone plug.

“Into these tomb-chambers would go people who had not lost the ability to communicate with the wisdom of the Universe. Those still alive and even those who might be born thousands of years hence would be able to go to them and obtain answers to any questions that were of interest to Man. This required sitting beside the chamber and meditating. Sometimes the answer would come right away, sometimes after a delay, but it would definitely come, since these structures and those that retreated into them served as an information receiver. Through them it was easier to communicate with the Great Intelligence of the Universe.

"These stone structures are the prototype of the Egyptian pyramids. Only the pyramids do not constitute nearly as powerful a receiver, even though they are far greater in size. Their essence and function, however, is pretty much the same.

"The pharaohs who were buried in the Egyptian pyramids were also thinkers, and at least partially preserved the abilities inherent in Man's pristine origins.

"But in order to obtain an answer to a question using the pyramids, those still living had to come to the pyramid not individually, but in large numbers. They had to stand along each of the four sides, and direct their physical and mental gaze upward, as though skimming over the pyramid's oblique sides right to its top.

"There at the top, people's gazes and thoughts focused on a single point, consequently forming a channel facilitating contact with the Mind of the Universe.

"Even today it is possible to do the same thing and obtain a desired answer. At the focal point of everyone's mental gaze an energy forms, an energy not unlike radiation. If a measuring device were placed at the top of the pyramid, right at the focal point, it would record the intensity of this energy. The people standing at the base, too, would feel strange sensations.

"Oh, if it were not for the sinful pride of people today, the prevailing public opinion, the false perception that past civilisations were less advanced! People today would then be able to find out the real purpose of the pyramids. With all the attention modern researchers have paid to how they were built, they still have not been able to figure this out.

"And it is all so simple: in constructing the pyramids, apart from physical strength and various pieces of equipment, they always used mental energy to reduce the force of gravitation. Whole groups of people with this kind of an ability would assist the builders. There are people alive today who are able to move small objects with their will.

"But of immeasurably greater significance than the pyramids in terms of contact with the Mind of the Universe were the smaller stone structures which preceded them."

"Why, Anastasia?" I asked. "Because of the way they were constructed, their shape?"

"Because, Vladimir, *living* people retreated there to die. And their death was a most unusual one. They went into eternal meditation."

"What do you mean, living people? What for?"

"To create for their descendants the possibility of bringing back the power of their pristine origins. An elderly person — as a rule, one of the wiser leaders or founders of a tribe, sensing his end was near, would ask his relatives and family to place him in a stone chamber. If he were considered worthy, they would grant his request.

"They would push away the heavy massive slab covering the top of the chamber. He would go into the stone chamber and the slab would be pushed back into place. Inside, the Man would be completely isolated from the external material world. His eyes would see nothing, his ears would hear nothing. Such complete isolation, the impossibility of even entertaining a thought about going back, but not yet having crossed into the next world, the deactivation of the usual organs of feeling, sight and hearing, would open up the opportunity for full communication with the Mind of the Universe and the comprehension of many phenomena, as well as of many of the actions of Earth-dwellers. Most important of all, they would be able to subsequently transmit what they had discovered to those still alive, as well as to succeeding generations. Today you would call an approximation of such a state of mind *meditation*. But that is merely child's play in comparison with meditation in eternity.

"Afterward, people would come to this stone chamber, pull out the plug covering the opening, and begin thinking,

mentally consulting with the thoughts lingering in the chamber. The spirit of wisdom was always there.”

“But, Anastasia, by what means can you prove the existence of such structures to those of us living today, let alone the fact that people went into them for ‘eternal meditation?’”

“I can! That is why I am telling you.”

“Then how?”

“It is very simple. After all, these chambers made of stone — they still exist today. Today you call them *dolmens*.⁵ You can see them, and touch them. And you can verify everything I have told you.”

“What??? Where? Can you pinpoint their location?”

“Yes, I can. In Russia, for example, in the Caucasus mountains, not far from the cities you now call Gelendzhik, Tuapse, Novorossiysk and Sochi.”⁶

“I can verify that. I’ll make a special trip there. I still can’t believe such things exist. I’ll definitely check to see.”

“Do verify, by all means. The local inhabitants know about them, but they do not pay any attention to them. Many dolmens have already been plundered. People do not understand their true purpose. They do not know about the possibilities they afford for contact with the wisdom of the Universe. Those who have entered into eternal meditation can never be re-embodied in anything material. They have sacrificed eternity for the sake of their descendants, and now it turns out their knowledge and opportunities have gone begging. This has caused them great sorrow and anguish.

“As for proof that in the past living people went into these dolmens to die, this may be confirmed by the position of the

⁵*dolmens* — see Book 1, Chapter 30: “Author’s message to readers”.

⁶*Gelendzhik, Tuapse, Novorossiysk, Sochi* — cities on the eastern shore of the Black Sea.

skeletal bones discovered in them. Some were found in a reclining position, others sitting in a corner or semi-reclining, leaning against one of the stone slabs.

"This fact has been attested by people today. It has been described by your scientists, but they still have not attributed any special significance to it. No serious studies of the dolmens have been undertaken. The dolmens are being laid waste by the local inhabitants. Some of them have been using their stone slabs for construction of new buildings."

Anastasia sorrowfully lowered her head and fell silent. I promised her:

"I will tell them what you said. I'll explain everything to them so they won't go on plundering and laying waste. They won't mock them any more. They simply didn't know..."

"Do you think you will manage to convince them?"

"I'll try. I'll go to these places and try to explain. I don't know quite how at the moment. I'll find these dolmens, pay my respects to them, and explain it all to the people."

"That would be good. Then, if you are going to those places, please pay your respects to the dolmen in which my foremother died."

"Astonishing! How do you know that your foremother lived in these places and how she died?"

Anastasia replied:

"How could one not know, Vladimir, how one's ancestors lived and what they did? How could one not be aware of their desires and aspirations? My ancient foremother certainly deserves to be remembered. All the mothers in my family since then have learnt of her wisdom. And she continues to help me today.

"My foremother was a woman who had perfect knowledge of how to inculcate in her child, through breast-feeding, the ability to communicate with the Mind of the Universe. Even back in her time people were starting to ignore the

significance of this, just as people ignore it today. In breast-feeding an infant the mother should never allow herself to be distracted by random thoughts, but concentrate all her attention on her child. My foremother knew what to think about and how, and consequently wanted to share her knowledge with everyone.

"She was not yet that old when she started asking the leader about being placed in a dolmen. This was because the leader was getting old and she knew his successor would not accede to her request. Women were rarely permitted to go into a dolmen. The old leader revered my foremother and had great respect for her knowledge, and he gave his consent. Only he could not compel any menfolk to push back the dolmen's heavy stone slab and then reseal it once my foremother had entered. Consequently this task had to be carried out by women, and women alone.

"But nobody comes to visit my foremother's dolmen any more. People are not interested in what she knows. And she so desperately wanted to share it with everybody. She wanted children to be happy and a joy to their parents."

"Anastasia, if you wish, I shall go visit this dolmen and ask her how to breast-feed infants — ask her what to think along this line and how. Just tell me where it's located."

"Fine, I shall tell you. Only you will not be able to comprehend her response. You are not a nursing mother, after all. You do not know what a breast-feeding mother feels. Only women, nursing mothers, are in a position to understand. Just go to the dolmen, go up to it and touch it. Think some good thought about my foremother — she will like that."

For some time neither of us said a word. I was amazed at how detailed her explanations were regarding the exact location of the dolmens — enough information for me to subsequently verify, and I was not about to raise any further doubts about their existence. I did ask her, however, to show me

some proof of the possibility of contact with the invisible and still incomprehensible (to me) ‘wisdom of the Universe’. To which Anastasia responded:

“Vladimir, if you keep on doubting everything I say, any proof I have to offer will seem incomprehensible and unconvincing to you. And I shall have to spend a great deal of time explaining.”

“Don’t be offended, Anastasia — it’s just that your unusual lifestyle as a recluse...”

“How can you call me a recluse when I have the opportunity to communicate not only with everyone and everything on Earth but with significantly more? So many on Earth are surrounded by utterly lonely people just like themselves. These are real hermit-recluses. It is not that frightening to be alone. It is much more frightening when one is lonely even when surrounded by people.”

“But still,” I persisted, “if one of our prominent scientists, let’s say, could talk about that dimension — the one where, as you say, thoughts produced by human civilisations reside, people would be more inclined to believe than just on your say-so. That’s the way people today are — they look to formal science as an authority.”

“There are such scientists — I have seen their thoughts. I cannot tell you their names. But no doubt they are renowned scholars by your standards. They have the capacity for prolific thought. You can hunt down the proofs you need when you get back, and compare them with everything I have said.”



Upon arriving in the Caucasus, I located the dolmens in the mountains near Gelendzhik. I took some colour photos of them. They knew about the dolmens at the local history museum, only they didn't attach any particular significance to them.

I also managed to find the dolmen where Anastasia's foremother was buried. Paying my respects, I laid flowers on the moss-covered stone portal.

As I looked at the dolmens, I realised that here was visible and tangible proof of Anastasia's words. By that time I had read the account from I Kings⁷ in the Bible about King Solomon and his relationship to the cedars of Lebanon. Not being much of a scholar myself, I wasn't about to leaf through a whole lot of scientific works trying to find confirmation of Anastasia's words. But by extraordinary coincidences this young recluse from the remote Siberian taiga seemed to be able to confirm — from a distance — the truth of everything she said, and in the language of modern science. People took it upon themselves to bring or send to me scientific studies dealing with the existence of the Mind of the Universe.

At the beginning of the book I cited the conclusions of two academicians — Vlail Kaznacheev, member of the Russian Academy of Medical Sciences and director of the Institute of Clinical and Experimental Medicine, and Anatoly Akimov of the International Institute of Theoretical and Applied Physics in the Russian Academy of Natural Sciences — published in the May 1996 issue of *Chudesa i prikliuchenia* (*Wonders and adventures*).



⁷See I Kings, Chapters 4–10.

I have been writing this chapter about the sacred sites of Gelendzhik right in the city itself. The text has been keyboarded into the computer by an employee of the *Druzhba* (Friendship) Sanatorium, Marina Davydovna Slabkina. Prior to its publication in the book it was gone over by employees of the sanatorium. And something interesting has happened.

On 26 November 1996 at 10:30 in the morning (Moscow time) an event occurred which did not have any obvious claim to significance, although I am certain that it will prove to be of planetary proportions.

A group of women were making their way toward one of the dolmens in the mountains near the settlement of Pshada⁸ in the Gelendzhik district. They were all employees of the *Druzhba* Sanatorium: V.T. Larionova, N.M. Griбанова, L.S. Zvegintseva, T.N. Zaitseva, T.N. Kurovskaya, A.G. Tarasova, L.N. Romanova and M.D. Slabkina.

In contrast to the tourists that sometimes visit these places to admire their natural beauty and gawk at this lonely mountain dolmen, these people, possibly for the first time in a millennium, came to the dolmen for the specific purpose of honouring the memory of their ancient forebear. To honour the memory of a person who lived more than ten thousand years ago. A wise leader of his people who, at his own initiative, was sealed into this stone crypt. Alive, so that over the millennia he could share the wisdom of the Universe with his descendants.

It is difficult to say for just how many millennia his efforts went begging. Traces of our own era's atrocities are seared into the ancient slabs in the form of modern graffiti and the forcibly enlarged aperture in the dolmen's portal. Visitors to

⁸*Pshada* — the name not only of a settlement, but also of a river and its valley. The seventy-plus Pshada dolmens are considered to be the prime examples of megalith architecture in the whole Caucasus.

the dolmen, at least over the past century, have thought little about its significance — about the person buried here, his wisdom, his desire and aspiration to sacrifice his life for the living. This is all eloquently attested in a number of pre-revolutionary as well as more recent monographs I have seen.

Scientists, researchers and archaeologists have been more interested in the dimensions of the dolmen itself, amazed and eager to determine how the multi-tonne slabs were prepared and put in place.

And now... I looked at the women standing by the dolmen with the flowers they had brought to lay at the portal, and thought to myself: How many centuries or even millennia have passed since you last received flowers, O illustrious ancestor?! What does your soul feel now? What is happening this very moment in the astral world? Have you, our distant and yet so close forebears, taken these flowers as the first sign that your efforts were not in vain? And among people today, your descendants, there is an aspiration toward living one's life with greater conscious awareness. These are but the first flowers. No doubt there will be more and more. But the first ones are the most desirable, and you will be helping those who are now living attain the wisdom of the Universe and the conscious awareness of being. You are our distant forebears.

Participants in this visit to the dolmen included the sanitary inspector of the Gelendzhik health service E.I. Pokrovsky. He had been invited by Valentina Larionova, in her capacity as local tour guide and museum curator, to accompany them and measure the dolmen's radioactivity.

Ms Larionova told me that once on an excursion she had led to this dolmen, a tourist had brought along a Geiger counter, which had showed a significant level of radiation. This individual later took her aside (so as not to alarm the other tourists), showed her the counter and told her about the presence of radioactivity at the dolmen.

This time the health service inspector had brought along a fairly accurate radiation meter in its own special case. He began measuring radiation levels even before we got close to the dolmen, and continued his readings right up to the dolmen itself and even inside.

While Ms Larionova was giving her talk to the group of women, I was seized by the fear that now this medical inspector would announce the results of his measurements for all to hear, and as this would not just be a tourist's observation, but an official conclusion, people might stop coming to visit the dolmen once they learnt of the elevated radiation levels.

Anastasia had told me that this radiation-like energy could come and go. It was controllable and could have a beneficial effect on Man. But how would we, people of the modern world, look upon the opinions of this (let's admit) not very typical woman, in contrast with the affirmations of modern science and facts established by modern scientific equipment — especially concerning radiation, which Man is so fearful of today?

Oh God, I thought, poor Anastasia! She wanted so much, after all, for people to take a different attitude, a more thoughtful attitude toward these ancient, extraordinary burial places of our ancestors. And now there would be an official pronouncement. Even in the best case, it would mean no more visitors to the dolmens. In the worst case they might be destroyed altogether. People wouldn't even use them any longer for construction as they had done before. But if this Mind of the Universe really exists, if Anastasia can use it so freely, then they'd better come up with something, at least.

Pokrovsky approached the group of employees standing by the dolmen and announced the readings on the meter. They were most extraordinary. I felt overwhelmed — first with amazement, and then with joy. According to the readings, the closer one got to the dolmen, the more the Earth's background radiation... decreased!

This was all the more remarkable since, on its way to the dolmen, our group had passed through areas of elevated radioactivity. One would have expected the people standing at the dolmen — their clothing, shoes, etc. — to have retained traces of this radiation. But, in spite of this, the measuring device still showed decreased levels. It was as though an invisible someone had said: “Do not be afraid of us, people. We are your distant forebears. We wish you well. Take our knowledge, children!”

And all at once I realised — Anastasia! This phenomenon must be attributable directly to her. Yes, definitely to her. Even though she was thousands of kilometres away, she had drawn an invisible line across the millennia, linking those living today with an ancient civilisation, thereby causing a surge in people’s consciousness of an aspiration toward good. Even if it were just among a small group of people, it was still a beginning. And it was something absolutely real, since here in front of me was a real dolmen, and here were real and tangible women, and real flowers that they had brought.

According to scientific literature, dolmens are to be found near Tuapse, Sochi and Novorossiysk, as well as in England, Turkey, North Africa and India. This points to the existence of an ancient civilisation with a single culture, whose members could communicate over vast distances. As Anastasia’s information reaches more and more people, their attitude toward whatever other dolmens have been preserved will no doubt change.

This is evidenced by the reaction of the people of Gelendzhik. Indeed, the world’s first excursion to a dolmen following Anastasia’s amazing revelations about them took place at Gelendzhik, led by Valentina Larionova, “the luckiest and happiest woman alive”, as she describes herself. And here was a woman with thirty years’ experience as a tour guide, and a member of the Gelendzhik city council to boot.

But that's not all. Under Ms Larionova's guidance, a group of local historians began comparing already known facts; they spoke with long-term residents of the area and read biographies of saints, all of which enabled them to confirm the existence in the Gelendzhik environs of the sacred sites Anastasia had spoken of. These were unique sacred sites of Russia, most of which were not even mentioned in a single tourist brochure. They included the Lebanese cedar, St Nina's mountain, a monastery and the Sacred Hand Springs.⁹ People who are healed there tie a cloth ribbon around a tree.

In the Gelendzhik area a church is now being restored. A branch of the Trinity-Sergiev Monastery is under construction. I observed all this and thought to myself: Look at all these sacred sites in just one small corner of Russia! Springs of healing waters. And here Russians are traipsing off to the ends of the earth to worship other people's gods. How many still forgotten sacred sites are waiting to be discovered in other parts of Russia? And who will discover them?

I've done what I can. It's a pittance, of course, but at last it has given me some hope that Anastasia will show me our son. So, armed with rompers, toys and baby food, I set off for the Siberian taiga to once again see Anastasia and meet my son.

To be continued...

⁹*Sacred Hand Springs* — the reference here is to five springs which merge at one point to form the shape of a hand.



In Anastasia's Ray

Editor's Afterword

Taking advantage of the frosty weather which had put a nearby lake under a thick shield of ice, I spent a Sunday afternoon skating with my daughter. The sky was overcast and a chilly north wind was blowing, but layers of winter clothing and energetic movement kept us warm. The same day, 26 December 2004, a local newspaper reported temperatures below 10°F (-12°C) and featured an article on ice fishing.

Five days later, on New Year's Eve, we were having tea on the porch of our house, basking in the Sun's hot rays and watching our daughter in her summer dress smelling yellow dandelions and feeding honey to a bee that had joined our meal. After breakfast we went for a walk by the lake, only to discover no traces of ice whatsoever. The Sun's heat was so intense that the temperature in the shade climbed to 65°F (18°C) and a new and historic record high was set. The newspaper printed photographs of residents of Columbia, Missouri, wearing shorts and T-shirts, enjoying the outdoors on 31 December 2004, and commented on the "unseasonably warm weather".

And then I remembered the words Anastasia had addressed to Vladimir Megré nine years earlier:¹

I am making it happen.... Can you not feel the gentle touch of the breeze, feel its caressing embrace? And the warm touch of the Sun's glistening rays on your face? Can you

¹Book 2, Chapter 25: "The Space of Love" (my italics).

not hear the birds singing so cheerfully and the leaves rustling on the tree you are sitting under?... *Love dissolved in Space for one can touch the hearts of many.*

I could not hear any rustling of leaves since it was the middle of winter, but the warm breeze, the bird songs and the Sun's generous warmth were very real indeed. Anyone who witnessed this unique outpouring of sunshine in the middle of the Midwest winter could not help but sense something unusual in the air, but I felt I knew something special about the *cause* of this sudden weather change. It was on this day, 31 December 2004, that the English translation of *Anastasia* was completed, and it seemed as if Nature were rejoicing at the birth of the book, the same way it had celebrated the birth of Anastasia's son with a warm sunny day, pushing away the icy grip of the Siberian winter in 1996.

A few days later, when the *Anastasia* text was laid out and sent to the printer, the cold returned and newspapers were replete with stories of ice storms and snowfalls, but the feeling of a great accomplishment lingered, to take embodiment first in the printed book, then in the e-mails and telephone calls of its initial readers. Here is one e-mail I received:

A friend gave me the book *Anastasia*. I read it today outdoors while the sun shone warmly and the birds sang sweetly. My heart knows such an essence as her spirit and I am still basking in the glow of the presence....

After reading that Anastasia suffered a loss in strength after helping someone, I decided to send her distant *reiki*.² I

²*reiki* — a technique of holistic healing combining elements of spiritual healing, meditation, balancing of energies, homœopathy and other approaches. The healing process involves transfer of energy (*reiki*) from the practitioner to the patient. While *reiki* practitioners usually use hands to channel the energy, it can also be accomplished at a distance by mental concentration.

know from experimenting with my kids that it has a healing effect. Immediately after sending the distant *reiki* I ‘heard’ her say ‘thank you’. Today I sent her distant *reiki* again. Soon after I was finished, I began smelling the sweetest scent of a flower, and the scent went into all my sinuses. My sinuses feel different now. I feel such an inexpressible feeling of love and joy. It is like being in love, but in a totally different way. If you were here right now I would hug you and let you feel it. Thank you for this sweet and precious gift.

Even as this and other heart-warming messages showed me that the book is producing the same response among English-speaking readers as in other parts of the world, I was still wary of the welcome the translated edition of *Anastasia* would receive in professional and academic circles. But the first impressions shared with me by its early readers — students of psychology, Russian literature, forestry, ecology, sociology and philosophy — are most encouraging. One scholar, after reading just the first chapter, asked me if she could have a pendant of cedar wood...

Dr Richard Bolstad, a psychologist from New Zealand and author of *RESOLVE: a new NLP model of therapy*,³ was quick to recognise the value of the book for his professional field and described the Ringing Cedars Series as “ecological common sense and profound wisdom delivered with love, a unique Russian gift towards the needed healing of the whole planet and the creation of space for love in our lives”.

Steven Foster, the ‘Echinacea guru’, one of the leading experts on medicinal plants in North America, author of *A field guide to medicinal plants and herbs*⁴ and other books, after

³Williston (Vermont), USA & Carmarthen, Wales: Crown House, 2002.

⁴Several volumes in the Peterson Field Guide Series, published by Houghton Mifflin, New York.

sharing many of his personal experiences corroborating Anastasia's sayings about the spiritual link between Man and Nature, had this comment about the Series:

The Ringing Cedars Series will impact a new generation of readers, like the works of Carlos Castaneda did for a previous generation — only this time through awakening the latent spiritual connection each of us has with nature. This is not about a walk in the woods, rather these books catapult us to an entirely new way of being on planet Earth.

I also discovered from informal talks with my colleagues that many foresters have psychic experiences in the forest, but keep silent for fear of being ridiculed by their peers. One colleague who manages thousands of acres of forest in the Ozarks confessed to me in a private conversation that when marking trees to be felled he communicated with the Intelligence governing the trees and had a deep reverence for the Life manifest in them.⁵

I am all the more happy to hear these accounts in view of the fact that they are a sincere expression of readers' actual feelings, rather than a formulation developed by a well-paid marketing specialist and put into the mouths of celebrities, as often happens in current practice in the publishing industry. These and all other reviews of the Ringing Cedars Series I have received are genuine, they come straight from the heart.

One of the faculty members at the University of Missouri surprised me by saying he already knew about *Anastasia* and the impact these books were producing around the world.

⁵He therefore removes only the *least* healthy and vital trees, leaving the best ones to grow — the opposite of the destructive forestry practices prevalent over the last century.

It turned out he had learnt about the Ringing Cedars Series from his aunt who lived in Germany and had read the best-selling German translation. He said she had been so greatly impressed by the books that she would call him from Germany and read entire chapters, in German, over the telephone. This story made me wonder as to how many aunts call their nephews on the other side of the globe to read a chapter from a book they particularly liked. Not very many, I would imagine. Which means a book that does elicit such a response must certainly possess a power to set hearts aflame, regardless of the language in which it is read.

I became even more confident about the Ringing Cedars' power to transcend national boundaries after I received the following message from Europe from Nara Petrovic, editor of the Slovenian translation of the Series. This is what he wrote:

Without any advertisement the book became a best-seller mainly by readers spreading the news from mouth to mouth. In many libraries the waiting lists were soon getting longer and longer and in bookstores the sales were very good....

Thousands of readers in Slovenia and Croatia are more than enthusiastic about the books. Whoever has read the books and has a vegetable garden was compelled — even out of sheer curiosity — to try out the ideas explained in the first book. And when I spoke to people they confirmed that everything works. One man even called us and told us that he had made a beehive according to Anastasia's detailed instructions and was amazed at how well it worked.

One of the publisher's relatives spent a lot of time in his garden even before he read the books. He loved to work in the garden and thus had cultivated very healthy and tasty crops. But after he implemented Anastasia's instructions

the tomatoes and some other vegetables yielded so well that all of his relatives and friends were surprised by the tastiest vegetables they'd ever eaten.

One lady who lives near my city planted pumpkins for the first time in her garden according to Anastasia's instructions. That year there was a great drought. All her neighbours' gardens were dry, with very little vegetables, while the pumpkins in *her* garden were huge, although she took almost no care of them.

I also have accounts of people in North America who — after either reading the Russian version or learning about Anastasia's ideas from their Russian friends — have followed her advice on gardening to obtain remarkable results. This is very encouraging. In the light of how all the 'incredible' revelations of the Series have been playing out in real life, there is no escaping the fact that

Your dream, Anastasia, is entering upon our world, and it really seems as though our world is beginning to change. There are certain people who feel and understand you — they show evidence of new strength coming from somewhere, and that is changing the world. The world is becoming just a little better.⁶

In this English-speakers are no different from other readers that embraced Anastasia's ideas earlier: "The book you have written will circulate all over the world and... it will give you and others a power greater than mere physical or material strength."⁷ The only difference is that in Russia and other

⁶Book 2, Chapter 25: "The Space of Love".

⁷Book 2, Chapter 26: "Anastasia's grandfather".

countries the dream has been unfolding for a number of years now, while America, along with the rest of the English-speaking world, is at the very beginning of this radiant path which it may now choose to follow. Wes Jackson, a well-known proponent of ecological approaches to agriculture in the United States and director of the Land Institute, has passionately argued in his writings that there is no other possible way of development for this country but a return to the land. What if he is right and there is indeed no other way? Then it is probably not by chance that two of the central chapters in Vladimir Megré's eighth book, *The new civilisation*, convey Anastasia's vision of *America's* future. A beautiful one.

Even as my family are now packing up, getting ready to move from Columbia to a small farm lost amidst the beautiful Ozark mountains — with an aspiration, apart from continuing work on the Ringing Cedars Series, to *live* their ideas in real life — I have an ever-growing feeling of awe at the clear realisation that what Anastasia dreamt about is already coming to pass in America as well. *It is coming to pass.*

Within the two months since *Anastasia* was published in English there have already been two artistic performances of dance and song inspired by her. The dancer — a young breast-feeding mother and a future midwife — told me how her heart had instantly felt and accepted Anastasia's essence as her own, and how she now feels her presence and support on the path she is following. She told me she felt herself simply overflowing with the energy of Love and wanted to share it with everybody. Then, as she described her captivating dance and song as 'butterfly women', I stared at her in awe, experiencing a strange sensation in my heart and head.⁸ The remarkable thing is that I have a large painting by Alexander Razboinikov (who designed the cover art for the Series) hanging on the wall in my home. This painting — called *The butterfly dance* — depicts Anastasia dancing in a whirlwind of

butterflies and is inspired by Book 3, *The Space of Love*, which has not been translated as yet!

But *The Space of Love* is being translated and is scheduled to see the light on 23 July 2005, a day on which 'Dachnik Day' and an 'All-Earth holiday' will be celebrated in America for the first time, true to Anastasia's promise: "This holiday will indeed begin in Russia. But then it will become the most fantastic holiday for the world as a whole".⁹

And then, "a wave of warmth will cheer the heart, and over the world will be unfurled a new dawn".¹⁰ I can already see the twilight of this dawn. And I know that I am not the only one who does.

Columbia, Missouri, U.S.A.
Earth Day (22 April 2005)

Leonid Sharashkin

⁸At that moment I could very well relate to Vladimir Megré's feelings — described in the first chapter of this volume — as he witnessed the unfolding of Anastasia's dream and watched readers expressing in art the images and scenes from his taiga experience which had not yet been described in the books.

⁹Book 2, Chapter 9: "Dachnik Day and an All-Earth holiday!".

¹⁰Book 2, Chapter 32: "Title!".

ABOUT THE RINGING CEDARS SERIES

Anastasia, the first book of the Ringing Cedars Series, tells the story of entrepreneur Vladimir Megré's trade trip to the Siberian taiga in 1995, where he witnessed incredible spiritual phenomena connected with sacred 'ringing cedar' trees. He spent three days with a woman named Anastasia who shared with him her unique outlook on subjects as diverse as gardening, child-rearing, healing, Nature, sexuality, religion and more. This wilderness experience transformed Vladimir so deeply that he abandoned his commercial plans and, penniless, went to Moscow to fulfil Anastasia's request and write a book about the spiritual insights she so generously shared with him. True to her promise this life-changing book, once written, has become an international bestseller and has touched hearts of millions of people world-wide.

The Ringing Cedars of Russia, the second book of the Series, in addition to providing a fascinating behind-the-scenes look at the story of how *Anastasia* came to be published, offers a deeper exploration of the universal concepts so dramatically revealed in Book 1. It takes the reader on an adventure through the vast expanses of space, time and spirit — from the Paradise-like glade in the Siberian taiga to the rough urban depths of Russia's capital city, from the ancient mysteries of our forebears to a vision of humanity's radiant future.

The Space of Love, the third book of the Series, describes author's second visit to Anastasia. Rich with new revelations on natural child-rearing and alternative education, on the spiritual significance of breast-feeding and the meaning of ancient megaliths, it shows how each person's thoughts can influence the destiny of the entire Earth and describes practical ways of putting Anastasia's vision of happiness into practice. Megré shares his new outlook on education and children's real creative potential after a visit to a school where pupils build their own campus and cover the ten-year Russian school programme in just two years. Complete with an account of an armed intrusion into Anastasia's habitat, the book highlights the limitless power of Love and non-violence.

Co-creation, the fourth book and centrepiece of the Series, paints a dramatic living image of the creation of the Universe and humanity's place in this creation, making this primordial mystery relevant to our everyday living today. Deeply metaphysical yet at the same time down-to-Earth practical, this poetic heart-felt volume helps us uncover answers to the most significant questions about the essence and meaning of the Universe and the nature and purpose of our existence. It also shows how and why the knowledge of these answers, innate in every human being, has become obscured and forgotten, and points the way toward reclaiming this wisdom and — in partnership with Nature — manifesting the energy of Love through our lives.

Who are we? — Book Five of the Series — describes the author's search for real-life 'proofs' of Anastasia's vision presented in the previous volumes. Finding these proofs and taking stock of ongoing global environmental destruction, Vladimir Megré describes further practical steps for putting Anastasia's vision into practice. Full of beautiful realistic images of a new way of living in co-operation with the Earth and each other, this book also highlights the role of children in making us aware of the precariousness of the present situation and in leading the global transition toward a happy, violence-free society.

The book of kin, the sixth book of the Series, describes another visit by the author to Anastasia's glade in the Siberian taiga and his conversations with his growing son, which cause him to take a new look at education, science, history, family and Nature. Through parables and revelatory dialogues and stories Anastasia then leads Vladimir Megré and the reader on a shocking re-discovery of the pages of humanity's history that have been distorted or kept secret for thousands of years. This knowledge sheds light on the causes of war, oppression and violence in the modern world and guides us in preserving the wisdom of our ancestors and passing it over to future generations.

The energy of life, Book Seven of the Series, re-asserts the power of human thought and the influence of our thinking on our lives

and the destiny of the entire planet and the Universe. It also brings forth a practical understanding of ways to consciously control and build up the power of our creative thought. The book sheds still further light on the forgotten pages of humanity's history, on religion, on the roots of inter-racial and inter-religious conflict, on ideal nutrition, and shows how a new way of thinking and a lifestyle in true harmony with Nature can lead to happiness and solve the personal and societal problems of crime, corruption, misery, conflict, war and violence.

The new civilisation, the eighth book of the Series, is not yet complete. The first part of the book, already published as a separate volume, describes yet another visit by Vladimir Megré to Anastasia and their son, and offers new insights into practical co-operation with Nature, showing in ever greater detail how Anastasia's lifestyle applies to our lives. Describing how the visions presented in previous volumes have already taken beautiful form in real life and produced massive changes in Russia and beyond, the author discerns the birth of a new civilisation. The book also paints a vivid image of America's radiant future, in which the conflict between the powerful and the helpless, the rich and the poor, the city and the country, can be transcended and thereby lead to transformations in both the individual and society.

Rites of Love — Book 8, Part 2 (published as a separate volume) — contrasts today's mainstream attitudes to sex, family, childbirth and education with our forebears' lifestyle, which reflected their deep spiritual understanding of the significance of conception, pregnancy, homebirth and upbringing of the young in an atmosphere of love. In powerful poetic prose Megré describes their ancient way of life, grounded in love and non-violence, and shows the practicability of this same approach today. Through the life-story of one family, he portrays the radiant world of the ancient Russian Vedic civilisation, the drama of its destruction and its re-birth millennia later — in our present time.

To be continued...

THE AUTHOR, Vladimir Megré, born in 1950, was a well-known entrepreneur from a Siberian city of Novosibirsk. According to his account, in 1995 — after hearing a fascinating story about the power of ‘ringing cedars’ from a Siberian elder — he organised a trade expedition into the Siberian taiga to rediscover the lost technique of pressing virgin cedar nut oil containing high curative powers, as well as to find the ringing cedar tree. However, his encounter on this trip with a Siberian woman named Anastasia transformed him so deeply that he abandoned his business and went to Moscow to write a book about the spiritual insights she had shared with him. Vladimir Megré now lives near the city of Vladimir, Russia, 190 km (120 miles) east of Moscow. If you wish to contact the author, you may send a message to his personal e-mail megre@online.sinor.ru

THE TRANSLATOR, John Woodsworth, born in Vancouver (British Columbia), has over forty years of experience in Russian-English translation, from classical poetry to modern short stories. Since 1982 he has been associated with the University of Ottawa in Canada as a Russian-language teacher, translator and editor, most recently as a Research Associate and Administrative Assistant with the University’s Slavic Research Group. A published Russian-language poet himself, he and his wife — Susan K. Woodsworth — are directors of the Sasquatch Literary Arts Performance Series in Ottawa. A Certified Russian-English Translator, John Woodsworth is in the process of translating the remaining volumes in Vladimir Megré’s Ringing Cedars Series.

THE EDITOR, Leonid Sharashkin, is writing his doctoral dissertation on the spiritual, cultural and economic significance of the Russian *dacha* gardening movement, at the University of Missouri at Columbia. After receiving a Master’s degree in Natural Resources Management from Indiana University at Bloomington, he worked for two years as Programme Manager at the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF Russia) in Moscow, where he also served as editor of Russia’s largest environmental magazine, *The Panda Times*. Together with his wife, Irina Sharashkina, he has translated into Russian *Small is beautiful* and *A guide for the perplexed* by E.F. Schumacher, *The secret life of plants* by Peter Tompkins and Christopher Bird, *The continuum concept* by Jean Liedloff and *Birth without violence* by Frederick Leboyer.

ORDERING INFORMATION



USA:

- *on-line* — www.RingingCedars.com
- *tel. / fax (toll-free)* — 1-888-DOLMENS (1-888-365-6367)
- *tel. / fax (from outside US & Canada)* — 1-646-429-1986
- *e-mail* — sales@RingingCedars.com
- *mail (US)* — send US\$14.95 per copy plus \$3.95 shipping and handling for the first copy and \$0.99 s&h for each additional copy in your order to:

Ringing Cedars Press
120 Hana Hwy #9-230,
Paia, HI 96779, USA

Make a check or money order payable to "Ringing Cedars Press". Please indicate clearly the quantity and title of the book(s) you are ordering and be sure to include your US postal address with your payment. Allow 2-4 weeks for delivery. Prices are subject to change without notice.

UNITED KINGDOM:

- *order on-line* — www.RingingCedars.co.uk
- *by phone (toll-free)* — 0800-011-2081
- *e-mail* — books@RingingCedars.co.uk

AUSTRALIA:

- *order on-line* — www.RingingCedars.com.au
- *by phone (toll-free)* — 1800-248-768
- *e-mail* — books@RingingCedars.com.au

NEW ZEALAND:

- *order on-line* — www.RingingCedars.co.nz
- *by phone* — 64-9232-9792
- *e-mail* — sales@RingingCedars.co.nz

SOUTH AFRICA:

- *order on-line* — www.RingingCedars.co.za
- *e-mail* — books@RingingCedars.co.za

ANASTASIA'S CALL

by Eric Dane Mansfield

My dear,
why are you so sullen and sad?
For that is not your place.
Come and *listen* to the call,
to *see* your *original* face.

Dear, all your struggle, and your pain
is *because* you have forgotten your name,
and your own divinity.
Yes, you *are* the living trinity,
I-Is-We,
the One *as* three.
This is *where* your sovereignty *lives*,
and peace is what dominion *gives*.

There is a voice,
calling from the very depths of Nature.
There is a guide,
that will lead us away from *disaster*.
A voice that echoes true,
for she speaks only of *Reality*.
And her mind is not clouded
by the obscured *views* of duality,
and its *images* of illusion.
She is living the *solution*,
and *showing* as she calls
to each from within the forested walls
of her love inspired *domain*.

Is it Christ, Buddha, Krishna?
Yes, Anastasia is her *name*.

She is the *God-Mother* of joy,
and peace is her constant companion.
She awaits your response.
She supports your *return*,
to the *ways* of Veda,
to the *Way* of Love.
For Anastasia has *risen above*
the lies and games of self delusion.
Hers is the way of *total inclusion*,
and she does not falter.

She is not *special*, or distinct.
She simply *knows how* to think
purely, and she *lives as* Man.
Co-creation, *as-is*,
that is her simple *plan*.

Consecration and devotion
to the *standard* of Truth,
if you *answer* to her call
your life will *be the proof*.
That all she says,
and all she *is*
you are able to *be*.

See, Anastasia is our Self
living *completely free*.

April 2007



ANASTASIA'S WORTH IS OURS

by Eric Dane Mansfield

When I came to the forest
to discover my Self,
and repair the *broken* Earth.
I first glimpsed Her
atop a golden tree.
Yet, I *knew not* of her worth.

For to *value* what is *unknown*
is to wander away from ego's *home*,
and I was not yet *ready*.
Yet, my inner pace remained steady.

And so many years later on
I began to *hear* her silent song
of Love for all,
as All *is* Love.

She sits atop the trees *above*
because she has transcended lies.
And the light she offers up so freely
gives illumination to our skies.

For she *is* Advaita alive, here come.
She is a *living* Veda, holy song *already* sung,
and she calls to those who hear,
"Come and join me, have no fear".
"For we will *remain* in the forests of joy,
to plant gardens, raise children, as I, my boy".

For knowing *how* to live aright
shall *end* this lingering, hopeless night

Where darkness *claims* powers of destruction.
Yet, where Light *already created*,
no construction shall stand.
For from *beyond* the temporal realm
comes this illuminated Man.
Anastasia, captain at the helm,
her course *true* to the divine plan
of inclusion, co-operation, contemplation.
See there's no *room* for condemnation
of Truth *set* in stone.

Living *as* All,
come with her and trust
that you shall not fall.
For Anastasia is *with* us.
So stop, and listen do not fuss,
or fight about life.
Accept Anastasia
as your wife.
For she *is* your Self,
for she *is* your Self.

April 2007

Editor's note: both poems by Eric Dane Mansfield are © 2007 by Eric Dane Mansfield and are used by kind permission of the author.

The publishing team of Ringing Cedars Press sincerely thanks all readers who shared their impressions, as well as poetry, songs and artwork inspired by Anastasia. The Series' editor may be reached by e-mail at press@ringingcedars.com

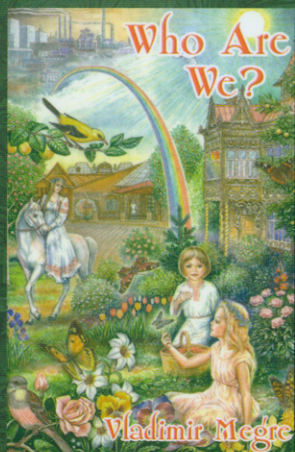
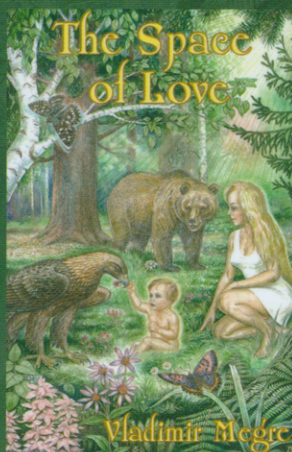
The Ringing Cedars of Russia

Spirituality /
Nature

Book 2 of The Ringing Cedars Series by V. Megre

"The Ringing Cedars Series will impact a new generation of readers, like the works of Carlos Castaneda did for a previous generation — only this time through awakening the latent spiritual connection each of us has with nature. This is not about a walk in the woods, rather these books catapult us to an entirely new way of being on planet Earth."

— Steven Foster, author of *A Field Guide to Medicinal Plants and Herbs*



RINGING CEDARS PRESS

www.RingingCedars.com

1-888-DOLMENS

US\$14.95 CAN\$19.95 AU\$24.95

ISBN 978-0-9763333-1-9



9 780976 333319



51495 >

The Space of Love

A vibrant, painterly illustration of a magical forest scene. In the center, a woman with long, flowing blonde hair, wearing a simple white tank dress, is kneeling on the grass. She is looking towards a small, cherubic child with a halo, who is sitting on the ground and reaching out to a large brown falcon. The falcon is perched on the ground, facing the child. Behind the child, a large brown bear stands on all fours, looking towards the woman. To the left, a large tree trunk is visible, with a large butterfly with brown and white wings resting on a branch. In the foreground, there are several pink and purple flowers, and another butterfly with purple and orange wings is flying. The background is a dense forest with sunlight filtering through the trees.

Vladimir Megre

Vladimir Megré
The Ringing Cedars Series

English translation by John Woodsworth

- Book 1 **Anastasia**
(ISBN: 978-0-9763333-0-2)
- Book 2 **The Ringing Cedars of Russia**
(ISBN: 978-0-9763333-1-9)
- Book 3 **The Space of Love**
(ISBN: 978-0-9763333-2-6)
- Book 4 **Co-creation**
(ISBN: 978-0-9763333-3-3)
- Book 5 **Who Are We?**
(ISBN: 978-0-9763333-4-0)
- Book 6 **The Book of Kin**
(ISBN: 978-0-9763333-6-4)
- Book 7 **The Energy of Life**
(ISBN: 978-0-9763333-7-1)
- Book 8, Part 1 **The New Civilisation**
(ISBN: 978-0-9763333-8-8)
- Book 8, Part 2 **Rites of Love**
(ISBN: 978-0-9763333-9-5)



Published by Ringing Cedars Press
www.RingingCedars.com

Anastasia herself has stated that this book consists of words and phrases in combinations *which have a beneficial effect on the reader*. This has been attested by the letters received to date from thousands of readers all over the world.

If you wish to gain as full an appreciation as possible of the ideas, thoughts and images set forth here, as well as experience the benefits that come with this appreciation, we recommend you find a quiet place for your reading where there is the least possible interference from artificial noises (motor traffic, radio, TV, household appliances etc.). *Natural sounds*, on the other hand — the singing of birds, for example, or the patter of rain, or the rustle of leaves on nearby trees — may be a welcome accompaniment to the reading process.



Ringling Cedars Press is an independent publisher dedicated to making **Vladimir Megré's** books available in the beautiful English translation by **John Woodsworth**. Word of mouth is our best advertisement and we appreciate your help in spreading the word about the Ringling Cedars Series.

Order on-line	www.RinglingCedars.com	ordering
call / fax toll-free	1-888-DOLMENS	details
or call / fax	1-646-429-1986	see last page

Generous discounts are available on volume orders. To help spread the word as an independent distributor, or to place the books in your bookstore, or to be kept up to date about future book releases and events, please email us at:

info@ringlingcedars.com

or write to the Publisher, Ringling Cedars Press, 415 Dairy Rd., Suite E-339, Kahului, HI 96732, USA. We also welcome reviews, poetry and artwork inspired by the Series.

Vladimir Megré

THE SPACE OF LOVE

The Ringing Cedars Series
Book 3

Translated from the Russian by
John Woodsworth

Edited by
Leonid Sharashkin



Ringing Cedars Press
Paia, Hawaii, USA

The Space of Love by
Vladimir Megré

Translation and footnotes by
John Woodsworth

Editing, Editor's Afterword, footnotes, design and layout by
Leonid Sharashkin

Cover art by
Alexander Razboinikov

Copyright © 1998 Vladimir Megré
Copyright © 2005 Leonid Sharashkin, translation
Copyright © 2005 Leonid Sharashkin, afterword, footnotes
Copyright © 2005 Leonid Sharashkin, cover art
Copyright © 2005 Leonid Sharashkin, design and layout

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, except for the inclusion of brief quotations in a review, without permission in writing from the publisher.

Library of Congress Control Number: 2005901795

ISBN: 978-0-9763333-2-6

Published by
Ringing Cedars Press

www.RingingCedars.com



Contents

1. Just another pilgrim.....	I
2. Money for crap?.....	II
3. Uninvited guests.....	15
4. Chords of the Universe.....	29
5. The spirit of a foremother.....	34
6. Forces of Light.....	47
7. Assault!.....	51
8. What hell is.....	57
9. When words change destinies.....	69
10. Work out your own happiness.....	79
11. Who are we?.....	91
12. Man-made mutants.....	97
13. A new morning — a new life.....	112
14. A father's role.....	122
15. A bird for discovering one's soul.....	135
16. The system.....	145
17. Put your vision of happiness into practice.....	151
18. Academician Shchetinin.....	165
19. What to agree with, what to believe?.....	173
20. Mediums.....	186

21. Should we all go live in the forest?.....	192
22. The Anastasia Centres.....	195
23. Re-creating Shambala.....	204
24. Who are you, Anastasia?.....	217
Lada's message. Editor's Afterword.....	233
Readers' comments.....	237
The Ringing Cedars Series at a glance.....	246

CHAPTER ONE



Just another pilgrim

There she is! Again before mine eyes flows that mighty Siberian River, the Ob. I had finally reached the settlement where regular passenger service stopped, and was standing on the riverbank. In order to continue my journey to the spot where I could begin my trek through the taiga to Anastasia's glade, I would have to hire a small motorboat. Beside one of the many boats tied up along the shore three men were laying out some fishing tackle. I said hello to them and mentioned I was ready to pay good money for transport to such-and-such a place along the Ob.

"That's Yegorych's department. He charges a half-million roubles¹ for the trip there," answered one of the men.

I was concerned right off when I heard that someone here was already making passenger runs to the tiny Siberian village hidden way up north in the taiga. It was only twenty-five kilometres from there to Anastasia's glade. And the prices they were charging! It meant there must be takers. Demand creates a price like that. However, bargaining was something one did not do in the North, and so I asked:

"And where do I find this Yegorych?"

"He's somewhere in the settlement. Most likely at the store. See over there where the little tykes are playing — that's his boat. His grandson Vasya's with them. He'll run and fetch him — go ask him."

¹a half-million roubles — approx. US\$100 at the then current exchange rate — an exceptionally high price, roughly equivalent to an average Russian's monthly income.

No sooner had I greeted Vasya, a bright-looking lad of twelve or thereabouts, than he started rattling off:

"So, you need to go there? To see Anastasia? Wait just a moment! I'll go call my gramps in a sec!"

Without waiting for an answer, Vasya went dashing off to the settlement. I realised quite clearly he didn't need an answer. It was apparent that any strangers in these parts, in Vasya's opinion, had but one goal in mind.

I made myself as comfortable as I could by the riverbank and began to wait. There being nothing else to do, I stared at the water and drifted into thought.

The River was a good kilometre across at this point. Here amidst the boundless taiga (which you couldn't see the whole of even from an airplane), the River had been flowing on down through the centuries. What had it carried away of the past without leaving so much as a trace? What do these Ob waters remember from those times? Perhaps they remember how Yermak,² the 'conqueror of Siberia', pressed by his foes with his back against the River Ob, single-handedly tried to repel an enemy attack, and how his blood from a fatal wound seeped into the River, which then carried off his enervated body to goodness-knows-where... What did Yermak in fact conquer? Perhaps his deeds weren't that much different from the racketeering that goes on in modern times. Probably it is only the River that is in a position to judge today.

Or perhaps of greater importance to the River may have been the raids of Genghis Khan's troops? In ancient times his Horde was considered great indeed. There is a regional centre near Novosibirsk today known as Ordynskoe, which

²*Yermak* (a.k.a. Yermolai Timofeevich, 1540?–1585) — a Cossack *ataman* (chieftain), credited with heroic exploits in his campaign to open up the Siberian wilderness to Russian civilisation. In early August 1585 he was killed in a battle against the Tatar Khan Kuchum on the River Ob.

includes a village called Genghis. Perhaps the River remembers how Genghis' hordes retreated with their plundered booty, how they seized a young Siberian maiden, while a mighty vizier, starry-eyed with love, eloquently begged her to go with him of her own free will, with no resistance. The maiden remained silent, her eyes lowered. All the soldiers under the vizier's command had already fled, while he stayed and kept courting her with loving words. Finally he tossed her up onto the back of his steed along with a bag of gold, leapt into the saddle and made full speed for the banks of the Ob to escape his pursuers.

They began to catch up to him. The vizier started throwing the gold at them, and when the bag was empty he began tearing off his precious medals he had been awarded for conquering various lands and throwing them on the ground under his pursuers' feet, but he did not relinquish the maiden. With frothing mane the steed carried him to the canoes at the shore of the Ob. The vizier carefully helped the maiden down from his steed and seated her in one of the boats. Then he jumped in himself. But as he was poling the boat away from the shore he was pierced by an arrow from the pursuing forces right behind them.

The current began to carry the boat downstream. The wounded vizier lay near the stern, not even aware of the three large rowing canoes filled with soldiers coming ever closer. He looked tenderly at the maiden sitting calmly and quietly beside him, and fell silent himself — he had no strength left to speak. And the maiden looked at him, and then, with a glance at the overtaking canoes, she smiled faintly at them (or maybe at something else), tore the ropes off her hands and threw them into the water. Then this young Siberian maiden took to the oars. And none of the pursuer's craft could catch up to the boat carrying her and the wounded vizier.

To what place and into what age did the River current carry them? And what might the muddied waters of the River be carrying off at this moment in their memory of us?

Perhaps, dear River, you consider our big cities to be important? A huge city, Novosibirsk,³ stands on the banks of the Ob, closer to its source in the south. Can you feel its great size and majesty, dear River? Of course, there's no doubt you would have a great deal to tell about it — you would say it pours a lot of pollution into you so that your once life-giving waters are no longer drinkable. But what can we do about it — where are we going to channel the waste from all the factories? After all, we, unlike our forebears, are in the process of developing. We have a lot of scientists working in the multitude of academic centres around Novosibirsk. And if we don't channel our waste into you, we shan't survive ourselves. And so the stench has made it hard to breathe in the city, and in some districts the smell is so bad and nobody even knows what it's from. Try to make sense of all this, dear River. Do you know — the technology we have today?! Instead of noiseless canoes, it's diesel ships that are now plying your waters. Including, at one time, my own.

I wonder whether the River remembers me. How I sailed up and down it on my ship — the largest passenger vessel in our fleet. It wasn't new, of course, the ship, and at full speed all its diesel engines and propellers made such a roar that it was even hard to hear the music in the bar.

What does the River cherish in its memory as the most important thing? In times past I would watch its shores from the upper deck of my ship, from the windows of the bar at the stern, listening to Malinin's⁴ songs and romances:

³*Novosibirsk* — with a population of a million and a half, Siberia's largest city and major industrial, cultural and academic centre. It began in the 1890s as a major hub at the point where the Trans-Siberian Railway crossed the mighty Ob.

*I was going to the city upon a white steed
When a pub-mistress smiled at me sweetly indeed.
Having caught on the bridge the old miller's sly glance,
I remained the whole night with that mistress, entranced.*

The people busy with their activities along the shore seemed at the time to me petty and insignificant. Now I was one of them.

Another thing I thought about was how to convince Anastasia not to prevent me from communicating with my son. The situation was a strange one indeed, the way it had turned out. All my life I dreamt of having a son. I pictured how I would play with him as a little tyke, and then how I would raise him. When my son grew up, he would be a great help to me. We'd be business partners.

Now I have a son. And even though he's not around, it's still a jolly thing to know that somewhere on Earth there's a human being as close to you as that, your own flesh and blood, someone you very much wanted.

Before leaving I took great delight in purchasing for my son all sorts of basic kiddie things. Anyway, I went and bought them, sure, but whether or not I'll be able to give them to him — well, that's still a question mark. If my son had been borne by an ordinary woman — it wouldn't matter whether she were a country or a city girl — it would all be so simple and straightforward. Any woman would be delighted that her child's father was concerned and really trying to provide him with everything he needed, and take part in his upbringing.

⁴*Alexander Nikolaevich Malinin* (1958–) — a popular Russian singer-songwriter from Sverdlovsk (now Ekaterinburg), a large industrial city in the Urals. Famous for his masterfully performed romances, in 1998 he was honoured with the title *People's artist of Russia*. The verse here is the first stanza of his song *Bely kon* (White Steed).

In fact, if he didn't do this voluntarily, a lot of women would be applying for alimony.

But Anastasia was a taiga recluse with her own views on life and her own understanding of values. Even before our son's birth she made it clear to me:

"He doesn't need any material goods in your sense of the term. He will have everything he needs right from the start. You have the desire to give our baby some sort of senseless trinkets, which he doesn't need at all. You are the one who needs them for your own self-satisfaction, so you can say: 'Look at how good and attentive I am!'"

Why on earth would she say something like that — "He doesn't need any material goods"? Come on, now! What can a parent give his newborn child, then? Especially a father? It's still too early to start raising a breast-feeding infant in a fatherly way. How then can I express my relationship to him? How can I show him I care for him? A mother can breast-feed her baby, it's easier for her, she's already doing something, but what can a father do? In civilised circumstances he can help around the house, fix things up, take financial care of his family. But Anastasia doesn't need anything like that. All she has is her glade in the taiga. Her 'household' takes care of itself and waits on her hand and foot, which means the boy will get the same treatment once he's seen as coming from her.

I wonder how much it would cost to buy that kind of service? Sure, one can purchase or get a long-term lease on a few hectares of land easy enough, but what price can you put on the love and loyalty of a she-wolf, a she-bear, bugs and an eagle? Maybe Anastasia doesn't need any of the accomplishments of our civilisation, but why should the child have to suffer for his mother's crazy world-view? The child can't even have normal toys! She sees everything her own way. "The child doesn't need senseless trinkets, they'll only do him harm, distract him from the truth," she says.

Maybe in what she says there is some sort of quirky exaggeration or even downright superstition. There must be some reason mankind has invented so many different toys for kids! But so as not to quarrel with Anastasia, I didn't buy him any rattles — instead I got him a kiddie's constructor set, where the label on the box reads: "Develops children's intellect". Along with a quantity of disposable diapers, which the whole world uses today. And I bought a whole lot of powdered baby food. I'm really amazed at how easy they've made it. You open the box and there's a hermetically sealed package of waterproof foil. You just take a pair of scissors, cut open the packet, pour the contents into warm water, stir and... presto, it's all ready. They've got all sorts of powders — buckwheat, rice and other cereal grains.

The box says it has all sorts of vitamin additives. I remember, back when my daughter Polina was really little, having to go every day to the 'children's kitchen',⁵ and now all you need do is buy a bunch of boxes and you can feed your own child with no trouble whatsoever. You don't even have to heat it up. Just dissolve in water, and that's it. I knew Anastasia didn't boil herself any water, and so, before buying up a whole lot, I bought a single box and tried adding the contents to water at room temperature — and it worked. I tried tasting it. It tasted normal — hardly any flavour, because there was no salt, but likely that's the way it should be for kids.

I decided Anastasia wouldn't be able to come up with any arguments against this powder. It would be silly to say no to a convenience like that. And that means she'll have to start showing a little respect to our technocratic world. It doesn't just produce weapons, it thinks about children too.

⁵'children's kitchen' (Russian: *domovaya kukhnia*) — a government-subsidised community canteen where parents (particularly mothers who were not breast-feeding) could go to get fresh dairy products, specially prepared for infants and young children.

But the thing that disturbed me most about what Anastasia said, especially since it didn't seem to make any sense, was this: she said that in order for me to communicate with my son, I would have to achieve a certain purity of thought, i.e., cleanse my inner parts. Only it wasn't clear to me just *what* inner parts I should cleanse.

It would have been understandable if she'd said I should shave, or shouldn't smoke, when I visited the child, or I should wear clean clothing. But she goes and talks on and on about conscious awareness and inner purging. And just where do they sell the brush that I can purge anything *there* with? Anyway, what have I got inside me that's so dirty? Maybe I'm not better than others, but I'm no worse either. Hey, if every woman started making a demand like that on her man, you'd have to set up a bloody purgatory for all mankind! It's... it's illegitimate, that's what it is!

I brought along a clipping from the civil code, where it says that one parent has no right to deprive the other of seeing their child without due cause, even if the parents are divorced. Of course, our laws don't mean very much to Anastasia, but still, it's a pretty strong argument. After all, the majority of people do observe the law. I ought to be able to take a hard line with Anastasia, too. We should have equal rights to our child.

I had thought earlier of taking a harder line with her. But now I've had some doubts about my initial decision, and here's why. Along with everything else in my backpack, I had brought along some letters from readers. I didn't bring them all, because I keep getting so many. I wouldn't begin to have room for them all. Many of the readers care a great deal about Anastasia. They call her a messiah, a fairy of the taiga, a goddess; they dedicate songs and poems to her. And some of them address her as though she were their bosom friend. This flood of letters got me reconsidering my words and actions in respect to Anastasia.

I had about a three-hour wait sitting beside Yegorych's boat. It was already late in the afternoon when I saw two men approach in the company of Yegorych's grandson. The first was getting on in years, he looked to be at least sixty. He wore a cloth raincoat and rubber boots. He was red in the face, obviously tipsy, since he staggered slightly as he walked. The second was younger, around thirty, and had a strong build. As they came closer, I noticed streaks of grey in the younger Siberian's dark-blond hair. The elder of the two came up to me and said:

"Hello there, traveller! So, you're off to see Anastasia? We'll take you. It'll be five hundr'd thousand for the trip plus two bottles⁶ surcharge."

It was already clear to me that I wasn't the only one trying to reach Anastasia. That was why the price was so high. To them I was just another pilgrim on my way to Anastasia's habitat. But still I asked:

"How did you decide that I was going to see somebody named Anastasia, and not just to the village?"

"If you be goin' to the village or no, you'd better have the five hundr'd thousand ready. If you don't have the right amount, we won't take you there."

Yegorych's tone toward me wasn't exactly friendly.

They charge so much for the trip and yet don't talk very friendly, I thought. Why would that be?

Still, there was no alternative, and I had to accept the terms. But instead of being happy at all that money, and especially the two bottles of vodka he sent his young assistant to buy at the settlement, his attitude toward me only hardened. He sat down beside me on a rock and kept muttering to himself:

⁶*two bottles* — i.e., of vodka.

"To the village — what village? Six houses with people just barely alive — you call that a village? Who needs a village like that?"

"And do you often take visitors to see Anastasia? I'll bet you earn a pretty penny transporting them, eh?" I asked Yegorych, mostly to get a conversation going and soften his enmity. But Yegorych only answered in irritation:

"And who invited them to visit? We've got too many uninvited jerks barging in here. Nothing stops them. Did she invite them? Did she? No, she bloody well didn't! She told one bloke about her life. He goes and writes a book. Fine, write a book. But why give the location away? We never did. And here he meets with her once, and writes about her life, and gives the place away. That's something even females can understand: if you give it away, that's the end of her peace and quiet."

"Does that mean you've read the book about Anastasia?"

"I don't read books. Sashka,⁷ my workmate here, he's a real bookworm. Anyway, we can't get you to the village tonight. Too far. The motor on the boat's not too strong. We'll make it as far as a fisherman's hut, spend the night there. Tomorrow Sashka'll take you on, while I do a bit of fishing."

"All right," I agreed, thinking it was just as well Yegorych had no idea I was the one who wrote about Anastasia.

Sashka, Yegorych's assistant, arrived with the vodka. Then they put the fishing tackle into the boat, at which point Yegorych's grandson Vasya all but cut the trip short. He started asking Yegorych for money to buy a new radio receiver.

"I've already fixed up a pole with an antenna — I've figured out how to set it up," said Vasya. "And I've got the antenna wire already. All you have to do is plug the antenna into the receiver and you pick up a whole bunch of stations right off."

⁷*Sashka* — like *Sasha*, a diminutive of *Alexander*.

CHAPTER TWO



Money for crap?

“You see what a bright lad I have for a grandson!” Yegorych proudly declared with a warmth in his voice. “A healthy curiosity, a budding craftsman! Way to go, Vasya! We’d better give him some money.”

The hint was all too clear, and I started to pull out my wallet. But Vasya, encouraged by the words of praise, went on:

“I gotta listen to everything about the cosmonauts. Ours and the Americans’. When I grow up, I’m gonna be a cosmonaut.”

“What?! What’s that you said?!” Yegorych suddenly pricked up his ears.

“When I grow up, I’m gonna be a cosmonaut.”

“The hell you are, Vasya! You’re not gettin’ any money from me for that kind of crap!”

“That ain’t crap, no way, being a cosmonaut. Everybody likes cosmonauts. They’re heroes, they show them on TV. They’re always orbiting the Earth on their huge spaceships. They can talk with a whole lot of scientists right from space.”

“And what good does all that chatter do? They’re flying away up there, and in the meantime there’s less and less fish in the Ob.”

“The cosmonauts can tell everybody about the weather. They know ahead of everyone else what the weather will be like tomorrow anywhere in the world!” Vasya continued his defence of modern science.

“So what else is new? You go see Babka Martha.¹ Just ask Babka Martha and she’ll tell you what the weather will be

tomorrow and the day after and next year. She won't charge any money, not like your cosmonauts, eh? Those cosmonauts of yours are wasting Petya's² money. Your father's money."

"The cosmonauts get a lot of money from the state."

"And where d'ya think the state gets its money from? From where, dammit? It's from Petya, your father, that the state gets its money. I catch some fish and Petya later sells it in town. He wants to become this smart businessman, see, and the state tells him: 'Pay your taxes, give us all your money — after all, you know, we've got a lot of expenses.' And over in the Duma³ they just keep on fussin' and fussin', worse than a bunch of old biddies at a well. The way they've over-invented everything, they think they're the cat's whiskers! They've got all sorts of amenities, their own, clean bathrooms to go to, those smart asses, and meanwhile our river here gets dirtier and dirtier. You're not gonna get any money, Vasya, 'til you wash that nonsense of yours right out of your head. An' I won't make any more trips, I'm not gonna earn good money for crap like that."

Yegorych, probably because of his drunken state, got so angry he was just about ready to cancel the trip. Then he uncorked one of the vodkas Sashka had just brought from the settlement and took a drink straight from the bottle. After lighting a cigarette, he managed to calm down a bit, and we all climbed into the boat. So he ended up not giving Vasya any money and, instead, kept muttering something into his beard about 'crap' during the whole trip.

¹*Babka Martha* — the word *babka* in this sense refers to the local 'shaman' of the village, an old woman held to be knowledgeable in folk medicine and weather predictions.

²*Petya* — diminutive from *Petr* (pronounced *PYOTR*), the Russian equivalent of the name *Peter*.

³*Duma* — the national parliament of Russia.

The ageing motor sputtered noisily along. It was hard to make conversation above the din. We scarcely said a word until we reached an old hunter's hut with a single little window. The first stars appeared in the night sky. Having finished off en route the bottle he had begun at the point of departure, Yegorych muttered to his Sashka:

"I'm-m off to sleep. You make yourself comfy here by the fire or on the floor of the hut. When it gets light, take him to our spot."

Yegorych was already bending over to get through the tiny door of the hut, but all at once he turned around and repeated with an admonishing tone:

"To *our spot*! G-got it, Sashka?"

"Got it," Sashka calmly replied.

As we sat by the fire eating fish cooked over the coals, I asked Sashka a question about a phrase Yegorych had used which rather alarmed me.

"Alexander, can you tell me what this 'spot' of yours is where Yegorych told you to take me?"

"*Our spot* — that's on the opposite bank of the river from the village where you set out for Anastasia's glade," Alexander calmly replied.

"So *that's* it!" I exclaimed. "Here you go charging all this money, and you don't even take people where they need to go!"

"You're right, that's the way we do things. It's about all we *can* do for Anastasia, to make up for what we've done to her in the past."

"What have you done to her? And why are you confessing this to me? How can you take me to 'your spot' now?"

"I'll tie up the boat wherever you tell me to. As far as the money goes, I'll give you back my portion of it."

"So why do me a favour?"

"I recognised you. I recognised you right off, Vladimir Megré. I read your book and saw your photo on the cover.

I'll take you wherever you want. Only there's something I gotta tell you... You've got to listen calmly to what I say. An' think about it. You mustn't go into the taiga. You won't make it... Anastasia's gone. I think she's gone way back into some remote part. Or somewhere else — off into the unknown. You won't make it any more. You'll get yourself killed on the way. Or the hunters'll shoot you. The hunters won't tolerate any intruders on their lands. Intruders they deal with at a distance, so as not to subject themselves to unnecessary danger."

Alexander was outwardly calm as he spoke, only the stick he was stirring the embers with betrayed an awkward trembling, and the sparks flew up alarmingly into the night, like fireworks.

"Did something happen here? What was it? You recognised me, so tell me, what happened? Why did Anastasia go away?"

"I've been wanting to tell this myself," replied Alexander in a hushed voice. "I've been wanting to tell it to someone who will be able to understand. I don't even know where to begin so's you'll make sense of it... so's *I'll* make sense of it."

"Tell it simply like it is."

"Simply? You know, it's true, it's all really quite simple. Only it's so simple it's terrifying. Just hear me out calmly, if you can — don't interrupt."

"I'm not interrupting. Give me the gist of it. Don't drag it out."

CHAPTER THREE



Uninvited guests

Alexander began speaking quietly, the way Siberian people do, and yet at the same time there was no mistaking the feeling of inner tension in the heart of this young Siberian fellow already showing streaks of grey in his hair.

“When I read your book *Anastasia*, I was a post-graduate student at Moscow University. I was interested in philosophy and psychology. I studied Oriental religions, and was really immersed in my studies. And then along came Anastasia. Not in some far-away land, but right in my own neighbourhood — Siberia, where I was born. And I could feel the tremendous power, logic and significance in her words! I could feel a kindred spirit — something that really spoke to me! The foreign theories I had been studying paled in comparison to the extraordinary feelings that now welled up in me. I dropped my studies and rushed home, as though from darkness to light. I really wanted to see Anastasia and talk with her.

“I came home and began making trips with Yegorych in the boat to the place you describe in your book. Yegorych and I figured out just where it was. From time to time other people would come and want to meet with Anastasia and ask about this spot. But we never took them there. The local residents had sense enough to realise what was happening and not give encouragement to the ‘pilgrims’. But one time we — or, rather, I alone, without Yegorych — took a whole group of people to this place.”

“Why did you do that?”

"At the time it seemed like I was doing the right thing, something good. It was a party of six. Two of them were prominent scholars and, from what I could tell, they had considerable resources at their disposal. Or those backing them, the ones who sent them, had considerable resources. The other four in the party were their security guards, armed with pistols, and something else besides. And they had two-way radios. I was invited to accompany them as their guide. I agreed, but not because of the money.

"I had a long talk with them first. They didn't conceal the goal of their expedition — a meeting with Anastasia. Their leader was a grey-haired, pleasant-looking chap named Boris Moiseevich.¹ He realised that Anastasia, all by herself, could do more for science than many research institutes.

"They planned to take her out of the taiga and set her up in a nature preserve where she could live under conditions she was accustomed to. And they'd guarantee her protection. Boris Moiseevich told me that if *they* didn't do this, someone else would. And anything might happen. Anastasia was an extraordinary phenomenon, and they felt obliged to protect her and study her.

"Boris Moiseevich had an assistant named Stanislav, a bright young man who claimed to be in love with Anastasia, even though he had never met her in person. I agreed with their arguments. They hired a small ship from a co-operative. They had a truck deliver barrels of aviation fuel to the ship.

"When we arrived at the spot, they set up tents on a promontory and summoned a helicopter on their two-way radio. The 'copter was outfitted for aerial photography; it also had a video camera and some other unusual equipment. Every day

¹*Boris Moiseevich* — Here *Moiseevich* is a patronymic (derived from Boris' father Moisei), and not a surname. The use of his patronymic here, in contrast to Stanislav's first name used alone, indicates his position of seniority.

the helicopter would fly low over the taiga and take pictures, one quadrant after another.

"The two scientists made a daily examination of the pictures taken from the air. Occasionally they would travel on the helicopter themselves to a spot that interested them. They were looking for Anastasia's glade, where they planned to land the 'copter. I could only imagine the noise the 'copter would make landing in Anastasia's glade, scaring all the living creatures around. I remembered Anastasia had a baby and thought the roar from the 'copter might frighten him too.

"I tried to persuade the scientists that after determining the location of the glade they shouldn't set the 'copter down there. I proposed that once they determined the location they should draw up a map and go to the glade on foot. But Stanislav explained that Boris Moiseevich would find it difficult making the long trek through the taiga. Stanislav shared my concerns about disturbing the peace of the taiga residents, but assured me that Boris Moiseevich would be able to calm down both Anastasia and her baby. It all came to a head on the fourth day."

"What came to a head?"

"It happened when the 'copter flew off on a routine filming-and-photography trip, and we were busy back at our base. One of the guards noticed a lone female figure approaching our camp from the direction of the taiga. He reported this to Boris Moiseevich. Soon the whole camp was watching the woman approach. She was wearing a light cardigan and a long skirt, and the kerchief on her head was tied in such a way so that it covered her forehead and neck.

"We were standing together in a group, with Boris Moiseevich and Stanislav out in front. The woman came up to us. There was no fear or embarrassment showing in her face. And her eyes... She had the most extraordinary eyes — they looked at us tenderly, with kindness. And we could feel a

warmth from her gaze. It seemed as though she was looking not at our group as a whole but at each one of us individually. We were all overcome by a feeling of excitement we couldn't explain. It was as though we had forgotten about everything else and were simply drinking in this warmth, basking in it — the warmth radiating from those extraordinary eyes of hers. And nobody even invited her to sit down and rest from her journey.

"She was the first to speak. And with a calm and unusually tender voice she said:

"'Good afternoon, people.'

"And we stood there without uttering a word. Boris Moiseevich was the first to respond.

"'Hello,' he replied for all of us. 'Please tell us who you are.'

"'My name is Anastasia. I have come to you with a request. Please call off your helicopter. It is very harmful for these parts. You are looking for me. Here I am. I shall answer any of your questions I am able to.'

"'Yes, of course, we've been looking for you. Thank you for coming on your own. That takes care of so many problems,' Boris Moiseevich began. But he still didn't ask her to sit down, even though there was a table and folding chairs by the tent. Nor did he take Anastasia aside to talk with her privately. He too was most likely distracted by her unexpected appearance. He started in right away telling her about why we had come.

"'Yes, that's very good... You came to us on your own. It was you, in fact, we had come for. Don't worry, we'll call off the helicopter right away.'

"Boris Moiseevich at once ordered the senior guard to radio the 'copter pilot to return to base. The order was carried out immediately. Then he turned to Anastasia and began talking with her in a calmer and more even tone.

"Anastasia, the helicopter's coming now. You will climb aboard along with our colleagues. You will show our colleagues the glade where you live with your son. The 'copter will set down wherever you indicate, and you can fetch your boy. We'll take the two of you to a nature preserve near Moscow. Everything there will be arranged just as you say. That's only right. Nobody will disturb you there. The preserve is under twenty-four-hour guard, which will be reinforced once you settle in there. Just occasionally, scientists will come and talk with you at a time convenient for you. These people will be thoroughly prepared. You will find them interesting to talk to. And they will be most interested in your views on certain natural and social phenomena, as well as in your philosophy.

"If you like, we'll provide you with a worthy assistant. Someone who will be constantly at your side and can catch your inner meanings. In spite of his young years, he is already a prominent and talented scholar. Besides which he has fallen in love with you even before meeting you. The two of you, I think, will be worthy mates — you have the potential to become a fine, happy couple. He is worthy of you not only because of his scholarship but in his lifestyle too. Here he is.' And at this Boris Moiseevich turned in Stanislav's direction, and beckoned him over.

"Come along, Stanislav, don't dawdle! Introduce yourself.'

"Stanislav came over and stood facing Anastasia. He looked a little embarrassed as he started speaking.

"Well, it looks as though Boris Moiseevich has already proposed for me! I know this may seem a trifle unexpected for you, Anastasia, but I really am ready to ask for your hand. I am prepared to adopt your son and treat him as my own child. I am ready to help you in working out a host of problems, and I ask you to consider me a friend.'

"Stanislav made an elegant bow before Anastasia, then took her hand and kissed it. He presented a most handsome

and elegant appearance. And if only Anastasia had changed her clothes, they would really have looked like a most worthy and attractive couple.

"Anastasia replied to Stanislav in a tender, serious tone:

"I thank you for your kind attentions to me. Thank you for caring about me.' And then she added: 'If you really feel you are strong enough to share your love and make another person's life happier and more fulfilled, then remember — there may already be in your circle of women friends someone who is dissatisfied with her life, unhappy about something. Pay attention to her, love her, make her happy.'

"But I want to love *you*, Anastasia.'

"I am already happy with another. Do not waste your energies on me. There are women out there who need you more than I do.'

"Boris Moiseevich decided to come to Stanislav's aid.

"That other — is he the one whom you met with, Anastasia? No doubt you mean Vladimir. He's a long way from being the best example of our society.'

"Whatever you say about him, it will not change my feelings. I cannot control my feelings.'

"But why did you choose Vladimir to meet with in the first place? He's hardly what you could call either religious or scholarly, or even someone who leads a normal lifestyle. He's just an ordinary businessman. How did you happen to fall in love with him in particular?"

"At some point I began to realise," Alexander went on, "that Boris Moiseevich, Stanislav and the rest of the group had one clearly defined goal — to seize Anastasia, to take her by any means possible and use her only in their own interests, against her will. And it didn't matter whose idea it was — their own or on orders from somebody higher up, they would try their hardest to carry out their plan. And

nothing — not even the most persuasive arguments — would stop them.

“Perhaps Anastasia understood this, too. She could hardly be ignorant or unaware of their intentions. And still she continued treating the men standing before her as kind and decent people, even as friends. She spoke sincerely and forthrightly on the most sacred of topics, and it was her attitude and sincerity which restrained, or rather forestalled, violence. She was so ingenious at countering Boris Moiseevich’s and Stanislav’s attempts to cool her feelings toward you that she showed all their arguments against you to be patently absurd.

“People say a woman in love sees only the good in the one she loves, no matter what he does or who he may really be. But *her* arguments were of quite a different sort. After the first flurry of excitement over Anastasia’s appearance had passed, I was able to quietly switch on my tape recorder.

“Later I would often listen and analyse what Anastasia said. I remember it all. And that ‘all’ was enough to turn my whole consciousness upside down.”

“What turned your consciousness upside down?” I queried, wondering what Anastasia had said about me. And Alexander went on:

“When Boris Moiseevich asked: ‘How did you happen to fall in love with him in particular?’, Anastasia countered with a simple, direct reply:

“‘There is no point in asking me a question like that. Nobody who is in love can explain why they love the person they do. For every woman in love there will be only one man who is the best and most significant person in the world — and that is the one she has chosen. And my beloved is the very best one for me.’

“But still, Anastasia, you cannot fail to grasp the absurdity of your choice. Even if it happened spontaneously, it’s still

absurd. That first breath of passion should have been chilled by your will, your abilities, the logic of your mind. They should have shown you how unworthy this man was compared to others. Think about it, carefully.'

"When I think about it carefully I come to exactly the opposite conclusion. In this case any further reflection is a waste of time. It only adds to the mysterious inevitability of what took place. Better just accept everything as it is.'

"What, accept an absurdity? A paradox?"

"It only seems to be that way at first glance. You have made a long trip here from Moscow. You had quite a challenge getting to that spot on the riverbank. You ask questions about my love. But you do not seem to have grasped hold of another paradox — namely that this love can be better and more clearly explained by events that happened in Moscow. And it would have been better for you to reflect on them right there. It would have saved you coming all this way.'

"What kind of events happened in Moscow?"

"On the surface they are very simple. But only on the surface. Right after meeting with me, Vladimir, whom you call a simpleton, an unremarkable and even malicious person, abandoned everything and left Siberia to go to Moscow. He went there to keep his word to me — to organise a fellowship of purer-minded entrepreneurs. Even though he had no money left, he still acted.

"In Moscow there is a two-storey building at 14 Tokmakov Lane. That is where the people used to work who were in charge of the first association of entrepreneurs. Then the people in charge left and the association started to fall apart.

"Vladimir went in there and things started to pick up again in its empty offices, both the large and small ones. There he wrote various letters addressed to entrepreneurs. He worked in his office from early morning until late at night and even stayed there to sleep. People would come and see him or just

turn up and start helping him. They believed in him and what he was doing. I asked him to do this when he was with me in my glade here in the taiga. I told him how important it was.

“I worked out a plan of action and presented it to him. The goals were achievable, provided he carried out the plan in the order that had come to me in my dream. He was supposed to write the book first. And then use the book to explain a lot of things and spread information. It was the book that was to have found and brought together pure-minded entrepreneurs. And provide him with the funds for carrying out this plan.

“But Vladimir did everything the right way as *he* saw it. He hardly thought of me at all. He realised the significance of the plan and put it into practice. Only he did it *his* way, and changed the sequence.

“That way the goal was unachievable. He did not know this, and he acted with incredible persistence and resourcefulness. Other people who believed in the idea started helping him. The new entrepreneurs’ association very slowly began to sprout and grow in size. It was incredible, but things started moving just a wee bit. They were getting together. And these were pure-minded entrepreneurs. There is a list of their names and addresses — you can go check yourselves.’

“We looked at this list. It was published in the first edition of the book. But I’m sorry to have to disappoint you, Anastasia. It will be a disappointment! The list included such enterprises as *Kristall*, a Moscow distillery. Its product is incompatible with any concept of the divine.’

“Everything in the world is relative. And perhaps this *Kristall* is not so bad in comparison with some others. Besides, we are talking about thoughts pure enough to change *everything*. Today’s reality is the result of yesterday’s thinking.’

“I can agree with what you are saying there. Still, your Vladimir failed to organise a fellowship of pure-minded

entrepreneurs. I assure you, Anastasia, you've pinned your hopes on the wrong man.'

"After changing the sequence of events, Vladimir was unable to reach his goal. He did not have even the slightest opportunity or any funds to circulate information beyond Moscow. He came up against adverse circumstances and he lost the offices where he could have continued his work, he lost his means of communication as well as his sleeping quarters. He left the building in Tokmakov Lane, along with the little group of local people who were helping him. He could not afford to pay his assistants for their work. He left without a kopeck to his name. He had no place to live and not even any winter clothing. He had forsaken his family and been forsaken by his family. And do you know what he talked about with his little group of helpers as they headed for the metro along the icy streets? He talked about starting everything again from scratch. Even under those conditions he was working out a plan, trying to get something going. After all, he is an entrepreneur. They, his helpers, followed him; they listened to him and believed him. They loved him.'

"What for, if I may ask?"

"You go ask them, these Moscow people, what for — ask *them* what they found in him. Go to the building on Tokmakov Lane and ask the security guards there why each time they came on duty they would bring him some food in jars or wrapped in cloth, to give him a decent supper. They tried to do it in such a way so as not to offend him with their charity. These burly security guards, who did not have to answer to him, cooked borshch and other kinds of soup at home and brought it to him so he could have something of a home-made meal. They loved him. Why?"

"When you visit that building, go have a talk with the pretty woman who used to work as a secretary there. She is a former actress, she played the lead as the kind alien-girl in

the film *Cherez ternii k zvyozdam* (Through the thorns to the stars).² She played her very well. It was a good film, calling upon people to care for and love the Earth. Ask her why she, an employee of another firm in the same building, tried to help Vladimir inconspicuously — and she did help him. She was not *his* secretary, but she helped him. Why did she endeavour to bring my beloved coffee or tea for his lunch? She made it look as though it were her firm which was supplying her with the sugar, tea and biscuits. In fact she brought everything from her own home. She was not rich. She loved him. Why?

“At the same time he, Vladimir, was still losing his strength, he was dying. He was physically exhausted. But even on death’s doorstep he kept trying to reach his goal. He is an entrepreneur, after all. And his spirit is strong.’

“Anastasia, you’re talking in metaphors. What do you mean when you say he was dying? In an allegorical sense?”

“In a literal sense. When he was in Moscow, his flesh was just about dead for several days in a row. People in such a condition usually lie motionless. But he was up and about.’

“Possibly thanks to *you*, Anastasia?’

“All during those forty-two terrible hours I never ceased warming him with my ray, not even for a moment. But it was not enough. My ray could not retain life in a body if the spirit were weakening. But Vladimir’s spirit was fighting back. In its struggles his spirit did not notice death approaching. It helped the ray. Then other little rays came to the aid of my ray. They were altogether weak and unconscious, but they were there. These were the rays of those around Vladimir in Moscow — people who loved him.

²*Through the thorns to the stars* — a 1980 Russian science-fiction film, directed by Richard Viktorov, starring Yelena Metyolkina as the cloned alien Niya from the planet Dessa, rescued from a stranded alien spaceship by Russian cosmonauts.

“His practically dead flesh began to be filled with life. When confronted by sincere love, if it is strong enough, death retreats. The immortality of Man³ is in love, in his ability to ignite love within himself.”⁴

“I say, Anastasia: dead flesh can’t walk about. You’re still speaking in allegories, not scientifically.’

“The criteria of human science are always temporary. There are truths that are valid beyond the present moment.’

“But how then can modern scientists be convinced? We need results from objective measuring devices.’

“Fine. Go to the Kursk Terminal.⁵ There’s an automatic photo booth in one of the adjacent metro stations. During that bad period Vladimir had his picture taken for an I.D. card — one of those small colour prints. You may still be able to find it at the building at 42 Leninsky Prospekt. Or Vladimir himself might have it. Take a careful look, and you will see all the outward signs of a dead body; the automatic camera captured even the death spots on his face. But you will also see life in his eyes. And a fighting spirit.’

“And yet you were the only one who could rescue him, Anastasia. Tell me how it is that you ended up spending so much of your energies on *him*? Why?”

“I was not the only one who came to his rescue. Ask the three Moscow students why they rented an apartment for him at their own expense? When he finally realised the reason

³*Man* — Throughout the Ringing Cedars Series, the word *Man* with a capital *M* is used as the equivalent of the Russian word *chelovek*, including both male and female, as, for example, the word *man* is used in Genesis 1: 27 (see Translator’s Preface to Book 1).

⁴*within himself* — it is possible that ‘toward himself [on the part of others]’ may be intended in the original.

⁵*Kursk Terminal* — one of the major railway terminals in central Moscow — a modern structure with a glass façade, constructed in 1972. It is connected to three different metro (subway) stations.

he was failing and set about writing the book, why did they, right in the middle of an exam period and trying to earn more money wherever they could, spend their evenings keyboarding Vladimir's text into their computers? Why? You can ask the same question of many Moscow residents who were at Vladimir's side in his times of need. The solution to the mystery lies in them, not in me. Why did Moscow and her people help him and take care of him, why did they believe in him?

"The city of Moscow was also writing the book. I am thrilled with that city! I have fallen in love with it! No amount of roaring machines or senseless cataclysms devised by the technocratic world can nullify the embrace of kindness and love from the hearts of its people. Many, many residents of this city are reaching out for kindness and brightness — for love. Through all the bustle and the clamour of roaring machinery they feel its tremendous power and grace.'

"But, Anastasia, what you say is really incredible and overwhelming. It couldn't happen all by itself. Once again it shows the incredible scope of your abilities, the extraordinary possibilities of that ray you possess. You have evidently used it to enlighten the Moscow people who got in touch with Vladimir. You won't deny, now, that you did that? And that you were the one who made all these miracles happen!"

"Love is what makes miracles happen. And I did use my ray to make careful contact with all those in communication with Vladimir. But all I did was to give a bit of strengthening to the feelings of goodness, love and bright aspirations that they already had. I only strengthened what was in them already.

"And the book was published by Moscow. The first print-run was small and it was a pretty slim volume. But people started buying it. It quickly sold out. Far from distorting the events he had witnessed in the taiga, it honestly described the feelings he had experienced. In the eyes of many readers I

came out looking clever and good, while Vladimir appeared stupid and none too bright.

“People in their homes reading the book did not take into account that Vladimir was with me one on one in the remote Siberian taiga. Everything back then was still extremely unfamiliar to him. And I do not know who else could go so far into the taiga with no gear at all. Or how such a person would behave upon seeing what Vladimir saw. Vladimir was honest in the way he depicted everything. And yet for many people he began to look stupid. And here you are asking me: *Why did I choose him? And why do I love him so?*

“In the process of writing the book, Vladimir was already turning his thinking around on a great many things. He grasps everything very quickly. Anyone who has the opportunity of talking with him cannot fail to notice that. But he never tried to paint a rosy picture of his former self.”

CHAPTER FOUR



Chords of the Universe

“Anastasia spoke warmly about you,” Alexander continued. “She knew all about people and events. She told them that the first book you wrote came out in Moscow in a small print-run, and it immediately led to enthusiastic reviews, poetry, paintings and songs. She said that thanks to the sincerity of the writing, the book preserved the combinations and symbols she had sought out in the Universe, and these were what aroused the extraordinary beneficial, panacean feelings in people.

“When Boris Moiseevich heard that, he began fidgeting, and abruptly sat down at the table by the tent. I noticed he was surreptitiously trying to switch on a tape recorder. He was probably so caught up with the pursuit of important information that he completely forgot about everyone else around. He didn’t even offer Anastasia a chair, he was so bent on extracting as much information from her as he could, and quickly. This old grey-haired fellow was excited and fired off more questions:

““Scientists in many countries of the world are trying to capture the extraordinary sounds of the Universe with their costly specialised equipment. These sounds are out there. They are known to science. Maybe not all of them, just a few for the time being. Maybe just a billionth part of the whole. What devices do you use to capture them, Anastasia? What equipment will allow us to select the sounds that can exert an effective influence on the human mind?”

““The equipment one needs has existed for a long time already. It is called the human soul. The attitude and purity of the soul will accept or reject sounds from the Universe.”

“Okay, fine. Okay. Let’s assume. Let’s assume you’ve managed to... to find and select from the billions of sounds the best that the Universe has to offer, and then recombine them in the right way. But sound can only be reproduced with the help of a device or a particular musical instrument. What’s the point of a book, then? After all, it can’t make sounds.’

“You are right, a book does not make sounds. But it can serve as a score, like a musical score. The reader will involuntarily utter within himself any sounds he reads. Thus the hidden combinations in the text will resonate in the reader’s soul in their pristine form, with no distortion. They are bearers of Truth and healing. And they will fill the soul with inspiration. No artificial instrument is capable of reproducing what resonates in the soul.’

“How did Vladimir manage to preserve all your combinations if he himself knew nothing about them?”

“I took note of Vladimir’s speech patterns. Besides, I knew in advance that Vladimir would not distort the essence of the events or what he heard, that he would even present himself just the way he was. But he did not convey all the combinations of signs. He needed to carry on writing. After all, he set forth only a fraction of what he knew and was trying to make sense of when he started to write. He needed to continue with the writing.

“And he has already been touched by fame. An unprecedented fame at that. It would have taken only a little more effort to organise the fellowship of entrepreneurs. But then all of a sudden he took another step my dream did not anticipate. He left his Moscow apartment — on which the rent was already paid — to his Moscow entourage, he left to them the privilege of receiving compliments from readers, while he himself boarded a train and headed out of town.’

“Why did he do that?”

“He had been wanting all along to seek out confirmation of some of the things I had said — scientific confirmation of

the existence of various phenomena I had talked about. To investigate them. That is why he decided not to write any more for the time being. And so he went off to the Caucasus. He left Moscow to see the dolmens in the Caucasus with his own eyes — the ancient structures where living people went to die ten thousand years ago. I had told him about them. I also told him about the important functional significance these dolmens have for people living today.

“Vladimir came to the city known as Gelendzhik. In the museum there, along with museums in Krasnodar and Novorossiysk, he collected material on the dolmens.¹ Then he met with various scientists, archæologists and local ethnographers who were studying the dolmens. He ended up with considerably more information on them than was available in any one museum.

“Naturally I tried to help him inconspicuously. I used the mouths of people who came to see Vladimir to inculcate a good deal of new information in him, so that he would have the opportunity to make his conclusions. But he also did his part by acting quickly and decisively. This was after he had compared all the information he had gathered with what I had told him, after the archæologists had shown him the dolmen closest to the road and he discovered that there were others, but that they had fallen into ruin for lack of proper attention from the local residents. The local people had never been much interested in them.

“Vladimir then did something that might seem incredible. In three months he managed to change the attitude of the local residents toward the dolmens. They began bringing flowers. The women ethnographers of the Gelendzhik museum

¹*Gelendzhik, Krasnodar, Novorossiysk, dolmens* — See footnotes 1 and 2 in Book 1, Chapter 30: “Author’s message to readers”, as well as Book 2, Chapter 1: “Alien or Man?”.

set up a public association, which they called “Anastasia” in my honour. This association opened a school for tour-guides in order to get the right message out to tourists about the dolmens, so they would preserve and take care of the dolmens instead of destroying them. In addition, they began organising new tours, which they called “Excursions into reason”.²

“The tour-guides at Gelendzhik began telling everyone about the significance of our pristine origins and about the works of the Grand Creator — about Nature.’

“Anastasia, do you think this was all because of him? Didn’t you play a part here?”

“If I could have done as much as this without him, I would have done it long ago. I very much wanted to. It is in one of the distant dolmens in these mountains that my foremother’s flesh approached its death.’

“But how? How did one man, a nobody, manage to change people’s attitudes in so short a time? And how could he have set up such an active association? You say that the local residents had access to scientific materials and all sorts of publications, since people knew about them at the museums. But they didn’t pay attention.’

“That is correct: they knew about them but did not pay attention.’

“But why did they then listen to *him*? How did he manage to pull it off? You can’t change people’s consciousness *that* quickly.’

“But Vladimir did not know that. He did not know that consciousness cannot be changed quickly, and that is why he acted and, in fact, changed it. Go visit that city, ask the different people who joined this association. Find out how and why fortune smiled on Vladimir.

² According to the Association’s leader, Valentina Larionova, in the years since the organisation was established in 1996, over half a million visitors have visited the dolmens through this Association alone; the total number is much higher.

“I was thrilled by what was happening there. The “Anastasia Association”. He agreed to the name when they asked him about it. I thought he did it for me, that he was beginning to understand me and love me. And he really has managed to grasp a great deal, but he has not fallen in love with me. He has not done so because of my many mistakes and transgressions.

“I soon began to figure this out. I began to realise that my dream was actually coming true. And that people would indeed be transported across the dark forces’ window of time. And that people would be happy! What I dreamt about would come true, except that my love for him was not to be requited. And this was payment for the many mistakes I had made, my lack of perfection and my own insufficient purity of thought.’

“What happened? What made you come to that conclusion?’ Boris Moiseevich queried. ‘In any case, everybody’s known for a long time how coarse and uncivilised this fellow is. Believe me, Anastasia, as your senior and as the father of a family, I can tell you that your parents would not have approved of such a union.’

“I beg you, do not talk that way about one who is so dear to me. Regardless of how coarse Vladimir may appear to some people, I know differently.’

“What else is there to know about him? Everybody knows what kind of people entrepreneurs are,³ and he’s just a typical example of the species, that’s clear to all. Anastasia, I must say you have a rather biased opinion of Vladimir.’

“No matter, it is still my opinion. Besides, your assumption regarding my parents’ views is wrong.”

³Partly because of so many years of communist indoctrination, *entrepreneurs* in 1990s Russia were stereotyped as having low moral and ethical standards, interested primarily in their own enrichment at the expense of ordinary citizens.

CHAPTER FIVE



The spirit of a foremother

“I realised it one morning...’ Anastasia said quietly, and her gaze looked as though it were immersing itself in the past, ‘a morning when Vladimir was not at home in the flat he had rented temporarily. I could not find him with my ray. It was the morning of the day when my foremother went into a dolmen to die many centuries ago. I always think of her on that anniversary. I try to talk with her. And she talks with me. You people are accustomed as well to going to the cemetery on a day you remember your loved ones, to think about them, even talk with them. I can do this without leaving my glade. My ray helps me both see and talk at a distance, and they can feel my ray.

“On that day I was thinking about my foremother, trying to talk with her as usual, but I could not sense any reply from her. None at all. She was not responding to me. This had never happened before. Then I tried to locate her dolmen with my ray. I found it. I shone my ray upon it with all my might. My foremother did not respond. Something had happened I did not know about. My foremother’s spirit was not in the dolmen.’

“Anastasia, please explain what you mean by someone’s “spirit”. What does it consist of?”

“It consists of all the unseen elements in a Man, including certain passions and sensations acquired during the period of existence in the flesh.’

“Does the spirit possess an energy, analogous to any of the energies we know of?”

“That is correct. It is an energy complex, consisting of a multitude of different energies. After the end of a human individual’s fleshly existence, certain of these complexes break up into separate energies, which are subsequently used in plant and animal aggregates, as well as in essential natural phenomena.’

“What kind of power do they have? What is the energy potential of unbroken complexes?’

“They vary from individual to individual. The weakest ones cannot even overcome gravitational energy — they will later fall apart, no matter what.’

“Gravitational, you say? The weakest ones? Is it possible to see their presence in anything at all? To touch it? Feel it?’

“Of course. In a tornado, for example.’

“A tornado? You mean a tornado which rips trees up by the roots and overturns things? Then what kind of energy do the strongest ones have?’

“The strongest? Well, that would be *Him*. I cannot fully fathom the strength of His energy.’

“Then, let’s say, somewhere in between, something average?’

“The energy complex of many average spirits already contains a released mental energy.’

“What would be the strength or energy potential of an average complex like this?’

“I already told you: it contains released mental energy.’

“What does that mean? What can it be compared to? How would you define it?’

“To what can it be compared? A definition? Tell me, what is the most powerful energy that your mind, your thought or consciousness can imagine?’

“The energy of a nuclear explosion. No, rather, the energy of the reactions taking place at the Sun’s core.’

“Everything you have named is equivalent to but a tiny fraction of released mental energy. As for definitions, those

are things you think up yourselves to use in verbal communication with each other. Not a single definition you have ever thought of is applicable here. You can use the ones you are familiar with if you multiply them to the power of infinity.'

"Tell me, what is the strength of your foremother's energy?"

"It contains released mental energy.'

"How did you find out about your foremother? How and where did she die? After all, that happened ten thousand years ago!"

"That information — about my foremother who went into the dolmen to die — was passed down from generation to generation of her descendants.'

"Did your mother tell you about her?"

"I was only an infant when my mother perished. I was not capable of taking in that kind of information. My grandfather and great-grandfather told me all about my foremothers.'

"Can her spirit be seen with normal human vision?"

"Partially. If one changes one's spectral perception, along with one's inner rhythm.'

"Is that possible?"

"The phenomenon you know as *Daltonism*¹ suggests that it *is* possible. You believe it is something beyond the will of Man, that it is merely a disease, but that is not so.'

"You said your ancestor, your foremother, was worthy enough to have information about her transmitted from generation to generation over the millennia? What makes this information so worthy, so valuable?"

¹*Daltonism* — a red-green type of colour-blindness (also known as *deuteranopia* or *deuteranomaly*), named after English chemist and physicist John Dalton (1766–1814), who was also a teacher of mathematics and natural philosophy. His theory of colour-blindness was published in a paper entitled "Extraordinary facts relating to the vision of colours, with observation" (Manchester, 1798).

“My foremother was the last from our pristine origins who knew what a woman should think about during the breast-feeding of an infant and had the ability to do so. Civilisation was gradually losing sight of the knowledge people had ten thousand years ago, and it has all but disappeared completely today. My foremother was by no means an old woman, but she went into the dolmen to die in order to preserve all this knowledge of our pristine origins. And when people’s awareness begins to be restored, people will become aware of the need to transmit this knowledge to nursing mothers. And after that they will help each other learn everything. Through her death in the dolmen my foremother learnt even greater truths that women need to know.’

“‘Why did she decide to go into a dolmen? How does a dolmen differ from the usual kind of stone tomb? And why did she not wait until she was old before going into the dolmen to die? Was she motivated by an awareness of her goal, or simply by superstition?’

“‘Back then they had already begun paying less attention to the breast-feeding of infants and women were not offered the opportunity of entering a dolmen, even if they wished to. The ageing leader revered my foremother and comprehended that if *he* did not accede to her request, the leader-to-be would not listen to her at all, and her intentions he might well dismiss as mere fancy.

“‘But the menfolk could not be compelled by their leader to build my foremother a dolmen, and so he gave her his own. The men did not approve of the leader’s decision and refused to lift the stone slab covering the top so she could go in. So the women got together as one and all night long tried to lift the slab of heavy stone. The next morning at dawn the old leader came. He did not do much walking any more, yet still he came, leaning on a staff. The old leader smiled at the women, said some encouraging words, whereupon the heavy slab

yielded to the women's upward thrust, and my foremother went in.'

"And how does a dolmen differ from an ordinary stone tomb?"

"There is not much difference outwardly. But the dolmen, as you call this stone tomb, was a place where *living* people went to die. The dolmen was not simply a religious structure, as people tend to think today. It is a monument to wisdom and the great self-sacrifice of one's spirit for the sake of future generations. Even today it has a significant functional purpose. And the death experienced in one of these dolmens was not an ordinary one. Actually, the word *death* is not all that appropriate here.'

"I can imagine,' Boris Moiseevich said. 'A living person entombed in a stone chamber... That is really extraordinary — it must have been an extremely torturous death.'

"The people who went into the dolmens did not suffer. The peculiarity of their death lay in the fact that they meditated. They meditated on eternity, and in spirit they would remain forever on the Earth, and even hold on to certain earthly feelings. But the soul of those who went into a dolmen to die was forever deprived of the possibility of material re-embodiment on the Earth.'

"How did they meditate?"

"You are aware today — especially from the ancient Oriental religions — of what meditation is. And there are teachings today that can help one become acquainted with a small fraction of the phenomena of meditation, but not, unfortunately, with its underlying purpose. And today there are people who are capable of meditating — temporarily separating part of their spirit from their body and then returning it to the body. Through the help of meditation in the dolmen, even while the body was still alive, the spirit completely separated itself and returned many times, while the flesh was

still living. After that the spirit remained forever in the dolmen. All alone, it would eternally wait for visitors to impart to them the wisdom of our pristine origins. Even if the flesh succeeded in living a while longer, it was still cloistered. But while it was alive, the spirit had the freedom to travel back and forth between different dimensions, which afforded it the opportunity of analysing at incredible speed (according to your calculations) the truth that was available, as though clarifying the truth for itself.

“One who died, or entered into eternal meditation through the dolmen, knew that his soul or spirit would never again be able to take on a material form. It would never again be able to embody itself in earthly flesh, or matter. It would never be able to go far from the dolmen or leave it for any length of time, but it would have the ability to communicate with a particle of the soul of a person living in the flesh who had come to visit the dolmen. And if you talk about a torturous death, about suffering in general, in this case the torture lies in the fact that for millennia now nobody has come to acquire this knowledge. The great tragedy of the dolmens is the utter lack of demand. That same demand for which —’

“‘Anastasia,’ Boris Moiseevich interrupted, ‘how important do you feel it is for nursing mothers to have this knowledge and ability?’

“‘Extremely important,’ she replied.

“‘But why? After, all, mother’s milk feeds only the *flesh* of an infant.’

“‘Not only the flesh. It is capable of transmitting a huge quantity of information, as well as a keen sensitivity. You must be aware, after all, that every substance includes its own kind of information, its own radiance and vibration.’

“‘Yes, I know. But how can mother’s milk transmit sensitivity?’

“‘It can — it is extremely sensitive. It is inextricably linked to the feelings of the mother. The taste of the milk can change

according to her feelings. And stress can even cause the milk to congeal or stop coming altogether.'

"Yes, that can indeed happen. It can. And you say nobody comes to visit your foremother? That means nobody's come over many thousands of years?"

"At first people came. Mainly the generations of relatives and people living there. After that a series of cataclysms began happening on the Earth. People began migrating. The dolmen remained where it was. But over the past millennia nobody has come to visit my foremother to find out... Now the dolmens are all being laid waste. Because people do not know.

"In the taiga, when I first told Vladimir about the dolmens and my foremother, he said that perhaps he would go visit her dolmen. Then I explained how it was impossible for him to comprehend or feel my foremother's spirit and accept the information she had to give. Men simply do not know the feelings and sensations inherent in a nursing mother. All these millennia my foremother has been waiting for women, not men, to come see her. But no women have come to her dolmen. And I am the only one to communicate with her, once a year. And on that particular day I wanted to be in contact with her, and tell her something good. But I could not. My foremother's spirit was not anywhere close to the dolmen. I had no idea why, and began quickly searching with my ray all around, in a constantly widening radius. And then all at once: I found her! I found her! In a ravine among the rocks.

"Vladimir was lying on the rocks unconscious. And my foremother, her spirit, was bending over Vladimir, taking form as a conglomeration of invisible energies. I realised then what had happened. I had known even earlier that Vladimir was looking for guides to take him to the dolmens located far away from the main road. But he could not find any. No one would volunteer to accompany him. And so Vladimir decided to go into the mountains alone. At one point he fell off the

path into a ravine. He was wearing ordinary shoes — not suitable for mountain hiking. In fact, he did not have any mountain gear at all.

“He wanted to be convinced that the dolmens really existed, he wanted to touch them. And so he went into the mountains alone. On my foremother’s memorial day he went to the dolmens located far away from the road. My foremother did not know why this poorly equipped person had come into the mountains. And she kept her eye on him. And when he slipped and started falling, she suddenly... Like a supple mass of air her spirit swept down to his side.

“My foremother saved Vladimir’s life. While he did not actually strike his head on a rock, the many bruises he received in the fall caused him to lose consciousness. My foremother used her supple air mass to hold up his head, as though supporting it with her hands, and waited for him to regain consciousness. That was why she did not speak with me. Even when Vladimir’s consciousness returned, she still did not go back to her dolmen. She remained in the ravine down below. She stayed to watch as Vladimir climbed back up to the path.

“Later I realised that my foremother was actually on the path, since stones began rolling out of the way. That was her doing. She had taken on the form of a supple breeze, sweeping the stones away from the mountain path. She wanted to help Vladimir in his descent. I very much wanted to do the same. And so I began to ever so quickly move along the path with my ray, so that it wouldn’t be so wet and slippery and Vladimir could get safely back to the place he was staying and treat his wounds.

“Once Vladimir had climbed back up from the ravine, he sat down on the path and examined the sketch one of the archaeologists at the Novorossiysk Museum had drawn for him. Then he got up and started walking, with a limp. But

not downward, along the dry path that had now been cleared of stones, but the opposite way: upward. I was shocked at this unexpected turn of events, and I believe my foremother did not immediately grasp his intentions either. At this point he left the path altogether and clambered through a thicket of thorny bushes.

“I realised he was trying to reach my foremother’s dolmen. He succeeded. He sat down on the portico in front of the dolmen, at the edge of one of the stone slabs, and began unbuttoning his jacket. His arm hurt and it took him a long time. When his jacket was completely unbuttoned I could see he had a bouquet of flowers underneath. Three little roses. The stems of two of them were broken. The flowers had been damaged when he fell into the ravine and struck the rocks. Some of the thorns on the stems were blood-covered. He placed the damaged roses on the dolmen’s portico and lit a cigarette. And then he said:

““Too bad the flowers got smashed. These flowers are for you, my beauty. You must have been a real beauty, just like Anastasia. You were smart, and kind. You wanted to tell our women all about breast-feeding children. Only they have no idea you exist. And the fact that your dolmen is so far off the beaten path makes it difficult for women to get here.”

“Then Vladimir took out a shallow little flask of brandy and two little metal goblets, and pulled out a fistful of squashed candies from his pocket. He poured brandy into the goblets. He drank one of them, placed the other on the dolmen’s portico, covering it with a piece of candy, and said: “This is for you, my beauty!”

“Vladimir did everything people do today at cemeteries when they come to see their loved ones or dear friends. As for my foremother... Her spirit kept sweeping around him in the form of an invisible energy mass. She was distraught, and did not know what to do. She tried to show some kind

of response to Vladimir's words, tried congealing the air into the shape of her body, but her outlines were transparent and barely noticeable. Vladimir did not notice them. He could not see or hear anything. She kept on trying her best to explain everything to him, but could only sweep back and forth in frustration.

"At one point her air mass lightly touched the goblet sitting on the portico and overturned it. Vladimir thought a random gust of wind had done this, and joked:

"“Hey, what're you up to, my wayward friend — spilling expensive brandy like that?”

"And my foremother's spirit fell still in a corner of the dolmen. Vladimir poured some more brandy, placed a little stone on top, and then put another piece of candy on top of that. And again he started talking, as though to himself:

"“We need to get a decent pathway in here. Just wait a bit. There will be a proper path to your dolmen. And that way women will come to see you. You will tell them everything they need to think about in breast-feeding an infant. Indeed, you must have had very beautiful breasts.”

"Then Vladimir started his descent. It was late at night when he got back to the place he was staying. He sat for a while alone on the sofa in his cold apartment, binding his wounds and watching a videocassette. Someone had given him a tape to watch which had been copied and passed around by people in various places.

"On the tape there was a speaker in front of a large audience made up mainly of women. He was talking about God and how strong the spirit of a righteous Man could be. Then he started talking about me. He said I was an ideal woman — a role model to which people should aspire. He said that I had great strength of mind and spirit and that I was aided by the forces of Light, and that now, once I became familiar with the lives of people in the usual world, I would be able to help them.

“He said a lot of nice things about me. And then, all at once... He said that I had not yet met a real man. And that the one I had been in contact with was not a real man. Indeed, others had been saying earlier that there was a young man in Australia who was worthy of me, that he and I would meet, and then I would meet a real man.

“And Vladimir, he... You see — he was sitting all alone there, listening to this. All this time he was trying with one hand to bind the wounds on his legs. His other hand still hurt too much from the bruises. I reached out to Vladimir at once with my ray. I wanted to warm his wounds, and chase his pain away. And to tell him... Somehow tell him... Even though he never hears me when I speak to him at a distance, I thought, well, this time it might work out... Yes, I thought it might work out this time since my longing for him to hear me was so strong. I wanted him to hear how I loved him! Only him. And only *he* — my dearest — only *he* is a real man.

“But I got burnt and thrown back on the ground. Something was preventing my ray from getting through to Vladimir. Once again I quickly aimed my ray at the room where he was sitting watching the video, and you know what I saw? There in front of him was this invisible energy mass — my foremother was kneeling right in front of him. Vladimir could not see or hear her. He just kept watching the tape. In the meantime my foremother was warming the wounds on Vladimir’s legs with her breath, as he was pouring this terribly painful cologne on his wounds. And my foremother tried speaking to him, but he was unable to hear.

“My foremother is so strong in spirit that nothing invisible could penetrate her. Any psychotropic weapons trained on her will explode. She will hardly pay them any attention. In any case any attack will be repelled. And there was no way I could interfere. I could only watch...

“I watched and began thinking ever so quickly. What had happened? How did a situation like this come about? Why was the speaker saying such things? Did he want to help me? Was he trying to explain something? If so, what? Why was my ray so drawn to Vladimir? Naturally I was afraid that Vladimir might take offence at the words “not a real man” and that he would be jealous of another over me. And then suddenly... O, how painful it was! It really hurt. After Vladimir had heard the whole tape, he simply sighed and said: “Whaddya know, a real man! In Australia, I heard, eh? They are going to meet. Maybe then they will give me my son.”

“My ray began trembling. It was as though everything had somehow gone dark. You see? Vladimir was not jealous. Naturally that is not a good feeling — jealousy. But I wanted to see him jealous, at least a little. Just a teeny-weeny bit. But here was Vladimir handing me over to another with complete indifference.

“I could not restrain myself and started to cry. I began asking, pleading with my foremother to tell me what I had done wrong. What mistake had I made? Where had I transgressed? She did not reply until Vladimir had finished binding the last wound. Then she told me sadly:

““All you had to do was love, daughter dear. To think about what was good for your beloved without elevating yourself in the process.”

“I tried to explain that I did really want only what was good. But once again she quietly said:

““You wanted something for *yourself*, daughter dear — pictures, music, poems and songs! It will all come to pass — your dream is powerful. I know. It is for everyone and for the one you love, too, but now it will be more and more difficult for you to obtain *earthly* love. You are becoming a star, daughter dear. People may admire and love a star as a star, but not as a woman.”

“That was the last thing my foremother said. I lost my sense of self-control, I screamed and tried to explain, to argue

that I did not want to be a star, that I simply wanted to be a woman and to be loved! But nobody could hear me.

“Please help me! There is a lot I now understand. I am not afraid for myself — I can take care of myself. But it will take Vladimir much longer to understand... And in the meantime listening to that kind of talk is leading him away from Truth.

“The distribution of that cassette must be stopped. It suggests to people, including Vladimir, that I am some sort of ideal role model, a star, and that someone else instead of him ought to be with me.

“I am not a star. I am a woman. I want to love whom I myself want to love.

“My path is not determined by me alone.

“I was mistaken. I dreamt things would work out so that people would talk about me, dedicate verses and songs to me, that artists would draw me... And that has all come about.

“Whenever I dream, my dreams all come true. And this one has, too. I am grateful for the verses and songs. I am grateful to the poets. But I was mistaken all along. That was how I dreamt it. The poems are needed! But I was not supposed to become a star.

“I wanted all that so Vladimir would look at the images, listen to the songs, and remember. So he would remember me. But I did not know this when I was dreaming it. Now I realise — I am becoming a star. Everyone looks up to stars. But it is a *woman* they love.’

“Anastasia, do you realise what you’re asking for? There’s no way to stop a cassette from being distributed, especially when it’s one people copy themselves. That’s not something you can control. Nobody can.’

“You see? *You* cannot. But *Vladimir*... He is an entrepreneur. And even if it is said to be uncontrollable, *he* could still do something. But he does not want to do anything. He is resigned to the assumption that I am not a suitable mate for him.”

CHAPTER SIX



Forces of Light

“Boris Moiseevich,” Alexander continued, “forgot about everything else and went on plying Anastasia with questions, such as:

“‘What are the forces of Light?’

“‘These,’ Anastasia replied, ‘are all the bright thoughts ever produced by people. All space is filled with them.’

“‘Can you freely communicate with them? Can you see them?’

“‘Yes, I can.’

“‘Can you answer any question confronting science today?’

“‘Many of them, perhaps. But every scientist — indeed, every Man — can find the answers. Everything depends upon the purity of one’s thoughts, and the motive for asking.’

“‘Could you explain certain phenomena for science?’

“‘If the answer does not come to you, it means your thoughts are not sufficiently pure. Such is the law of the Creator. I will not go against it, if I feel it is not right to tell you.’

“‘Is there something higher than the bright thoughts produced by Man?’

“‘There is. But they are just as significant.’

“‘What is it? How could you define it?’

“‘In a way you are capable of relating to.’

“‘Are you able to talk with Him?’

“‘Yes. At least sometimes. As far as I know, I talk directly with Him.’

“‘Is there some kind of energy that exists in the Universe that we don’t know about on the Earth?’

“The greatest energy in the Universe is on the Earth. We need only to understand it.’

“Can you, Anastasia, give me at least an approximate description of this energy? Is it like a nuclear reaction? A vacuum phenomenon?’

“The most powerful energy in the Universe is the energy of Pure Love.’

“I’m talking about visible, tangible energy, capable of influencing technical progress, of producing heat and light. And, if you like, an explosion.’

“And I am talking about the same thing. All your humanly established installations, taken together, are not able to supply light to the Earth for any length of time. But the energy of Love *can*.’

“There you go talking allegorically again. In some other, metaphorical sense.’

“I am talking in a literal sense, as *you* understand it.’

“But love is a feeling! It’s not something visible — it can’t be applied, or even seen.’

“Love is energy. It is reflected. It *is* possible to see it.’

“Where is it reflected? How is it possible to see it?’

“The Sun, the stars, the visible planets — they are all but reflectors of this energy. The light of the Sun, which gives life to everything on the Earth, is created by human love. In the whole Universe the energy of Love is reproduced only in the soul of Man. It takes upward flight, becomes filtered and reflected, and pours itself forth from the planets of the Universe as beneficial light upon the Earth.’

“Do not combustive, chemical reactions take place on the Sun all on their own?’

“You only have to do a little reasoning to realise the falsity of such a conclusion. It is like, as you put it, “two-plus-two”.’

“Can Man control this energy?’

“Not to any significant degree, at least for the time being.’

“But do you know how to do it?”

“Myself, I do not know. If I knew, my beloved would already love me.”

“You say you can communicate with *Him* — a Being higher than the forces of Light? Does He always answer you? I mean, willingly?”

“Always. And He always answers very gently. Because He could not do otherwise.”

“Could you ask Him how to control the energy of Love?”

“I did ask.”

“And?”

“To comprehend certain answers of His, one needs to have a certain level of conscious awareness and purity, which I myself do not have. I do not understand all His answers.”

“But you will still attempt to do something to obtain this requited love?”

“Of course I shall do something.”

“What will you do?”

“I shall think. Help me. I need to ask all the women out there who have ever loved, all who have or have not been loved. They will think, analyse and produce thoughts which will appear in the dimension of the forces of Light. I shall see them. I shall understand and then I shall help everyone. Thoughts in the dimension of Light are always comprehensible.”

“Anastasia, we can’t put a question to all the women of the world at once. Nobody can do that.”

“Then ask Vladimir. He will figure out how to do it, he will find a way. But he will not do it just for me. You will have to persuade him that this is very important for all people, for him. If he feels how important it is, he will definitely do something. He will find a way of asking all the women at once.”

“You believe so strongly in him. Why then has he not been able to love you in return?”

“He is not to blame. I am to blame. I made many mistakes. Possibly I was in a hurry and made myself appear too fantastic to him with my abilities. Possibly he is not yet able to appreciate why his son has to be raised in surroundings that seem unusual for human beings — that is, in the forest. Possibly I should not have interfered so drastically with his customary habits, not have intruded on his conscious awareness. I know now that men really do not like that. They can even beat women for that. I should probably have waited and he would have come to understand it all on his own. He should have felt that he is superior to me at least in something.

“But I did not realise this in time. I told him that he could not see his son until he purified himself. At that moment I was thinking only of our son, about what was best for him, and I inadvertently said it would not be good for him to see his father as a dimwit. So it turned out that *I* was the altogether clever one, and my beloved was stupid. What kind of requited love could I dream about after that?”

“Why then do you need to ask other women, if you are so capable of analysing things yourself?”

“I need to determine whether there really is a possibility of setting everything right. I cannot determine this by myself, I am so emotionally wrought whenever I think about him. The analysis needs to be carried out calmly, through reminiscence and comparison. But I have nothing to reminisce about except him.”

“And can you talk with him?”

“I feel mere words are useless. Real love does not come out of words. Some kind of actions are required. But which ones? Perhaps one of the women will have the experience and the needed answer?”

“And you are unable to reach him with your ray?”

“I cannot even touch him now with my ray. My foremother’s spirit is often right beside him. And she will not permit it. I know why.”

CHAPTER SEVEN



Assault!

"The helicopter was coming in for a landing," Alexander went on. "We all watched it land without saying a word. The two crewmen got out, came over to where we were standing and fixed their eyes too on Anastasia. A group of armed, robust fellows silently stood watching this lone figure in an old cardigan standing before them, and immediately it was clear to all: they must capture this woman. The only question was: what was the most accommodating way to make the capture? After a long pause Boris Moiseevich laid it down in black and white:

"Anastasia, you realise you represent a valuable resource for science. The decision has already been made to transfer you to the nature preserve near Moscow. This is necessary for your own good, among other things. If for some reason you don't understand the situation and refuse to come voluntarily, we shall be obliged to effect the transfer by force.

"Naturally you will want to have your child with you in your new place. You show us the location of your glade on the map and the helicopter will go fetch your son. Later we can capture a few of the animals and transport them to your new dwelling-place. I repeat: all this is necessary for your own benefit, for the benefit of your son and other people as well. You *do* want to bring benefit to people, don't you?"

"Yes," Anastasia replied calmly, and right away added: "Everything I know I am ready to share with all people, if they find it interesting, but only with *all* people. Science is not something that is available to everybody at once. Its

achievements are used first only by localised groups, often for their selfish, personal interests. The vast majority get to know about only what the localised groups are disposed to reveal.

“Who do you represent? Is it not a particular localised group? I cannot go with you. I need to raise a Man, I need to raise my son. That can only be done properly where a Space of Love has been created. This Space has been created and perfected by my forebears, near and distant. It is still small, but it is what ties me to the whole substance of the Universe. Every Man must create around himself his own Space of Love, and offer it to his child. Bearing children without preparing a Space of Love for them is criminal. Every Man must create around himself a small Space of Love. And if everyone understood this and acted upon it, then the whole Earth would become the brightest focus of Love in the Universe. This is the way He wanted it, and this is Man’s purpose. For only Man is capable of creating such a Space.’

“Two strong security men approached Anastasia from behind, one on either side. It wasn’t clear whether they were acting on orders from the security captain or whether it had all been planned out in advance. They exchanged glances and simultaneously grabbed Anastasia’s arms. They did this quite professionally, though not without a certain degree of apprehension. They kept a tight grip on her arms, as though holding a captured bird by its outspread wings.

“The security captain was a stocky fellow, his hair cut real short. He stepped out in front and stood beside Boris Moiseevich. Anastasia’s face showed no sign of fear. But she was no longer looking at us. Her head was slightly inclined toward the ground, her eyelids were lowered, hiding her gaze. And she began to speak without raising her eyes, with the same calm and gentleness in her voice as before.

“Please do not use force. It is dangerous.’

“For whom?” the security captain enquired in a raspy voice.

“For you. And it would be unpleasant for me.”

“Boris Moiseevich tried to restrain what may have been either his fear or his excitement. He asked Anastasia:

“Can you cause us physical pain using supernatural abilities?”

“I am Man. A Man, like anybody else. But I am worried. Worry may allow undesirable things to happen.”

“Such as?”

“Matter... cells... atoms... nuclei... nuclear particles in chaotic movement... You know about them. If one visualises them vividly and in full detail, perceives and understands them properly, and then uses the full powers of one’s imagination to extract from the nucleus even a single chaotically moving particle, then the matter begins... begins to...”

“Anastasia turned her head to one side, lifted her eyelids just slightly and fixed her gaze on a stone lying on the ground. The stone immediately began to break apart into small particles and before long was transformed into a pile of sand. Then she raised her gaze to the security captain, squinting her eyes into a concentrated stare. Steam began to escape from the tip of the security captain’s left ear. The tendon slowly, millimetre by millimetre, began to disappear, and suddenly the young guard standing beside him went white with fear and drew his pistol from its holster. He did it automatically, like a professional soldier, without thinking. He aimed the pistol directly at Anastasia and discharged the whole cartridge.

“No doubt the thoughts of each one of us at that moment were racing at top speed, and something happened which you occasionally hear about with soldiers in wartime, when in extreme conditions they see a grenade or a bullet in motion. And even though the grenade or bullet is flying at its usual speed, the acceleration of one’s thinking and perceptive faculties causes it to be seen as in slow motion.

“I watched as the bullets from the frightened security guard’s gun flew at Anastasia one after another. The first

bullet grazed her temple. The rest of the bullets never reached her — they dissolved into dust while still in flight, just like the stone which she had trained her gaze upon earlier.

“We all stood there stupefied. We stood and watched as a stream of blood flowed down Anastasia’s cheek from under her kerchief.

“The guards holding Anastasia by the arms stepped back from her when they heard the gunshots, but didn’t let go of her. They had got her in a death-grip, and were pulling her in opposite directions.

“All at once a pale-bluish glow flooded the ground around us. It came from somewhere up above and quickly intensified. It dazzled us, making us incapable of moving or speaking. In the unusual quiet that followed we heard Anastasia say:

“Please, let go my arms. I may not be able to... Let go, please.’

“But the petrified guards did not let go their death-grip. Now I realise why she raised her arm in a characteristic gesture when she was talking with you. It was this gesture that indicated to someone up above that everything was in order and that she did not need help. But this time they wouldn’t let her raise her arm.

“The bluish glow continued to intensify, then something seemed to sparkle, and we saw — we saw a fiery sphere hanging over us, pulsating with a pale-blue light. It was like a huge ball lightning. And inside it were sparkling networks of hundreds of lightning discharges. Occasionally they would spark out beyond the blue membrane-like hull and reach the tops of the nearby trees, or even the flowers beneath our feet, but caused them no harm. One of the thin lightning bolts momentarily made contact with an obstruction which rocks and a fallen tree had made in the creek; it transformed the obstruction into a cloud of dust which instantly vaporised.

"The bolts that sparked out beyond the blue hull of the fiery sphere no doubt possessed tremendous power of an energy we know nothing about. It seemed as though it was being controlled by some kind of intelligence.

"We had the impression of being in the presence of an intelligent being which possessed unimaginable power. But the most incredible and unnatural thing about what was taking place were the sensations we felt from its presence. We had no sense of fear or suspicion — on the contrary...

"You can just imagine — right there in a situation like that we began to feel a sense of calm and grace, as though something very close to us, something related to us, had suddenly appeared.

"At that point the pulsating blue sphere soared over our heads and seemed to be studying us, sizing up the situation. All at once it made a circle in the air and landed at Anastasia's feet. The bluish glow intensified and, like a pleasing languor, relaxed us to the point where we simply didn't feel like moving, or even hearing or saying anything.

"The blue hull of the sphere then emitted several fiery bolts at once. They swept over to Anastasia, began touching her, as though stroking the toes of her bare feet.

"Anastasia managed to free her arms from the languishing security guards. She stretched out her arms toward the sphere. Immediately it rose to the level of her face, and the lightning bolts, which we had seen with our eyes turn to dust the stones piled up in the creek, began to fondle her arms, while doing them no harm.

"Anastasia began talking with the sphere. We couldn't distinguish any words but, judging by her gestures and facial expression, she was trying to explain something to it, to prove or persuade it of the way she was seeing something, but without success. The sphere gave no response to her, but it was nevertheless clear that it was not agreeing with her. This

much was evident, since Anastasia went on trying to persuade it with considerable excitement. It was the excitement that no doubt caused her cheeks to flush. Still talking away, she removed her kerchief. Golden wheat-coloured braids of hair hung about Anastasia's shoulders and covered the stream of dried blood on her face. We saw how perfectly beautiful her facial features were.

"The fiery sphere made several revolutions, like a comet, around Anastasia's head, then stopped once more in front of her face, and a thousand delicate lightning bolts swept through her golden hair, neatly touching each individual strand, lifting and stroking them. One of the bolts lifted a whole bunch of strands at once and opened the bullet wound in her temple, while another bolt began gliding along the traces of the dried blood. It was as though the sphere was using the actions of its lightning bolts in place of words to remind Anastasia about what had happened and to contradict her arguments.

"Finally all the little bolts drew back inside the sphere. Anastasia lowered her head and fell silent. The sphere made one more revolution around her and then rose into the air. The bluish glow decreased in intensity, and we felt things gradually return toward the way they were before, but instead of the bluish light a brown smoke now began rising from the earth. This smoke filled the whole space around us, and only Anastasia remained in a little circle of blue. And when this brownish smoke completely enveloped us, that was when we began to discover what hell really is."

CHAPTER EIGHT



What hell is

“Old Bible pictures showing the beastly torture of sinners over hot coals, and even the most extreme portrayals of horror-film monsters, pale like children’s innocent fairy-tales in comparison to the hell we went through there on the riverbank!” Alexander exclaimed. “Since the beginning of time mankind has never managed to dream up anything that can compare with it. All the Bible images and horror films stop at depicting all the different ways fleshly bodies can be torn apart and dismembered, which is nothing by comparison with real hell.”

“But what could be more frightful than the acute torturing of the flesh?” I queried. “What kind of hell did you see?”

“Once the blue glow had weakened sufficiently to allow the brownish smoke to rise from the earth and it had enveloped us completely from head to toe, we found ourselves split into two halves.”

“What two halves?”

“Just imagine — I suddenly found myself comprised of two component parts. The first was my body, enveloped in a transparent skin through which I could see all my internal organs — my heart, stomach, intestines, the blood rushing through my veins, along with various other organs. The other part — invisible — consisted of my feelings, my emotions, my mind, my desires, my pain sensibility — in other words, everything about Man that you can’t see.”

“What’s the difference whether the parts are together or separated, as long as it’s still you? What happened to you that was so awful, aside from seeing your skin transparent?”

"The difference turned out to be incredibly significant. The thing is, our bodies began to act on their own, independently of our minds, wills, aspirations or desires. We could observe the actions of our bodies from an external viewpoint, yet our feelings and pain sensibilities remained with our invisible selves, and we were deprived of any ability to influence the actions of our own bodies."

"Like someone who's terribly drunk?"

"Drunks don't see themselves externally, at least not while they're drunk, whereas we saw and felt everything. Our clarity of consciousness was extraordinarily acute. I could see how beautiful the grass, the flowers and the river looked. I could hear the birds singing and the creek burbling away, I could feel the cleanness of the air around me, along with the warmth of the sunbeams. But those bodies... All the transparent bodies standing in our group suddenly trotted down, like a herd of sheep, to a pond formed by the creek.

"The pond resembled a little lake, the water in it was clear and transparent, the bottom was covered with soft sand and beautiful stones. Tiny fish were swimming in it. Our bodies ran down to this splendid little lake and started splashing around in it. They started urinating and defecating in it.

"The water became dirty and clouded, yet our bodies began drinking from it. I saw the dirty, stinking liquid flow through my intestines and into my stomach. I was overcome with a sensation of nausea and revulsion.

"Then under one of the trees by the pond all at once appeared the naked bodies of two women. Their skin was just as transparent as that of our bodies.

"The women's bodies lay down on the grass under the tree, lolling about and stretching out in the warm sunshine. My body and that of the security captain ran over to the women's bodies.

"My body began stroking one of the women's bodies, it felt a responding caress and entered into sexual intercourse with the woman's body. The security captain's approach was not reciprocated and his body started raping the woman. Then one of the guards came running over and started hitting first my spine and then my head with a rock, but it was I, and not my body, that felt excruciating pain. The guard dragged my body away from the woman's and started raping her himself.

"Our bodies soon began to grow old and decrepit. It was as though time was accelerating everything. The woman that had just been raped now became pregnant, and through her transparent skin you could see the embryo taking form and enlarging itself in the womb.

"The body of the scientist, Boris Moiseevich, went over to the pregnant woman, and spent some time peering attentively through her transparent skin at the developing embryo. Then all of a sudden he slipped his hand into the woman's vagina, and began wrenching out the foetus.

"In the meantime, Stanislav's body was quickly collecting rocks into a pile, then wildly breaking off small trees and using them, along with any other materials he found handy, to construct something resembling a cabin. My body went over to help. When the cabin was just about finished, my body tried to kick Stanislav's body out of the cabin; he resisted and our bodies started fighting with each other.

"Even though I myself was invisible, I could still feel terrible pain when he started hitting the legs and head of my body. Our fight caught the attention of the other bodies, and they shoved us both out of the cabin, and then started fighting for it amongst themselves. My body became terribly frail and began decomposing before my very eyes. It could no longer walk, and just lay there under a bush, wasting away with a nauseating stench. Worms appeared on my body, and I could feel them crawling all over me, creeping into my internal organs

and eating away at them. I acutely felt them gnawing away at my insides, and awaited the final decomposition of my body to escape from this excruciating torture.

"Then all at once a foetus emerged from the second woman that had been raped. It began to grow right before my eyes. Soon the little fellow stood up and took its first timid step, then another, then it staggered and fell on its bottom. I could feel a painful sensation as it landed, and I realised to my horror that this was my new body and it was doomed to survive — to exist among these abominable, brainless bodies, which were desecrating themselves and everything around.

"I realised that I, who was invisible, would never die and that I was condemned to eternal contemplation and an acute awareness of the nastiness of everything that was going on, experiencing physical and even more terrible pain.

"The same thing was happening with the other bodies. They decayed, decomposed and were born again, and with each new birth our bodies simply switched roles.

"There was hardly any vegetation left around. In its place ugly structures had appeared, and the once pristine pond had been transformed into a stinking cesspool."

Alexander fell silent. I too felt a sense of revulsion from what he had said, but not pity.

"Indeed," I said, "you all went through a horrible experience, but you vermin had it coming to you. How come you had to latch on to Anastasia? She lives all alone in the taiga, she doesn't touch anybody, doesn't ask for housing, she doesn't require a pension or any kind of amenities, so why go interfering with her?"

Alexander didn't give any sign of offence to my verbal attack on him. He simply sighed and responded:

"You know, you said we '*went* through an experience'. But, you see... It may seem hard to believe, but the thing is, I'm not completely out of it. I think those who were in our group, too, haven't fully come out of it."

“What do you mean, ‘haven’t fully’? Here you are, sitting calmly beside me, poking the ashes in the fire...”

“Yeah, sure I’m sitting here poking the ashes, but that acute awareness of something terrible has stayed with me. It still frightens me. This terrible thing is not just in the past — it is still going with us today, right now. With all of us.”

“Maybe something’s happening with *you*, but everything’s okay with me and everyone else.”

“But doesn’t it seem to you, Vladimir, that the situation we were in is an exact copy of what mankind is doing today? What we were shown in a microcosm and at an accelerated speed only reflects what’s going on today in the world.”

“It doesn’t seem that way to me, since our skin is not transparent and our bodies obey our commands.”

“Maybe someone’s just taking pity on us, not letting us become fully aware of what we have done and are continuing to do. After all, if we were aware of it, if we could see our lives from an external viewpoint, we’d see them exposed, along with all the false teachings which we’ve used through the ages to justify what we are doing. We wouldn’t last, we’d go out of our minds!

“We try to put on a decent front, we try to justify the evil we do by our own so-called ‘insurmountable weaknesses’. We couldn’t resist temptation: we started smoking and drinking, committed murder, then we started going to war to defend some sort of ideals. We started setting off bombs.

“We are weak. That’s the way we see ourselves today. We say there are higher powers — they can do everything, they decide everything. But as for us? We hide behind dogmas like that and feel we can get away with any kind of filth we like.

“And let’s face it, what we do *is* filth. We all do it, every one of us, only we justify it to ourselves in different ways. But now it is absolutely clear that, as long as my consciousness has not lost its control over my body, I and I alone must take personal

responsibility for all its actions. And Anastasia is right when she says 'As long as Man is in the flesh...'"

"Don't go citing Anastasia, smart ass! 'She is right!' But you yourself practically had her in the grave. Too bad she didn't go just a little further and then you would all have lost your marbles completely!"

I was really growing more and more angry at the whole bunch of them, but since Alexander was the only one in front of me, he had to bear the brunt of my anger.

"Just look at your own self," Alexander replied. "Wasn't it thanks to you that we were able to get through to Anastasia? And not just us — you think attempts like ours won't be repeated?"

"Whatever possessed you to specify the exact name of your ship, even the name of your captain? Don't play the documentarian. You could even have changed the name of the river, but you didn't do it — you didn't think of it in time. And here you expect others to always know the right thing to do. I got what was coming to me. Now my whole life I will have to keep making sense of that nightmare I witnessed."

"Tell me, how did it end, that nightmare of yours? How did you get out of it?"

"We would never have been able to come out of it all on our own. It was something we were to go on reliving forever. At least that was the impression each of us had.

"Anastasia appeared amidst our decomposing and still active bodies. *Her* skin wasn't transparent. She was still wearing her old cardigan and long skirt. She tried speaking to our bodies, but they wouldn't listen. They seemed to be preprogrammed to die and be born again, repeating their actions over and over with only a change of roles.

"At that point Anastasia started quickly picking up the garbage near one of the structures our bodies had built. She quickly gathered the scattered stones and brush into a

pile with her hands, loosened the earth a little with a stick, touched and fluffed up the grass where we had trampled it, and the little green blades began popping up again — not all, but those that still could. Anastasia carefully straightened the broken trunk of a small tree, about a metre tall: she mashed up some earth in her hands to soften it and then daubed it on the broken part of the tree. She squeezed the tree between her hands, and held it tight for a while. Then, when she carefully took her hands away, the tree remained upright.

“Anastasia nimbly went on doing what she had to do. She created a small ‘oasis’ on the ground our bodies had trampled, which had been left almost devoid of vegetation. Boris Moiseevich’s body ran over to it, leapt onto the grass and rolled around on it, then jumped up and ran off. A little while later it returned with the body of one of the guards. Together they uprooted the small tree and began dragging stones and sticks to the ‘oasis’, where they attempted to put together yet another ugly-looking plain structure.

“Anastasia threw up her hands in frustration. She tried talking to them but, as she met no response, she apparently abandoned her efforts at persuasion. After standing for a while in a dither about what to do next, she dropped to her knees, covered her face with her hands, and you could see the hair trembling on her shoulders. Anastasia was crying — crying just like a baby.

“And almost immediately the bluish glow reappeared, at first barely noticeable. It drove the brownish smoke of our hell into the ground and reunited our bodies and our minds. Only we still weren’t able to move about — but this time it wasn’t from horror, but from a sweet and pleasant languor emanating from the blue glow. The fiery sphere was again circling overhead.

“Anastasia stretched out her hands toward it. The sphere instantly changed location to within a metre of her face. She

began talking with it, and this time I could distinguish words. Anastasia told the sphere:

“Thank you. You are kind. Thank you for your mercy and your love. The people will understand, they will most certainly understand everything, they will understand it in their hearts. Do not ever take your beautiful blue light from the Earth, your light of love.”

“Anastasia smiled, and a tiny tear rolled down her cheek. From the sphere’s pale-blue membrane hull fiery lightning bolts flew into her face. Carefully and dexterously they picked up the tear on her cheek, glistening in the sun, and ever so delicately, as though it were a priceless gem, held the tear on their fiery tips as they placed it inside the sphere. The sphere gave a shudder, executed a circle around Anastasia, landed momentarily at her feet, then swept upward and dissolved into the blue sky above, leaving everything on the ground the way it was before.

“And there we were, standing where we had been before. The sun was shining, the river was flowing as it had always done, the forest could be seen rising in the distance, and there was Anastasia standing in front of us, right where she had been earlier. We stood there silently taking in everything around us. I was overjoyed by what I saw, and I think the others were, too. Only we weren’t talking — perhaps because of what we had experienced and the natural surroundings which had suddenly become so beautiful to our gaze.”

Alexander fell silent, as though he had quite withdrawn into himself. I tried speaking to him:

“Listen, Alexander, maybe everything you told me really didn’t happen that way at all. Maybe Anastasia’s simply able to use some sort of powerful hypnosis? I’ve read that there are many recluses who can do that. So maybe she hypnotised you and showed you a vision?”

“Hypnosis, you say? Did you notice the grey streaks in my hair?”

"Yes, I did."

"Those grey streaks appeared after this all happened."

"But you could have got a huge fright under hypnosis, and that caused the grey streaks."

"Well, if you assume it was hypnosis, then there's another mystery you'll have to explain."

"And what's that?"

"The stone and log obstruction in the creek. It's completely disappeared — the creek runs freely now. But the obstruction was there before our 'vision' — everybody saw it — it was there!"

"Okay... That's something to think about."

"Anyway, what difference does it make what happened to us. There's something more important than that. I'm not the same person I was before — I don't know how to live now, what I should be studying, or where. After I got home, I burnt a lot of my books written by different so-called sages, 'wise men', teachers from various parts of the world. I had quite a decent-sized personal library."

"What d'you go and do that for? You should have sold them, if you no longer needed them."

"I couldn't sell them. I didn't even think of selling them. Now I have some accounts to settle with those teachers and sages."

"And what do you think, Alexander — is it dangerous to communicate with Anastasia? Maybe she really is some kind of anomaly? After all some of the letters I've got say that she represents another civilisation. If that's true, then it'd be dangerous to communicate with her, because you never know what this other civilisation might have in mind."

"I think just the opposite is true," Alexander replied. "She has such a feeling and love for the Earth, for everything living and growing on it, that, compared to Anastasia, we look pretty much like vagrant aliens."

"Then *who is she*? Can scientists say for sure, once and for all? How did she manage to acquire such a huge mass of information? Where does she have room to store it in her head? Where did she get her mystifying abilities? What about her ray?"

"I think we simply have to go by her words here — she said: 'I am Man, I am a woman'. As for all that information, I don't think she stores any of it in her head. I think, rather, that the purity of her thoughts allows her access to the database of the entire Universe. And that her talents derive from this total access to information.

"The Universe loves *her*, but is wary of *us*, and that's why it won't open itself to us completely. Our thoughts — the thoughts of any Man raised in today's society — are blocked by stereotypes and conventions, in contrast to her thought, which is completely open and free. That's why it's hard for us to explain her mysterious abilities simply by her assertion that she is Man.

"Of course she can perform incredible feats — miracles, in our perception — I know that from personal experience. During our visit one other incident happened which can *only* be described as a miracle. It's even more mystifying than what happened with our group. And much grander!"

Alexander uttered these last few words with a certain degree of excitement in his voice. He got up and walked away from the fire into the night. In the twinkling light of the stars and the dusky glow from the smouldering fire I could see the young Siberian lad pacing back and forth. I could hear his brief, excited phrases. Alexander was saying something incomprehensible about science, and psychologists, and some sort of teachings. I got tired of sitting there and listening to his fragmentary utterances. I was dying to hear what kind of 'grand miracle' he had seen Anastasia perform.

I tried to calm him down.

"Relax, Alexander, sit down. Tell me more specifically, what grand thing you witnessed?"

Alexander tossed some dry branches onto the fire and sat down again beside it. But I could see he had not fully regained his composure. Out of nervousness, no doubt, he had stirred the smouldering coals so forcefully that the sparks flying upward landed on him and on me, causing us to jump up and away from the fire. When things had quieted down, I began listening to his emotional tale.

"In the space of some twenty minutes," he began, "Anastasia managed to change right before our eyes the physical condition of a little village girl. She did this before our very eyes. And over this period of time she changed not only the little girl's destiny, but her mother's too, and even had an effect on the whole outward appearance of this remote Siberian village. And it all happened within the space of twenty minutes or so. The main thing was *how* she did it — simplicity itself! She...

"How can anyone believe in horoscopes after that?!" Alexander wondered. "I saw it happen! That's why I burnt my books with all that 'wise man' nonsense and all that religious stuff."

"See," I countered, "you yourself admit that she performs superhuman miracles, mystical wonders, even if she smashes horoscopes in the process. She makes these things happen all by herself, and then expects to be called a normal human being. If only she'd tried to *act* half-way normal, but no!... I spoke to her about that, too — I said she should just act like everyone else, then everything will be normal, but it seems she's not capable of acting like everyone else. Pity! She's such a kind and beautiful woman, so smart — she can heal people, and she's borne me a son... But to live with her, the way I'd live with another woman — well, that's simply impossible. I can't imagine anybody being able to sleep with her after everything you've told me. Nobody could. Everybody needs a

woman, plain and simple, not a far-out eccentric like that. But she herself is to blame for that, what with her mysticism and all."

"Hold on, Vladimir. Now it's my turn to tell *you* something. Just think carefully about what I'm going to say. It may seem incredible, but try to understand. Everybody has to understand it! *Everybody!* Perhaps, together, we can make some sense out of it. Perhaps...

"You see, Vladimir, Anastasia performed this incredible miracle with the little girl, but there was no mystery or magic involved. No sorcery, no shamanistic gimmicks. If you can imagine, she, Anastasia, did this miracle using just simple human words known to everyone. Simple, everyday words, only spoken in the right place at the right time.

"If psychologists were to analyse Anastasia's conversation with this little village girl, they would realise how psychologically effective it is. Anyone uttering these same words could have achieved a similar effect. But to have these words come to mind at the right time, the sincerity and purity of thought Anastasia spoke of are an absolute requirement."

"So, it's not just good enough to memorise the words?"

"We've all known them for a long time — that's not the point. The real question is: what lies *behind* each of the words we say?"

"Somehow you're losing me. You'd better tell me the rest of what happened with you there. What words could change people's physical condition and their whole destinies?"

"All right. Of course I should explain. Listen."

CHAPTER NINE



When words change destinies

“After what we experienced,” Alexander began, “our group took a while to regain a sense of normalcy. Nobody spoke with anyone else. We stood there right in the same spot and it was only after some time had passed that we began to look to either side of us and take in the surrounding world in a different way from before, as though we were sensing it for the first time. And now we noticed a group of residents approaching us from the direction of the village. The local population was quite small, only about a dozen people lived in the six houses of this remote Siberian settlement. And they were nearly all oldsters, some of them quite frail. One woman was bent over double — she walked with a limp, carried a cane, but she still came with the others. Those who did not require a walking stick were armed with various tools — one carried a cross-beam, another an oar. They had evidently come to defend Anastasia. These old and frail people were advancing against young, healthy, stalwart fellows carrying weapons. They advanced without fear, determined to come to Anastasia’s defence, no matter who might be standing in their way.

“Their resolve was terrifying. When they drew near to us, the old fellow carrying the oar and wearing rubber boots, who was walking slightly ahead of the others, stopped, which brought a halt to the group of villagers as a whole. They paid no attention to us, treating our group as empty space. With a sedate stroke of his beard he looked right at Anastasia and greeted her respectfully:

"I wish you good health, my dear, dear Anastasia, on behalf of all of us."

"Good day to you, kind people," Anastasia responded, clasping her hand to her breast and bowing to the elderly villagers.

"The water in the river is dropping early this year," the old fellow went on. "The summer hasn't been too rainy."

"Not so rainy just now," Anastasia confirmed, "but more rain will come, the water level will rise, and the river will return to its former strength."

"As they continued talking that way, out from the group of elderly villagers emerged a frail little girl, about six years old, with pale yellowish skin. She was wearing an old jacket, pieced together from fragments of some adult garment, her thin legs were covered by patched pantyhose, and she had little old boots on her feet.

"Later I found out the girl's name was Aniuta. She was a sickly child, with a congenital heart disease. Her mother had brought her from the city when she was just six months old and left her with the oldsters, not coming back even once to see her daughter. They say she works somewhere as a painter for a construction firm.

"Aniuta went up to Anastasia and started tugging on the hem of her skirt, pleading with her:

"Bend down, Auntie Anastasia. Bend down to me."

"Anastasia looked at the little girl and squatted down in front of her. The girl quickly took off the old white kerchief she was wearing on her head. She salivated on one edge of it and began to carefully wipe the blood which had already dried on Anastasia's face and temple, saying:

"You don't come any more, Auntie Anastasia, to sit on your little log by the shore. Grandpa said that earlier you used to come more often. You would sit on the log and watch the river. Now you don't come. Grandpa showed me the

little log where you used to sit, Auntie Anastasia. Grandpa showed me, and I started coming to it, to your log, myself. I sat there all alone, waiting for you to come, Auntie Anastasia. I really wanted to see you. I have a secret to tell you. But you wouldn't come to sit on your log and watch the river. Maybe 'cause the log is quite old. I kept asking Grandpa and he brought a new little log for you. There it is, lying right beside the old one.'

"The little girl took Anastasia by the hand and started pulling her over to the log.

"Let's go, let's go, Auntie Anastasia, let's go sit on the new log. Grandpa hewed out two seats on it with his axe. I was the one who asked him to do that, so that when you came we could sit together.'

"Anastasia at once responded to the little girl's request, and they sat down together on the log. They just sat there silently for a while, not paying any attention to anyone. It was as though there had been no one else around. And everyone stood silently, without budging. Then the little girl started talking:

"Grandma told me a lot about you, Auntie Anastasia. And when my Grandma died, I began asking Grandpa, and he told me about you, too. Whenever Grandpa talks about you, I think about my little secret I have to tell you. Grandpa told me that when I was little, my heart wasn't working right. It wasn't ticking evenly. One time its tick was way off. Then they brought in Auntie Doctor in a boat. Auntie Doctor said there was nothing they could do with such a bad heart — there was no one it would obey. And that it would die before long.

"Grandpa told me how you, Auntie Anastasia, were sitting at the time on your old little log and watching the river. Then you got up and came into our hut. You took me in your arms and put me on the grass outside the house. Then you lay down beside me and put your hand on my chest. You put

your hand here, where you could hear my heart ticking. Right here.' And the girl clasped her hand to the left side of her thin little chest.

"Grandpa said that you too, Auntie Anastasia, started lying next to me as if you were breathless, since your own heart had started ticking ever so softly, just like mine. Then your heart started beating faster, and called out to mine to catch up. My heart obeyed yours, and together they started ticking the way they ought to. That is what Grandpa told me. Did he tell me everything right? Right, Auntie Anastasia?"

"Yes, Aniuta. Your grandpa told you right. Your heart will always be good now."

"That means your heart called to mine and mine obeyed? It obeyed, did it?"

"Yes, Aniuta dear, your heart obeyed."

"Now I shall tell you my secret, Auntie Anastasia. It is a very, very important secret!"

"Tell me your important secret, Aniuta."

"Aniuta got up from the log and stood in front of Anastasia, clasping her thin little hands to her chest. Then all of a sudden she... Suddenly little Aniuta fell on her knees before Anastasia. She barely managed to restrain the excitement in her voice when she said:

"Auntie Anastasia, dear Auntie Anastasia, ask your heart again! Ask it! Ask your heart to call to my Mama's heart. Have my Mama come see me. Even just for a day. To see *me*. That's my secret. Have your heart... Mama's... heart... hear..."

"Aniuta choked from emotion, then fell silent, her eyes fixed on Anastasia.

"Anastasia squinted her eyes and looked off into the distance, past the little girl kneeling in front of her. Then she looked at the girl once more and quietly stated a fact that must have been horrifying for the child. She answered her as she would have an adult:

"Aniuta, dear, my heart is unable to call to your Mama. Your Mama is far away in the city. She tried to find happiness but did not find it. She does not have a home of her own, she does not have any money to buy you gifts. And unless she can bring you gifts she does not want to come and see you. It is hard for her in the city. But if she *should* come and see you, it will be even harder for her. A visit with you would become a sad and tormenting experience. It would be more difficult and frightening for her to see you so sickly and so poorly clothed. She would see how the houses in your village are falling apart, and how dirty and shabby the house you live in is. It would be all the more difficult since your Mama no longer believes she can do anything good for you. She simply does not believe it. She feels she has tried everything and this is what fate has determined for her. She has given in to the very hopelessness she has imagined for herself."

"Little Aniuta listened to the terrible truth, and her wee body trembled. It seemed to me awfully cruel to talk to a child that way. I thought a white lie would have been more appropriate here. Like stroking the poor little girl's head and promising her mother would arrive soon. And saying they would have a happy meeting.

"But that is not what Anastasia did. She told this helpless, defenceless little girl the whole bitter truth. Then after spending some time watching her body shake all over, she began talking to her again.

"I know, Aniuta dear, you do love your Mama."

"I love... love... I love my poor dear Mamochka," the girl replied, her child's voice on the point of breaking into tears.

"Then you make your Mamochka happy. You are the only one, the only one in all the world who can make her happy. It is very simple. You become healthy and strong, and learn how to sing. You will be a singer. Your marvellous, pure voice will sing together with your heart. Your Mama may meet

you in twenty years, and seeing you will make her very happy. Or your Mama may come to see you next summer. By that time you should already be healthy and strong. To welcome her. Get some presents ready for your Mamochka. Show her how strong and beautiful you are, and you will make your Mamochka very happy, and your meeting with her will be a joyful one indeed.'

"But I will never be able to be healthy or strong.'

"Why not?'

"You know Auntie Doctor? She wears a white coat. Auntie Doctor told Grandma. I heard her say I'll always be a weakling 'cause I was a bottle baby. My Mama wasn't able to give me any mother's milk. My Mama had no milk in her breasts. And children, when they are small, always drink milk from their mama's breasts.

"I saw it once, when a lady came to the village with a little baby. I went over to the house she had come to. I really wanted to see how babies drink milk from their mother's teats. I tried to sit there ever so quietly. But they kept chasing me out. The mama-lady wondered why I was sitting there without blinking. I was afraid to blink my eyes in case I missed something.'

"Do not you think, Aniuta, that Auntie Doctor might have been mistaken when she said you would never be healthy and strong?'

"How could she have been mistaken? She wears a white coat. Everybody listens to her — the grandfathers and grandmothers. She knows everything. She knows that I was a bottle baby.'

"And why did you go to see how babies are breast-fed?'

"I thought I would see how good the baby felt when he got fed from his mother's teat. I thought I would see how good he felt, and then I would feel better, too.'

"You will get better, Aniuta dear. You will be healthy and strong,' Anastasia said quietly and confidently. And then

Anastasia gradually unbuttoned her cardigan and exposed her breasts.

"Aniuta stared at the exposed breasts in amazement, quite overwhelmed by the unexpected action. From the ends of the nipples tiny drops of breast milk emerged.

"Milk! Mother's milk! Auntie Anastasia, are you feeding a baby, too? Are you a mama?"

"This milk is to feed my little son."

"Drops of breast milk kept coming. One of the drops fluttered in a passing breeze. The breeze tore the drop from Anastasia's breast.

"Like a lightning-fast steel spring, Aniuta dashed after the little drop of breast milk. And she... Imagine, this thin, sickly little girl was nimble enough to catch the drop! She fell to the ground, but as she was falling she put out the palms of her hands and caught the little drop of breastmilk! She caught it just as it reached the ground. Getting up on her knees, she lifted her cupped hands to her face and opened them, examining the tiny wet spot they were holding. Then she held out her hands to Anastasia.

"Here. I caught it. Here it is. Your son's milk is not lost."

"You saved the little drop, Aniuta. Now it belongs to you."

"To me?!"

"Yes. Just to you."

"Aniuta raised her cupped hands to her face and touched the drop with her lips. The frail little girl closed her eyes and held her hands pressed against her lips for a long time. Then she dropped her hands, looked at Anastasia, and with a voice full of gratitude, whispered:

"Thank you."

"Come close to me, Aniuta dear."

"Anastasia took hold of the little girl by her shoulders. She stroked her hair, then sat her on her lap. She gently inclined

the little one's head to her breast, as she would an infant, and began singing quietly.

"Aniuta's lips were now very close to one of Anastasia's nipples. Almost in a half-sleep, Aniuta slowly drew her lips closer and closer to Anastasia's breast, felt the moist nipple, gave a tiny shudder and began greedily sucking on Anastasia's milk-filled breast.

"Judging by the tape recording, she awakened about nine minutes later. She raised her head and jumped down from Anastasia's lap.

"I... Oh, dear, what have I done? I've drunk up your son's milk.'

"Not to worry, Aniuta. There is enough left for him. You only drank the milk from one of my breasts, and there is still milk left in the other one. There is enough for him. My son can also eat pollen from the flowers if he wants to. And now you have been provided with all you need, so you will have no fear about being strong and beautiful and happy. Now go and draw your happiness from life, from each day it brings.'

"I shall be strong and healthy. I shall think about how to greet Mamochka, so that she will not find it difficult to see me, but she will be extremely happy. Only I shan't be able to sing. I used to sing with Grandma. Then Grandma died. I keep asking Grandpa, but he doesn't sing. Only when he drinks vodka will he sing me a song, and then I sing along with him. But it is hard for me to sing along with him, 'cause his voice croaks. I also tried to sing along with the radio, but our old receiver crackles so much I can't get the words.'

"Aniuta dear, just try singing without words, try to imitate the birds when you hear them sing, or the water when it burbles, or the rustling of the leaves and the wind when it is strong and whistles through the branches. And there are a lot of sounds in the grass. You will hear many pure sounds around you if you are willing to listen. Try imitating them with your voice. They will be your best teachers...

“‘I am going now, Aniuta, good-bye. It is time for me to go.’

“Anastasia got up from the log. Aniuta remained sitting, listening to the world of sounds around her. Anastasia went up to the young guard who had shot at her. The guard was still very pale in the face, and his hands were shaking. His pistol was lying nearby on the ground. Anastasia told the guard:

“‘Do not blame yourself, do not torture your soul. It was not a partner in what you did. You acted out of instinct. You were trained to protect whatever you were ordered to, without thinking about the situation. And your instinct took its course. It is not good for instinct to gain supremacy in Man. When instinct takes first place, then Man takes second place. The result is something less than a Man. Think about it — perhaps it would be better to return to yourself — to the Man that you are.’

“When the guard heard the calming tones of Anastasia’s voice his hands stopped shaking, and the paleness disappeared from his face. And by the time she had finished speaking, his face was flush with a reddish colour, right to the tips of his ears.

“Then Anastasia said good-bye to the elderly villagers and headed off in the direction of the taiga. For a long time we watched her as she drew further and further away. Then all at once we heard an extraordinarily pure child’s voice singing.

“Aniuta was still sitting on the log, singing a beautiful, old-time song — probably one she had learnt from her grandmother. And how she sang! Her pure voice hit unusually high notes, filling the space around and enchanting the heart:

*Sprinkling raindrops glisten.
Brother rocks his sister;
Brother rocks his sister;
Sings to her — she listens.*

"Aniuta finished her song and began staring at our group, still standing there motionless. Then she got up, picked up a thin stick from the ground and said:

"'You chaps are bad. You're so big, but you're still bad.'

"After saying this she started coming at us, armed with the little stick. The group of elderly villagers shuffled silently along behind her. And all of us to a man began withdrawing before them. We retreated right back to our ship which was docked by the riverbank, then scrambled up the gangplank, not without some pushing and shoving. We were on the point of pulling up the gangplank when the captain suddenly noticed the two helicopter pilots were also on board.

"'How come you're here?' he shouted from the bridge. 'Who's looking after the chopper?'

"The pilots jumped down from the ship and ran over to their 'copter.

"We left, abandoning the barrels of fuel and tents remaining on the shore. Nobody even thought of collecting them."

CHAPTER TEN



Work out your own happiness

When Alexander finished his story, I couldn't help expressing my animosity toward him.

"I see only too well what you're up to. So you left the tents there. And the barrels too, eh? Too bad you got away with just some grey hair. She's a holy person, Anastasia. It was so clear straight off — any normal person who'd seen you would have twigged what was going on, right off the bat. They would have known who was standing in front of them and what they were getting at. And yet she started pouring out her soul to you."

"She was aware of everything," Alexander observed. "She was aware of why we came and what we wanted of her. She understood. But she was not talking with the dark side of our human selves. She ignored the dark side, communicating only with what was bright in each one's heart. And that way she changed all of us. After all, I'm an academic. I've done a lot of work in psychology."

"So, another academic, eh? So what good is all your study if your thoughts are so slow to catch up?"

"Well, you see, life often happens to deal out its events to us faster and more accurately than we can handle them. Besides, Anastasia turned out to be... No, I'm afraid to put her into a category, any more than that other experience..."

"What other experience?"

"How can I put it? You know? Those old people from that remote taiga village — well, they're still coming at us. Together with the frail little girl out in front of them, carrying the thin stick."

"What? Where?"

"They're coming at us, they're coming at all of us who were there and saw them. I thought that this was happening just with me — as soon as I close my eyes, I see them straight off, and sometimes they appear whenever I do anything which, in their opinion, is probably unwarranted. I thought this was happening just with me — but I've been talking with others in the group. Similar things have been happening with the ones who were there."

"But that's all just in your minds, in your imagination."

"What's the difference? We still have to retreat before their advance, even in our minds."

"What could be so frightening about helpless and unarmed oldsters? What are you afraid of?"

"I really don't know what there is to be afraid of. Maybe our own... Maybe we've overstepped some line of permissiveness?"

"What kind of line would that be? That sort of fantasising can drive one crazy. Maybe you just have to think things through as you're doing them, before it's too late."

"Maybe, think things through in time... We all have to think things through."

"And where did you get the notion that after her conversation with Anastasia the little girl's destiny changed, and her mother's too? And the destiny of the other villagers?"

"I told you, I'm into psychology. As an academic I can say this: Anastasia completely changed Aniuta's whole internal programme."

"After being abandoned to the care of her grandparents, the little girl had been spending her time sitting sick and helpless in a corner of a dirty hut, waiting for her mother to come. They kept assuring her that her Mamochka would come and play with her and bring her presents. They did this, thinking they were doing a good deed by lying. In the meantime

her mother in the city went on a drinking binge to relieve her feeling of hopelessness. The false assurances had condemned the girl to a state of fruitless expectancy.

"We too sometimes sit around waiting for a dispensation from above. Someone is supposed to come along and make us happy and change our destiny. Maybe that's why we act so lethargically or don't act at all. We don't reflect on the fact that we already have more than enough, and that maybe we should be greeting the one coming with gifts of our own.

"Anastasia changed destiny and the future with her simplicity and sincerity. Just think, the simplest human words can change destiny.

"I've listened to the recording of Anastasia's conversation with Aniuta many times. I have an idea if anyone else spoke that way to the girl, it would have had the same effect. It doesn't actually take much to speak the way she did. The main thing is not to lie. One need only have the sincere desire to help. And helping doesn't just mean sympathising. You have to be free of doctrines of karma, of predestination or, rather, rise above them.

"Of course one can do a lot of talking about karma, the hopelessness of inevitable predestination and what it means for a sick little girl, but Anastasia rose above this sense of inevitability. She simply didn't pay any attention to it. And any other person could do the same. After all, everything was done with words, simple words we use every day. Only they need to be spoken at the right time and in the right place, and in the proper order. It is quite possible that the purity of thought Anastasia talks about causes these words to automatically fall into place in the right sequence, and that is why they are so powerful."

"Well, Alexander, those are all theories of yours, assumptions. You still have to look at real life and see whether any destinies will change on account of a bunch of words or

not. Anyway, what could possibly change in life for that little girl? Unless some sort of miracle happened.”

“A miracle *has* happened. It turns out that all the miracles we need are within ourselves.”

“What kind of miracle happened?”

“Little Aniuta’s whole mind and life got reprogrammed. She broke all the bonds of karma for herself and those around her.”

“What do you mean, ‘broke’? How do you know this?”

“I know it. Some time afterward I went back to the village. I decided to offer Aniuta my radio receiver, since hers was too crackly, and set up an antenna for it on the roof. So I’m walking along to Aniuta’s house and I notice that the boards on the wooden sidewalk have been fixed. Before they were quite decayed, and now all the rotting boards had been replaced with new ones. Wow, I thought, what’s all this renovation going on here? I saw Aniuta’s granddad sitting on the porch, washing his boots in a pail of water. I said hello to him, and explained why I’d come.

“‘Well, fine!’ said the grandfather. ‘Come on in, if you like. Only you’ll have to take off those shoes of yours. You see, we’ve got new rules around the place.’

“I took off my shoes on the porch and accompanied the grandfather into the hut. Everything was simple inside, as you’d expect in a small village, only extremely clean and cozy.

“‘You see, our granddaughter’s got this new order set up for us,’ the grandfather told me. ‘She worked at it for a long time. She cleaned the floor, and then washed everything spic and span. She was at it from morning ‘til night for over a week, like a wound-up spring. She would have a rest and then start cleaning again. She persuaded me to paint the walls a fresh coat of white.

“‘And now when I come into the hut with my boots on and leave tracks, right away she gets out a rag and starts cleaning

away the tracks. So, I guess, it's better not to leave any tracks. We don't have any slippers.¹ Instead of slippers she adapted some old galoshes. Here, you can put these on. Make yourself comfortable.'

"I sat down at the table. It was covered with an old, but clean tablecloth. The cloth was torn in one place, and the tear was patched, as neatly as a child's hand could make it, with a piece of coloured cloth cut in the shape of a bunny-rabbit. In the middle of the table stood a cut-glass tumbler, out of which corners cut from notepad sheets neatly protruded — instead of serviettes.

"'I see they've started improving your village, too,' I said to the grandfather. 'And it looks like the authorities have been paying attention, seeing they fixed the wooden sidewalks.'

"And he replied:

"'It's got nothing to do with the authorities. They don't pay any attention to us. It's my granddaughter, Aniuta. She just can't keep still.'

"'What do you mean, Aniuta? She's still a wee one, much too little to repair sidewalks. Those are heavy boards there.'

"'Heavy boards. Yeah. You see, one day I was about to set out hunting, and I asked a neighbour if she would look in on Aniuta. And Aniuta says to me, "Go on, Grandpa, go on about your business. Don't worry, I'll take care of everything myself. Just let me take a saw to that board that's standing against the wall in the barn."

"'I was surprised, but I thought: why not let the child play, if that's the way she likes to play. So I put the board on the wood-block, handed her a couple of saws and set off to do some hunting. Later my neighbour told me what happened while I was gone.

¹*slippers* — It is customary for Russian hosts to offer their guests slippers to wear during their visit.

"Aniuta pulled out the old rotten pieces of board from the sidewalk. She measured the hole with a string and began sawing the board I had given her according to the measurement. The neighbour says she spent half the day sawing the board, but she managed to do it somehow. Then she lugged the new board right up to the sidewalk and put it in the place of the rotten one.'

"She's so thin and frail, how on earth could she have lugged such a heavy board?' I asked.

"She found herself a helper. Back a couple of months ago she made friends with an orphaned dog, a Siberian laika.² An old lady died who lived at the other end of our village, leaving a large dog. Back at the funeral Aniuta kept stroking him. Then she started taking him something to eat. At first the laika wouldn't leave his own yard, even though there was nobody left living in the hut. The old lady had been living alone.

"Aniuta fed the dog for several days. He started following the girl around, and now he never leaves her side. Now this old dog helps carry out whatever our granddaughter fancies. So he helped her lug the board over. Aniuta tied a string around one end and started in dragging it herself, when the huge dog grasped hold of the other end with his teeth, and between the two of them they managed to drag it to the sidewalk.

"Then Aniuta asked a neighbour lady for some nails, and borrowed my hammer. And here she was trying to nail the board into place with the hammer. But nothing happened. The neighbour saw Aniuta sitting on the sidewalk, trying to hammer in the nail. She hit her hand in the process and blood started oozing out. The dog was sitting right beside her, watching and whimpering.

²*laika* — the name given to a number of Arctic breeds of dog, akin to the Canadian husky, trained for pulling sledges and hunting in the North. The word has the same root as the Russian for *to bark* and is commonly used in Russian as a personal name for a dog.

“The neighbour came over, took the hammer and nailed the board in place. The next evening she saw Aniuta and the dog dragging another board over. Which meant there was another hole in the sidewalk to patch up.

“The neighbour asked Aniuta if she were going to patch up all the holes this way — couldn’t she think up some other little girl’s thing to do? And my granddaughter replied:

““It’s very important, Auntie, for all the sidewalks outside the houses to be new and free from holes. You see, otherwise someone might decide to come visiting, walking along the boards, and there’s holes in them, and that would spoil the visitor’s good mood. And my Mamochka, when she comes, might get upset if she saw such a shoddy sidewalk.”

“So the neighbour hammered down the second board for her. And then she raised a hue and cry throughout the village, shouting out to everyone: “Get busy fixing the sidewalks in front of your houses. I’m not going to let a child do drudgery on account of your disorderliness! She’s working her hands to the bone!”

“So, you can see, everyone’s fixed up the sidewalk in front of their houses. So they wouldn’t have to hear the neighbour lady rail at them any more.’

“And where is your granddaughter now?’ I asked the old fellow.

“She’s lugged a tin of paint over to the house at the far end. She’ll probably spend the night there, with the old Losin couple. Yeah... She may spend the night there.’

“What kind of paint, and what’s it for?”

“Just ordinary oil-based paint, bright orange. She got it from the steamship in exchange for fish. That’s her latest fancy.’

“And what kind of fancy might that be?”

“She’s decided that all the huts need freshening up. Need to look more cheerful. So when the ship comes —

that's the ship that collects fish that's been caught around here, she goes and offers 'em a whole catch of fish in exchange for paint. And then she lugs the tin of paint to one of the huts. She asks them to paint the *nalichniks*.³ And the old people start painting. Soon it'll be my turn. Whaddya know! I'll do the painting. Why not? Maybe it'll be better if the painting gets done, if the huts are going to look more cheerful on the outside.'

"And where does she get the fish from?"

"She catches them herself. Every morning she brings home two or three connies,⁴ sometimes more. If only once she'd come home empty-handed, but no, the fish just seem to land on her hooks all by themselves. And here I'm lying in bed with my back problems, and she says to me: get up. And keeps at me: "Get up, Grandpa! You've gotta salt the fish, so it doesn't go bad." Every morning it's the same,' the old fellow muttered, but with no trace of annoyance in his voice.

"So I asked him how Aniuta managed to cope with the fishing tackle — all by herself?

"See, I told you,' he replied. 'Aniuta's got a helper — this Siberian laika. He may be old, but he's smart, and obedient. He helps her carry out all her fancies. Aniuta takes my throw-line with its five hooks, neatly arranges the bait on the hooks and goes down to her treasured spot on the riverbank every evening with her laika. She'll tie one end of the line to a post on the shore, then attaches the other end to a stick. The dog then takes the stick in his mouth and swims out into the river. He keeps on swimming as long as Aniuta, standing

³*nalichnik* — an ornately decorated board (with carved symbols to repel evil spirits) covering the cracks between the window-frame and the wall, to keep out the elements; *nalichniks* are a common feature of Russian rural houses.

⁴*connies* (Russian *belorybitsa*; Latin: *Stenodus leucichthys*) — a freshwater white fish, otherwise known as *incommu* or *sheefish*.

on the shore, keeps encouraging him: “Swim, Druzhok, swim, Druzhok!”⁵ The dog keeps pulling the line until Aniuta changes the tone of her voice as she calls: “Come here, Druzhok, come here, Druzhok!” Then the dog releases the stick from his jaws and swims back to shore...

“Well, that’s enough for now. Let’s get some sleep.”

“With that the old fellow climbed onto the stove.⁶ And I lay down on the wooden sofa. When I woke up at dawn, I went outside and saw Aniuta down by the river tugging on the iron ring to which the fishing line was attached. A huge Siberian laika was helping her. The laika had grasped hold of the ring with his teeth and braced himself with his legs as he backed up. Together they were dragging the line with quite a decent catch on the end of it. Aniuta was wearing rubber boots three sizes too big over her bare feet.

“Once the catch was almost at the shore, she took hold of a scoop net and ran down to collect the fish. The laika was standing on his hind legs, holding the ring in his teeth. Aniuta went into the water deeper than her boots allowed, and the water started pouring over the tops of her boots.

“She drew the catch onto the riverbank and unhooked three splendid fish, which she put into a bag. Then she and the laika together took hold of the rope attached to a piece of plywood carrying the bag, and dragged it home.

“The water was sloshing around in Aniuta’s boots, interfering with her walking. She stopped and took off her boots — first one, then the other — and stood barefoot on the cold ground while she emptied out the water. Then she put on her wet boots again and continued on her way.

⁵*Druzhok* (lit. ‘Little Friend’) — a popular Russian name for a dog.

⁶*stove* (Russian: *pech*) — The vast majority of Russian huts (*izby*) in rural areas have a furnace-size brick stove in the centre with a flat top where the family sleeps to stay warm during cold nights.

"As the two of them together lugged their morning catch up to the porch, I got a good look at Aniuta's face and was amazed.

"Her cheeks were a rosy red, and her little eyes were sparkling with determination. These, together with the hint of a smile on her face, made her virtually unrecognisable by comparison with the sickly, sallow-skinned little girl I had met earlier. Aniuta set about rousing her grandfather. With a rather loud wheeze he climbed down from the stove and put on a jacket. Then he took a knife and salt and proceed to cut up the fish. In the meantime Aniuta served me tea, and I asked her why she got up so early every morning to bring home the fish.

"Those fellows on the steamship, on the river, they come and collect our fish,' she said. 'They give me money. And I asked them to bring me paint for the houses in our village. They brought me the paint in exchange for the fish. Along with some lovely material for a dress. For that I gave them all the fish I had caught that week.' And when she said that, she went and fetched a huge piece of magnificent silk fabric.

"Well, Ania,' I observed, 'I see there's enough here for more than one dress. How come so much?'

"This isn't for me. I've got it ready as a present for my Mamochka, when my Mamochka comes to see me. And I'm also going to give her a beautiful shawl and a long beaded necklace.'

"Then Aniuta opened an old worn suitcase and pulled out a pair of imported women's pantihose, a pearl necklace and a magnificent brightly-coloured shawl.

"I don't want Mamochka to be upset that she can't give me any presents. I can buy everything for her now myself. I don't want her to think she's been wasting her life.'

"I watched as she joyfully showed me the gifts she had prepared for her mother — she was so happy admiring them — and

I realised what had happened: here Aniuta had transformed herself from an utterly helpless, pitiful little girl, waiting for somebody else to help her, into an active, self-confident individual. And happy that she has known such great success, or maybe her happiness stems from an entirely different source...

"Now I believe that each one's happiness lies within themselves, within each one of us. It is there at a particular level of awareness. The only question is: how do we reach that level? Anastasia helped little Aniuta reach it. Will she be able to help everyone else do the same? Or maybe we ourselves need to learn in some way how to figure things out ourselves."

Alexander fell silent, and we each became absorbed in our own thoughts.

I wrapped myself in a short thick coat and laid my head against a log. I began looking up at the bright northern stars, and it seemed they were quite low overhead and were also being warmed by the flames of our fire. I tried to go to sleep.

After about three hours' sleep, at dawn Alexander and I headed for the motorboat. But before casting off, Alexander suddenly announced:

"I've been thinking. Now I'm certain. It's not worth your while going into the taiga. You won't find Anastasia there now. Nobody can find her, including you."

"Why not?"

"Anastasia's gone. She's gone deep into the taiga. She couldn't help leaving. If you try to go after her, you might get killed. You're not suited to the taiga. Besides, you've got to write some more. To fulfil your promise to her."

"In order to write more, I've got to hear her answers to the many questions from my readers. Questions about children, about different religions..."

"Nobody'll find her now."

"Why do you keep parroting: 'She can't be found! She can't be found!' I know where her glade is, I'll find her."

"I tell you, you won't. Anastasia can't help but realise that there are people out to hunt her down."

"What do you mean, they're out to hunt her down? Is somebody bribing the local hunters? Just like they pay you and Yegorych?"

"Me and Yegorych? No way! We try to persuade people not to interfere with her, not to alarm her. And if that doesn't work, we take them and let them off on the opposite shore. The local hunters can't be bribed; they've got laws and values of their own. They knew about Anastasia long before you came along. They've always treated her with great respect. They've been careful even when speaking about her amongst themselves. They don't like it when strangers show up in the taiga, and they're pretty good shots."

"Then who could possibly hunt her down?"

"I think: whoever has led us into the condition we find ourselves in at this moment. And is still leading us."

"Can you be more specific?"

"Each one of us has to work that out more specifically on their own."

"But still, who do you have in mind? Someone like Boris Moiseevich?"

"He's just a tool. There's something we can't see that's playing with us. And Boris Moiseevich is starting to realise that now. And maybe the one who hired him has realised it, too."

CHAPTER ELEVEN



Who are we?

"A month ago Boris Moiseevich returned to these parts," Alexander told me. "This time he had no assistants or guards with him. He looked me up. He was quiet and pensive. He and I talked for a whole day. It wasn't so much a conversation as a confession on his part — it wasn't me he was confessing to, of course, but to himself. He gave me a copy of his report on his contact with Anastasia. I copied out some excerpts for you. Would you like me to read them?"

"Who commissioned the report?"

"I don't know. Even Boris Moiseevich doesn't know. He had a meeting with whoever it was in an opulent salon with a fireplace. His sponsor identified himself as a representative of the 'International Academy'. But so many academies have sprouted up recently, it's hard to tell which of them are the really serious ones. Now people have begun judging the seriousness of an organisation by the amount of funding it gets.

"The sponsor hadn't scrimped on the financing. He'd paid for the whole trip right off in cash, and promised not only a substantial bonus but also the future involvement of the whole unit Boris Moiseevich headed in a serious scientific project connected with Anastasia.

"When Boris Moiseevich met with him upon his return to Moscow and presented his report, the sponsor took only a cursory look at it. No doubt he had already been informed of its contents. He threw the report into the fireplace and said to Boris Moiseevich:

“You were supposed to establish contact with “Object X”, as you yourself referred to Anastasia. In carrying out the project you employed not only your own scientific methods and techniques of persuasion, but also violence. The violence was your own initiative.

“We have decided to double your fee for organising the expedition, and at the same time cancel our agreements with you for any future activity. Here, take your money,’ he said, pointing to a briefcase standing beside his chair, ‘and forget about the whole thing.’

“Boris Moiseevich tried to explain that the violence had erupted spontaneously, and that he himself found the whole episode quite distasteful, and he realised what harm his group’s inexperience had inflicted on future contacts with Anastasia, and for that reason he would not take any fee at all.

“At that point the man sitting by the fireplace got up from his chair and in a tone that brooked no contradiction, articulated:

“You *will* take it. And you’ll leave. You didn’t care about the cause, only the money. So here, take it. We don’t need you any more.’

“Boris Moiseevich took the briefcase with the money and left the spacious office salon. He tried to share the money in equal amounts among the members of the expedition, but not all of them accepted it. It only seemed to emphasise the tremendous feeling of unpleasantness at what had been wrought by the participants.”

“How come you only copied out excerpts of the report for me?” I asked Alexander.

“Judging by your book, you don’t really fancy reading documents filled with terms you don’t understand. I tried to copy out only the important points, and places where there wasn’t too much specialised terminology.”

“So, what do they say about Anastasia?”

Alexander pulled some printed pages out of his pocket and began reading them to me:

Object X cannot be studied by traditional scientific research methods known to us today.

The evaluation criteria currently accepted in scientific circles inevitably posit particular frameworks which automatically exclude properties hitherto unknown and the possibility of encountering phenomena arising out of and connected with isolated situations and the changing psychological state of Object X.

As an information source in various areas of scientific research, the 'object' may prove to have no equal among the sources currently known to science.

The object is most likely not an information carrier in itself. It is not interested in simply receiving and analysing information. However, should there arise a particular goal — and, consequently, a desire — which it deems significant, information accrues to it in a form selected by an unknown entity and in the required amount, for which Object X may instantly find a practical application.

Our group was able to offer only a few hypotheses. But we did confirm experimentally a number of Object X's sayings regarding plants. We were able to establish the existence of the ray. The scientific terms *torsion field* and *radio-wave emissions* are not really suitable here. If they are used at all, it is only because there are no other more suitable terms.

The most incredible and doubtful hypothesis, in our view, was the possibility of infusing the text of the book¹ with hidden combinations and signs — according to Object X's terminology — of "the depths of eternity and the infinity

¹the book — i.e., *Anastasia*, Book 1 of the Ringing Cedars Series.

of the Cosmos". The object affirmed that these signs may have a beneficial effect on people.

We were recommending conducting a series of experiments, comparing the parameters of the physiological changes in human beings before and after the reading of the book, with the help of measuring devices used in medical practice. This does not make much sense any more.

Already we are compelled to confirm that the fact of their existence is indisputable. These changes are not effected through the material, physiological organs of the body, but at some intangible, non-material level of society as a whole.

One has the impression that within the milieu of the community of people living on the Earth a reaction is beginning to take place which we are not in a position to arrest — or, for that matter, even to control.

The basic evidence of such a reaction is the psychic response observed in those who have come in contact with the book. Questionnaires, along with examination and analysis of readers' correspondence attest to the fact that a majority of readers have experienced a creative urge expressed in the form of poetic compositions, sketches and drawings, along with the writing and performing of songs. Many readers have felt the impulse to make contact with and cultivate plants, or to change their profession. In certain cases the reading of the book is followed by a significant improvement in one's sense of well-being and the disappearance of symptoms of disease.

We conducted an experiment on thirty people having various ailments. In a psychotherapy/sleep-therapy unit they were asked to read the text of the book. In the case of 27 of them an emotional concentration was observed, along with lack of sleep and an increased hæmoglobin count in the blood. If we assume that the reaction on the part of these readers is due to the vividness of the image of literary art,

one can confirm that in terms of psychological effect this particular image far surpasses, by several degrees, all those hitherto known, including classical and biblical images.

The indisputability of such a conclusion is confirmed by the percentage of readers who have expressed their relationship to the book in poetic and other creative forms — according to our statistical survey, this has happened with as many as one in every nineteen readers.

Moreover, it should be noted that the author's expository style is primitive to the extreme. It does not follow any established norm of the literary arts, and the text is replete with grammatical errors. But a computer analysis of the book's readability shows that it has a readability rating of 80% or higher!

In our direct contact with Object X we noticed a phenomenon encountered nowhere else before and with no counterpart in any data observed or recorded by ufologists.

We observed a spheroid energy mass, resembling large ball lightning. Its energy potential far surpasses existing scientific concepts of the power of natural energies. Its ability to change the Earth's gravitational field in a specific location affords it the possibility of instantaneously transforming anything not rooted in the ground into cosmic dust.

During the period of our contact, the Earth's gravitation was changed slightly, but with any increase in its power output we and all material objects might have simply found ourselves somewhere out in space. By contrast, the gravitational field around Object X was not changed, which attests to the possibility of selective influence.

It was evident that the change in the Earth's gravitational attraction was preceded by a reduction in the blue spectrum of natural light.

One could hypothesise that the so-called gravitational attraction of the Earth is not dependent on the Earth itself

but on the pressure of light emanating from certain celestial objects, energies, or the Earth's atmosphere as created by an intelligent being.

Despite its ability to acquire large quantities of information, Object X does not attempt to subject it to analysis. It processes the information it receives on the level of feelings and intuition, from which arises an impression of naïvety. The interrelationships between Object X and the energy mass are simple and commonplace, established on the basis of feelings, with no trace of servility or idolisation. They are characterised by full freedom of action in a context of mutual respect.

The luminous energy mass we observed possesses intelligence and, even more incredibly, feelings, something which ufologists have not noted in connection with a single UFO. This is evidenced by the fact that during contact with Object X the rays of the energy mass stroked its feet and hair, and that the mass itself, through its movements, reacted to Object X's emotional state.

Along with the capability of exerting a physiological effect on matter, the phenomenon perceived by us also has the capacity to produce a psychological effect.

It may be hypothesised that Object X may represent an earthly human being who is periodically contacted by representatives of an extra-terrestrial civilisation, or that it is in communication with some kind of natural phenomenon which does not lend itself to scientific investigation.

It may be further hypothesised that Object X itself represents an extra-terrestrial civilisation. However, the object's own declaration: "I am Man, I am a woman" contradicts this hypothesis. Such a declaration places us in an unresolvable dilemma, as the question inevitably arises: "Who then are we?" Or to put it another way: "Has mankind been treading a path of progress or regression?"

CHAPTER TWELVE



Man-made mutants

“Okay, that’s enough,” I interrupted Alexander. “For me, Anastasia is just a recluse. Maybe she’s got some unusual abilities, but I would say she’s human, she’s Man. Let’s hope so, anyway. If I think about everything too much, I could go nuts. So start up that old rattletrap motor of yours and let’s go.”

It took us about four hours to get to the remote settlement. After I had set foot on the familiar stretch of shoreline, Alexander also got out of the boat and once again tried to persuade me:

“Anastasia’s gone, Vladimir. Really give it some thought — you can still change your mind about trying to reach her glade. You won’t make it.”

“I’m going.” I was hoisting my backpack to sling it over my shoulder when I suddenly noticed Alexander unsheathing a large hunting knife.

I threw the backpack down and rifled about on the ground for something I could defend myself with. But Alexander, having bared his right arm to the elbow, suddenly slashed his own arm with the knife and covered the gushing blood with a white linen scarf he had. Then he asked me to fetch the first-aid kit from the motorboat and bind his wounded arm. I did this, still in a state of bewilderment. He handed me the bloodsoaked scarf, saying:

“Tie this around your head.”

“What for?”

“At least that way the hunters won’t touch you. They will not fire at a wounded man.”

"You think those hunters of yours are dumb or something? They only have to come close and they'll see right off it's a prop."

"They won't come close. Why take the chance? They've all got their own territories and pathways. If someone needs to go into the taiga for a good reason, he'll talk to the hunters first, tell them about himself and what he intends to do, and co-ordinate his route with them. If they think he has a good reason, they'll help him, give him advice and may even provide an escort. But they know nothing about you. They may shoot first and ask questions later, but they won't fire at a wounded man."

I took the bloodsoaked scarf and tied it around my head.

"I guess I'm supposed to say thank you, but somehow I don't feel like thanking you."

"No need to. I didn't do it for thanks. I just wanted to do at least something for you. When you get back, light a fire on the riverbank. I'll be passing close by from time to time, and if I see the smoke I'll come pick you up — if, that is, you manage to get back."

As I was walking along, I noticed a couple of dogs about a hundred metres away. Probably from the settlement, I thought. I wished they would come closer, as dogs had a quieting effect on me. I even tried to attract their attention, but they didn't approach, only kept a parallel course to mine. And so we went deeper into the taiga.

It was pointless for Alexander to try and scare me, I thought. The taiga didn't seem hostile to me at all. Maybe it was because I knew at the back of my mind that here amidst the trees and moss-covered logs lived Anastasia, and even if she was strange, she was still a kind person. I held to the notion that here in the taiga with all its tangled undergrowth, its sounds and air so unfamiliar to city-dwellers, lived my very

own son. This thought made the taiga feel just a bit more like home to me.

The twenty-five kilometres from the riverbank to the glade presented much more of a challenge than walking along an ordinary road, since there were fallen trees to climb over and thickets to go around. The time I had been walking with Anastasia I hadn't noticed all these barriers, immersed as we were in conversation. The main thing now was not to lose my sense of direction on account of them, and I began checking my compass more often, all the while thinking: How did Anastasia find her glade with no compass? It certainly didn't look as though there was any kind of pathway.

Stopping to rest after every hour, by noon I got to a shallow stream about two metres wide. Anastasia and I had also forded a stream, I remembered. I decided to go across and stop for some time in a glade just on the other side. I made my way along the trunk of a partly rotted tree which had fallen into the stream. The tree didn't extend all the way across, so after tossing my backpack, I made a jump for the shore. But something happened. My leg fell on some kind of protruding snag and got twisted, or sprained somehow. I felt a searing pain through my whole leg and it even spread to my head. I lay there a few minutes and then tried to get up. I realised I couldn't walk. So I lay there, reflecting on what to do next. I tried to remember what you're supposed to do when you twist or sprain your leg. But I had a hard time remembering, probably because the pain was so intense. Then I decided I would lie still for a while, have a bite to eat, and maybe the pain would go away. If need be, I would light a fire and spend the night there. Maybe by morning my leg would even be better. After all, everything with Man heals itself eventually.

It was at this point that I caught sight of the dogs again. There were four of them now, and two more on the other side. And they weren't going anywhere. They took up their

positions on either flank, about ten metres from me. The dogs were of various breeds: one was an Airedale, another was a Boxer, the remainder were mongrels. And there was a little lap-dog among them. Their coats were ragged, they were terribly thin, the Airedale's eyes were festering. I remembered hearing my captain's first mate telling about dogs like this. And my sudden awareness of the precariousness of my situation made even the pain in my leg disappear temporarily.

The first mate of my headquarters ship told how people who didn't want their pets around any more would take them off somewhere and abandon them. If they dropped them off within the city limits, the cats and dogs would hang around various scrap-heaps and at least get a little something to keep them going. When dogs were taken out to a remote area, far outside of town, they would group together in gangs and get their food by attacking a living creature. Including people, especially people all by themselves.

These dogs are actually more frightening than wolves. They'll lie in wait for a wounded or exhausted victim and then attack their prey simultaneously. Another thing that makes these gangs of homeless mad dogs more frightening than wolves is their superior knowledge of human habits and their hatred of human beings. They have it in for *people*. They have no experience hunting for wild game, but people are their prey.

It's especially frightening when the gang includes at least one dog who's been trained to attack human beings. I once had a dog, which I took to a private obedience school. The training programme included attacking a person on command. The instructor's assistant would put on a padded coat with long sleeves and the dog would be taught to attack him viciously. If the dog carried out the command properly, he would be rewarded with a treat. They sure went through their paces, those smart-asses!

I wonder if there is any other creature on Earth, apart from Man, that finds it necessary to teach another species to attack one of the teacher's own kind.

The dogs around me began to tighten their circle. I needed to show them, I thought, that I was still alive, that I could move about and defend myself. I picked up a short stick and chucked it at the closest mangy bitch. It managed to dodge the stick and take up a new position. There weren't any other sticks within reach. Then I got a couple of tins of preserves out of my backpack. As I was getting them, the smallest of the gang — the lap-dog — stole up from behind, tore a piece out of my trouser-leg with its teeth and then jumped back. The other dogs watched — probably to see my reaction.

I took one of the tins and chucked it at the nearest large pooch; the other I threw at the lap-dog. There was nothing else to throw. My consciousness was overwhelmed with a sense of hopelessness.

I began imagining how the dogs would tear apart my body and eat it in pieces and how I would still be conscious for some time and witness it all and writhe in pain, since the dogs wouldn't be able to finish me off all at once. And I had nothing with me to bring on a quick death and escape extended torture.

One thing I felt especially bad about was that I wouldn't be able to deliver my backpack containing the gifts for Anastasia from my readers, along with various kiddie items a young child would need.

Half my backpack was taken up with readers' letters full of questions and requests. A lot of letters. Most unusual letters. They wrote from the heart, they wrote about their lives, and there were lots of poems. Maybe not too professionally crafted, not always rhyming, but still there was something good about them. And now they would all be lost, rotting away here in the taiga.

And then a thought struck me, out of the blue. I decided to write a note and place it in the plastic bag with the letters. A note! If anyone found my backpack, they could take all its contents and the money too. And they could send the readers' letters back to my daughter Polina. I told her in the note to publish them once there were enough royalties from my book to cover the expense. It would be a crime for so many soul-inspired poems to be lost forever. Many of their authors were likely writing the first poem in their life, something that came straight from their heart. And now the only poem they ever wrote in their life would be lost.

It was quite a challenge writing the note. My hands were trembling. From fear, most probably. And just why does Man cling so tight to life even in a situation where it is absolutely clear that it's all over? But I managed to finish the note and put it in the plastic bag with the letters. I tied the bag tight so moisture wouldn't get in.

And then all at once I noticed that the dogs, which had already come quite close to me, were beginning to execute a rather strange manoeuvre. One by one they started crawling *away* from me. Some of them were sitting up on their haunches looking in the other direction, away from me, and then lay down again, as though in ambush. I managed to get up on one leg to take a look and see what had distracted them. And then I saw... I saw how along the stream, with leaps and bounds, came running none other than Anastasia, her magnificent golden hair trailing in the breeze. And her sweeping stride was so utterly beautiful that I completely forgot about my own danger in admiring the scene.

And all of a sudden it hit me: *the dogs!* They were no doubt under the impression that their prey might now be taken from them, and they were getting set to attack the newcomer running so determinedly toward them.

These starving dogs, brutalised by the wilds, would viciously fight for their prey to the end. Anastasia would not be able to do anything about them all by herself. The dogs would tear her apart, and I cried out as loud as I could:

“Stop, Anastasia, stop! Dogs! Wild dogs here! Don’t come this way, Anastasia! Stop!”

Anastasia heard me, but didn’t let up her bounding stride for a moment. But while she ran she waved her hand in the air. What has she done now? — I thought. The extraordinary phenomenon she could call upon wouldn’t be able to help her now.

As quickly as I could I pulled out of my backpack the little glass jars of baby food. I started throwing them at the dogs, trying to attract their attention to myself and away from Anastasia. One of the jars hit its mark, but the dogs paid no attention to my efforts.

No doubt they realised who their real threat was. No sooner had Anastasia entered their circle than the dogs attacked her from all sides at once. And then...

Oh, what a sight it was! You’d have had to see it to believe it. Anastasia transformed all the energy of her run into a spin. All at once she broke her stride and spun about sharply like a top, or a ballerina twirling on stage, only faster. Upon striking Anastasia’s rotating body, the dogs flew off in different directions without causing her any harm, but then, once she had stopped spinning, they got ready to launch a new attack.

I crawled over toward Anastasia. She was wearing her short, light-weight dress. If only she’d been wearing her quilted jacket, it would have been harder for the dogs to bite through.

Anastasia got down on one knee. As she knelt there in the circle of the vicious dogs that were half-crazed by hunger, her face betrayed no fear. She looked at me and said briskly:

“Hello, Vladimir! Only do not be afraid. Just relax a little. Let go. Do not worry, they will not do anything to me, these starving little dogs. Not to worry.”

Two huge mutts once more launched an attack on Anastasia from either side. Without getting up and without ceasing her talking, a lightning-fast movement of her hands caught each dog in mid-air by its front paw and spun it around. Moving her body slightly to one side, she let the two dogs crash into each other and drop to the ground.

The other dogs had once more taken up a position, no doubt getting ready for a new attack, but this time they stayed put.

Anastasia stood up and swept her hand up into the air. Lowering it, she slapped herself twice on the thigh.

From behind the nearby thickets there suddenly sprang out four mature wolves. There was such determination in their headlong dash that it seemed they would not think to take account of the numbers or strength of the foe before them. They were spoiling for a fight.

The dogs put their tails between their legs and headed off lickety-split. The wolves ran right past me, practically spraying me with their hot breath. Right on their heels a young wolf cub breezed past in a flicker, trying with all his might, in spite of his shorter stride, not to fall behind the pack. When he reached the spot where Anastasia was standing, he suddenly braked with all four paws, and even did a somersault. Then he jumped up and gave two licks to the fresh scratch on Anastasia's bare foot.

Anastasia abruptly grabbed the cub by his torso and hoisted him up in the air.

"Where are you off to?" she said. "It is not your time yet. You are still too little."

The cub began squirming all over in Anastasia's arms and whining like a puppy. He managed to escape — or, rather, she herself let him go. Once more on the ground, the cub gave one more quick lick to Anastasia's scratch and set off to catch up with the pack.

"But why?" I began questioning Anastasia as she headed over to me. "Why didn't you call in the wolves right off? Why?"

Anastasia smiled, and proceeded at once to feel my arms and legs. With her pure, calming voice she said:

"Please do not worry. I needed to show the dogs that Man is always superior to them. The wolves they will fear in any case. But the dogs have begun making attacks on Man. Now they will no longer attack Man.

"Not to worry. I felt your presence and could tell you were coming. I ran to meet you. Why did you take such a risk in coming into the taiga all by yourself? At first I could not find you, and then I guessed you must have set out on your own."

Anastasia ran off to one side and plucked up some kind of grasses. Then she looked in a different place and did the same. She rubbed the grasses between her hands and carefully soothed my sore leg with her moist palms. And she kept talking non-stop:

"It will go away. It will pass quickly. Before you can say 'Jack Robinson'."

I noticed Anastasia frequently used proverbs and sayings, and I asked:

"Where did you pick up these sayings?"

"I sometimes listen to how various people speak. To learn how to express a greater meaning in just a few words. That displeases you?"

"Well, sometimes they're not quite apropos."

"And sometimes they *are*, well, 'propos'? It is good when they are 'propos'?"

"How do you mean, 'propos'?"

"That was your word. I was just repeating it."

"Tell me, Anastasia, is it still a long ways to your glade?"

"You have come halfway. Together we shall get there quickly."

"It probably won't be very quick, as long as my leg hurts like this."

"Yes, it may still hurt a bit longer. Let your leg rest, and I shall help you walk."

Anastasia hoisted the heavy backpack onto her shoulders. Then, turning her back to me, squatted down on one knee and invited me to climb on.

"Take hold of me and climb onto my back." She said this with such briskness and determination that I immediately obeyed, clasping my arms around her neck. Anastasia promptly rose to her feet and skipped off at a sprightly gait. And throughout our journey she kept talking on the run.

"Not too heavy for you?" I asked after some time.

"One's own burdens are light," replied Anastasia, adding with a laugh:

"I'm a horse and I'm an ox, I'm a wench and I'm a jock!"

"Stop. Let me down. I'll try walking on my own."

"But you are not too heavy for me. Why do you want to try on your own?"

"What's that about a jock? 'I'm a wench and I'm a jock', you said?"

"Just another saying. It was not apropos, eh? Did it offend you?"

"It's okay. I simply want to try walking on my own. If you could just carry my backpack a little while longer."

"If you want to walk on your own, you will have to rest your leg at least another hour..." she advised as she gently lowered me to the ground. "You sit there for a bit, I shall return before long." At that Anastasia ran off for a little while on her own. She presently returned with a bundle of various grasses and once more began rubbing them into my leg near my ankle. Then she sat down beside me, and smiled as she slyly eyed my backpack. All at once she asked:

"Vladimir, please tell me, what is in your backpack?"

"Some letters from readers. Also gifts they sent me to give to you. And I've bought a little something for the baby."

"Could you show me the gifts now while we are resting?"

"And will you show me the baby — our son? You're not going to tell me that he can't see me until I've cleansed myself?"

"Fine. I shall show you our son. Only not right away. Tomorrow I shall show you. The first thing you need to do is to learn a bit about how to converse with him. You will learn quickly once you see him."

"Tomorrow's okay."

I undid the backpack and began to take out its contents. First, the gifts for Anastasia. She took each item carefully in her hands and looked at it with interest, caressing it. She started playing on the Valdai Bells¹ — a present from Olga Sidorovna.² And when I handed her a beautiful large, colourful shawl — a gift from another very kind woman, Valentina Ivanovna, I realised right off: women are women, and they all have a lot in common.

Anastasia took the shawl and turned it over in her hands. Then she performed a whole series of manipulations with it. She tied the shawl around her head just like in the picture on the *Alionushka* chocolate bar label,³ and then in other variations as well.

Then, with a laugh, she tied the shawl around her waist in gypsy fashion, before throwing it over her shoulders and

¹*Valdai Bells* — popular bronze bells made in Valdai (in north-western Russia on the route between Moscow and St. Petersburg). According to legend, these bells date back to the 15th century. They were often used on Russian sleighs pulled by a fast-moving troika of horses sweeping over the silent snow-covered countryside, and even today are considered a symbol of freedom and happiness.

²*Sidorovna* — like *Ivanovna* in the following sentence: a patronymic, not a last name.

parading before me in some kind of folk dance. Then she neatly folded the shawl and placed it over the presents spread out on the grass and said:

“Please, Vladimir, say thank you from me to each person, thank these women for the warmth of their heart that they sent along with each of these things.”

“I’ll thank everyone I see. But I have nothing more to show you. The remaining things aren’t for you. They’re for our son. All the things he needs. *You* can’t use these things — I’ll show them to you on the spot when we get there.”

“Why do you not want to do this now? We are just sitting here and resting. I would be most interested in seeing what you have.”

I didn’t want to show Anastasia right off what I had bought for our son, since I remembered what she had said back the first time we met: “You will want to get our son all sorts of senseless toys, but he will not need them at all. You are the one who needs them for your own self-satisfaction, so you can say: ‘Oh, look at me, I’m so good and caring!’” But then I still decided to show them to her, since I myself was interested in how she would react to the achievements of our civilisation in matters of child-care. I started showing Anastasia the diapers I had brought, explaining how effectively they absorb moisture when the baby wets them, so he doesn’t perspire. I told her everything I had seen in the TV commercial. I showed her the baby food.

“You see, Anastasia, this baby food is simply a marvel. It contains all the substances a baby needs — vitamin

³The chocolate bar is actually called *Alionka* (pron. *al-YON-ka*), rather than Alionushka. The label for this popular chocolate bar, a favourite with Russian children, shows a little girl with puffy cheeks, wearing a shawl tied to cover her head and neck. ‘Alionushka’ (another diminutive of Aliona), on the other hand, is the heroine of a Russian fairy-tale, not connected with the chocolate bar label.

supplements too. The main thing is, it's so easy to prepare. Just dissolve in warm water, and the food's ready. Got it?"

"I 'got it'."

"Well, now, you see the factory chimneys of our technocratic world aren't just blowing smoke for nothing. We've got some factories producing baby food like this, and the packaging for it. You see that beautiful baby pictured on the package, all smiling and rosy-cheeked?"

"I see."

Finally I showed Anastasia my last gift and commented:

"This is a children's construction set. A construction set's not like a senseless noisemaker. It says here it's specially designed to help the child develop. He can build a car with it, like in the picture, or a steam engine, or an aeroplane, or a house. Well, maybe it'll suit our son a little later. Right now, of course, it's still early for him to make sense of what moves and flies and how."

"Why early? He can make sense of all that right now," replied Anastasia.

"You see, the construction set will help him in this," I observed.

"Do you think so? Are you certain about that?"

"I'm not the only one who's certain, Anastasia. There's a whole bunch of scientists and psychologists who study children's mental development. You see, their endorsements are printed right here on the box."

"Fine, Vladimir, fine. Not to worry. You will do everything the way you feel you should. Only I would ask you to take a look first, observe how our son lives. Then you will be able to determine what his first priorities are."

"Right. Whatever you say." I was glad that Anastasia did not argue with the need for the things I'd brought. I would be able to have a look for myself and decide.

"In the meantime let us hide your backpack here," she said.

"Then, once you determine what thing is needed first, I shall run and fetch it, or I shall fetch the whole backpack if necessary. Right now it is heavy to carry. Your leg still hurts after all, and you do not wish me to carry you."

"Well, okay, let's hide it for the time being," I agreed. "Only we'll take the letters with us. There are a lot of questions in them for *you*. I didn't memorise them all."

"Fine, we shall bring the letters," Anastasia agreed, taking the package. Once she had hid my backpack in a safe place, I leaned my arm on her shoulder, and the two of us headed off in the direction of her glade.

It was late at night by the time we arrived.

As before, the glade was empty. No structures, not even a lean-to. But somehow I got the feeling that I had come home. Even my mood was uplifted, and a sense of calm had set in. I felt like going to sleep. Probably because I had been talking all the previous night with Alexander. Wow! I thought — there's absolutely nothing in this glade, and yet I get the feeling I've come home.

Evidently, one's sense of home is not in the size of one's living space or even a castle, but in something else.

Anastasia at once took me to her lake and recommended I bathe. I really didn't feel like bathing, but I thought I should be obedient to her in everything, at least for now, so I'd get to see my son sooner.

When I came out onto the shore after bathing, it was colder than in the water. Anastasia dried me off with the palms of her hands, wiped me with some kind of grasses, and my body began to feel warm, even hot. Then she handed me her dress and said with a laugh:

"Please put it on, Vladimir. It will be like a night-shirt for you. I shall soak and wash your clothing, which has a strong odour coming from it."

I put on Anastasia's dress. I knew the odour must be eliminated, and that was that.

"So our son won't be scared off?"

"For him too," Anastasia replied.

"But it'll be cold for me to sleep in nothing but a dress."

"Not to worry, I have already arranged everything. You will have a good night's sleep, and you will not be cold. You can put the packet with the letters under your head for a pillow. I have thought of everything — you will have a good night's sleep, and you will not freeze."

"With the bear to keep me warm again, eh?... I will not sleep with a bear. I'll manage somehow on my own."

"I have made up your bed so that you will not be too cold or too hot."

We went to the dugout where I had slept before. Anastasia pushed aside the branches hanging over the entrance. I caught the pleasant aroma from the dried grasses, and crawled into the dugout, lay down amidst the grasses, and felt the sleep of sweet languor envelop me all around.

"You can cover yourself with my cardigan, but even without it, you will still not be cold. If you wish, I shall also lie down beside you and keep you warm." I heard Anastasia's words through a half-sleep and responded:

"No need. You'd better go to our son, keep him warm..."

"Not to worry, Vladimir. Our son is already capable of handling a great deal on his own."

"How can he do things on his own? He's still too young..." But that was all I could say. I was already immersed in a deep and calm, blissful sleep.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN



A new morning — a new life

I woke in the morning. I felt in such an extraordinarily good mood that I just lay there thinking I'd better not budge for the time being, lest the good mood suddenly vanish. What kind of a night did I have, anyway? And why did I get the impression in the morning that over the past night my whole body and consciousness were literally bathed in love? By the light of day it became clear to me why I had felt neither too cold nor too hot during the night. I was lying immersed in dry grasses and flowers, which gave off a pleasant warmth and aroma.

Readers often ask how Anastasia keeps from freezing in the wintertime, during the cruel Siberian frosts, but it's really all so simple: if you bury yourself in a haystack, there are no frosts to fear. Granted, she has some sort of alternative source of warmth, given that she can walk about semi-nude even when it's +5[°]¹ out and doesn't get cold. She even goes swimming then and doesn't give so much as a shiver when she comes out of the water.

I continued to lie there in the bliss of my dried grasses and thought about how the morning breaking meant a new day had come, and I got the impression as though a new life were beginning. I thought if only this were the way it could be every morning, then in one lifetime one could live a thousand ages, as it were, and each age would be as magnificent as this morning. But how does one make each new day turn out as magnificent as *this* morning?

¹ +5° (Celsius) — approximately equivalent to +40° Fahrenheit.

I didn't get up until I heard Anastasia's cheerful voice calling out to me:

"God surely gives to him who rises early."

I crawled out of my splendid night-time lodgings. Anastasia was already standing right up there at the entrance. Her golden hair was woven into a braid, which was tied with grasses at the end, like a bow. Her new hairdo looked very nice on her.

"Let's go to the lake — you can wash yourself and get dressed," Anastasia proposed, tossing her braid coquettishly to the front.

Well, now, women are women after all, I thought, and said to her aloud:

"That's a very pretty braid you have, Anastasia."

"Pretty, eh? Very, very pretty?" she laughed, as she twirled around.

We ran to the lake. There on the shore, over some branches, were hanging my shirt, trousers, undershirt — in sum, everything I had taken off the night before. I felt them, and they were dry already.

"How did you manage to dry them so quickly?"

"I gave them some help," Anastasia replied. "I put them on myself and ran about a little wearing your clothes, and they dried out very quickly. Now you will be able to put them on after your dip in the lake."

"And are you going to be taking a dip, too?"

"I have already done everything I need to to greet the day."

Before I went into the water, Anastasia rubbed my body down with some sort of paste made from grass. And when I plunged in, the water all around me began to sizzle and my body smarted a little, but when I came out, I felt really refreshed. As though the pores of my skin were starting to breathe with great intensity all by themselves, each one taking in air individually. My overall breathing was free and easy.

Just as she had done the night before, Anastasia, ever cheerful and playful, began once more to rub the moisture off my body with her hands. As she was rubbing my back, I suddenly felt something hot unexpectedly spurt down my spine. It happened once, then again — I turned about sharply and there she was, squeezing her breast with both hands, aiming a stream of warm breast milk right into my face, then from the other breast a stream of milk spurted onto my chest. And then she let loose with a fast rub up and down my body, accompanied by a roar of laughter.

“What are you doing that for?” I asked, when I had recovered from my surprise.

“Because! Because!” guffawed Anastasia, as she handed me my shirt and trousers. They too did not smell the way they did before, and I noticed this as soon as I put them on. Then I said to Anastasia, in a serious tone:

“Okay, I’ve done everything as you wished. Now let me see our son.”

“Fine. We shall go. Only, please, Vladimir, do not try to approach him right off. Watch him for a while at first, try to understand him.”

“Fine, I’ll watch, okay! And I’ll understand.”

We went back to the glade which was now so familiar to me. When we reached the bushes at the edge of the glade Anastasia said:

“Let us sit here quietly and watch: he will be waking up now and you will see him.”

Beside a tree at the edge of the glade the bear was lying on her side, but I couldn’t see any baby. I was getting more and more excited, and my heart started beating strangely.

“Where is he?” I asked Anastasia with bated breath.

“Look more closely,” she replied. “Look, you can see his little head and feet sticking out from under the bear’s paw. That is where he sleeps, in her groin. It is soft and warm

there, and she keeps her paw on top of him — not pressing down, but just to provide a little covering.”

And I saw the scene. The boy’s tiny body was resting in a cradle of thick bear fur, in the huge beast’s groin, under her slightly raised front paw. The bear was lying on her side without stirring, turning only her head from side to side as she looked around. The wee little legs wiggled in the thick fur, at which point the bear raised her paw a little more.

The baby was waking up. When he moved his arm, the bear raised her paw. When his arm dropped back to his side, she lowered her paw a little. Only her paw and head moved. There was not a stir from the rest of her body.

“How can she lie like that without stirring? Isn’t it uncomfortable to maintain that one position the whole time?” I asked.

“She can lie like that without stirring for a long, long time. And it is not hard for her at all. She is just so thrilled when he crawls into his little bed. And now she has started to take herself very seriously. She has a sense of responsibility. When the time approached to start a family, she did not even let her intended mate come near her. That is not too good. But when our son grows a little, she will allow her mate to approach her again.”

As I listened to Anastasia I couldn’t take my eyes off my son — I watched as the little feet once again wiggled beneath the bear’s huge paw. Then the paw went up in the air.

The baby moved his arms and legs, stretched himself, raised his head, then all at once stopped moving.

“Why did he stop moving? Is he going to go back to sleep?” I asked Anastasia.

“Look more closely, he is going piddle. The bear did not manage to let him down to the ground on time, or perhaps she did not want to — she really spoils him, you know.”

The little fountain kept trickling onto the bear’s fur. Like the boy, she too had stopped moving — even her head and

her paw — until the fountain had ceased its trickle. Then the bear began to turn over onto her other side, and the baby slid down to the ground.

“All right. You see, she thinks he will go on to do his Number Two, our little Man,” Anastasia said cheerfully.

The tiny human body lay on the grass, tensing its abdomen muscles in preparation for his ‘Number Two’, while above it hovered the enormous bear. It seemed as though the bear was helping the baby along with her rumbling sounds, as if going through a similar preparation herself. The boy turned over on his stomach, started moving his arms and crawling across the grass on all fours. His little bottom had got dirty from his pooping. The bear went over to him and lapped his tiny bottom with her enormous tongue, wiping off the poop, just like a nanny. She gave the boy a push with her tongue, and he plopped on his tummy, but got up again on all fours and went on crawling. The bear followed him and gave his bottom still another lapping, even though it was already clean by now.

“What do you think, Vladimir? Do you think she would be able to take off his dirty diapers or underpants and put new ones on?” Anastasia asked quietly.

“Okay, okay!” I responded, also in a whisper. “I get it.”

The boy turned over onto his back, and when the bear persisted in lapping his thighs, he made a nimble move and his little hand latched on to the fur on the bear’s muzzle.

In response to what looked to be insignificant movements by the boy’s hand, the bear proceeded to rest her huge head on the ground at his feet. He grabbed hold of her muzzle, reached up with his other hand and started climbing up the bear’s head.

“Where on earth is he going?” I queried.

“To the bear’s eyes,” responded Anastasia. “Her eyes sparkle. They fascinate him, and he always wants to touch them.”

The boy lay on his tummy on the bear's muzzle and looked at one of her eyes. He then tried touching it with his finger, but all at once her eye snapped shut. The boy's finger poked at her eyelid. After waiting a little while longer and still not seeing any sparkling eye, the boy began climbing down from the bear's muzzle, then crawled a little way across the grass, and stopped to look at something on the ground. The bear got up and roared twice.

"She's calling the wolf. She needs to clean herself up and have something to eat. Now you will see how they have a friendly conversation amongst themselves," Anastasia commented.

A few moments later the she-wolf appeared at the edge of the glade. The bear did not show any signs of welcoming her presence, but greeted her with a threatening roar. The wolf's own behaviour was far from friendly. She surveyed the whole glade. She pranced a bit around the edge, lay down, then took a big leap and lay down again, as though ready to pounce.

"What kind of friendly conversation do you call that?!" I asked. "Why did the bear call her, and then roar at her like that? And the wolf seems pretty threatening herself!"

"That is the way they talk with each other. The bear stopped the wolf with her roar to make sure everything was in order with her. To check that she was not sick with anything, that it was not dangerous to let her approach a child of Man, that she was strong enough to defend him. The wolf showed that she was completely prepared. She showed it by her actions, not with words. You saw how she walked past and jumped pretty high."

Indeed, the bear, after observing the wolf, calmly shuffled off out of the glade. The wolf lay down on the grass not far from the little one. The baby kept staring at something for a while longer, feeling the grass. Then he noticed the wolf and crawled toward her. As he approached, he began feeling her

muzzle with his hands, stroking her teeth with his finger, patting her tongue. The wolf lapped his face, at which point little Vladimir crawled onto her stomach, felt the wolf's nipples, sucked his hand all over and screwed his face into a frown.

"Time for our son to eat," Anastasia began speaking again. "But he is not yet so hungry that he will drink the wolf's milk. I am going to leave you for a little bit, while you sit here at the edge of the glade. If he sees you and is interested, he will crawl over to you. Only do not pick him up yourself. He is already a Man, even if small in appearance. He will not understand meaningless cooing sounds. Besides, violence may result if you try to pick him up against his will. He will not understand that. Even if you do it with good intentions, but without his permission, you will make a bad impression on him."

"Right," I said. "I shall not try to pick him up. I'll just sit here like this. But the wolf — she won't touch me?"

"With the scent you have now, she will not touch you."

Anastasia clapped her thigh twice. The wolf got up, turning her head in Anastasia's direction. Then, after a glance at the baby, who had started playing again with some kind of bug, she ran over to Anastasia.

Anastasia came up very near to me. She summoned the wolf to approach closer, then gestured to her to lie down.

"Can I stroke her, to finally make friends with her?" I suggested.

"She will not appreciate any condescending familiarity on your part. She understands everything and will not touch you, but she will not tolerate any display of superiority," Anastasia replied. She sent the wolf back out into the glade and ran off to tend to some affairs of her own, promising to return shortly.

I emerged from behind the bushes, where Anastasia and I had hid ourselves to observe the scene taking place in the

glade. I came out and sat down on the grass about ten metres² from little Vladimir. I sat there that way for about fifteen minutes. He didn't pay the slightest attention to me. I thought that as long as I continued sitting quietly, he would never pay any attention to me. And so I gave a couple of clicks with my tongue.

The little one turned his head and looked at me. My son! My very own son had his eyes fixed on me with fascination, and I was excitedly looking at him. I could even feel a flush all through my body from the excitement.

I had the urge to run and take his little body into my arms, squeeze him and press him against my chest. But Anastasia's request and (more significantly) the presence of the wolf held me back.

And then my little son began slowly crawling toward me. He kept his eyes fixed on me all the while he was crawling. My heart started beating so loud in my chest that I could hear it — what was it beating like that for? Maybe it would frighten the little one away, it was pounding so.

But he kept crawling and crawling, and again something in the grass caught his eye, and he began poking around after a little bug. Then he began to examine something crawling along his arm. At this point he was three metres away. My little son had stopped short in his crawling only three metres away from me!

All over some bug. And what kind of world was out there in the grass, what kind of life had taken his fancy so? What kind of order or rules do they have in the forest anyway? Here's this little boy with his very own father right in front of him, and he's more interested in some kind of bug! That's not the way it should be. The child should know that his father is more important than a bug.

² *ten metres* — approximately equivalent to 33 feet.

All at once the little one looked up again in my direction, showed me a toothless smile, and quickly started crawling again, more nimbly than before. I was all prepared to pick him up, but then noticed that he kept on crawling right past me, not paying any attention to me.

I looked around and saw Anastasia standing all smiles behind me, a little to one side. She sat down and put her hand on the ground, palm upturned. The boy smiled and climbed up to his mother's breast. Anastasia didn't pick him up, but ever so gently helped him climb up, ever so gently helped him reach her breast. Now he was already in her arms, clapping his tiny hands against the exposed breast and smiling at Anastasia. Then, after feeling and stroking her nipple, he closed his lips tight about it and began sucking on the supple breast. Anastasia in the meantime just gave one look at me, putting her finger to her lips to let me know I should keep quiet. I sat there the whole time without uttering a word while she fed our son.

It seemed as though all during the feeding Anastasia was totally oblivious to my presence. Indeed, she did not seem to be aware of the world around her at all. The whole time she concentrated her gaze on our son. And it also seemed as though they were somehow communicating with each other. This impression came from the fact that after sucking for quite a while the baby would suddenly stop, turn away from the nipple and look into Anastasia's face. Sometimes he would be smiling, at other times his face had a serious expression. Then he became very still and slept for a while in his mother's arms. When he awoke, his face once again broke into a smile, and Anastasia sat him on the palm of her hand, supporting his back.

Their faces were very close together, and the baby would feel Anastasia's face with his hands, and press his cheek against hers. Then he spied me once again. And once more he fell still for a while, staring at me in fascination.

All at once he reached out his little hand toward me, inched his body forward in my direction and uttered the sound *eh*. Involuntarily I reached out my hands to him, and at that point Anastasia handed him over to me.

Here I was holding in my arms the tiny body of my very own son — the son I had so greatly desired! Everything else in the world vanished into oblivion. And I had the strong urge to do something for him. The baby felt my face, pressed his lips against it. Then he recoiled with a frown, apparently feeling the prickles on my unshaven face. After that — I don't know how it happened, but I got an uncontrollable urge to kiss his warm little cheek. And I resolved to kiss him! But instead of a kiss I somehow ended up giving his cheek two quick laps, the way the wolf did.

The boy recoiled from me and began batting his eyelids in amazement. Anastasia's loud trills of laughter filled the glade. The baby at once reached out his little hands toward her and started laughing too, squirming in my arms. I realised he was asking to be released. My son was leaving me. Obedient to his will and the established rules of communication here, I carefully put him down on the grass. He immediately crawled over to Anastasia. She jumped up with a laugh, ran around me and sat down on the other side of me, very close. Whereupon the little one turned around and with a big smile crawled over to the two of us. He climbed into Anastasia's arms and once more began to feel my face.

This is how I first communicated with my son.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN



A father's role

My son, my little Vladimir, finally fell asleep. After his feeding he played for a while with something in the grass. He felt a cedar cone which had fallen to the ground and tried to lap it. He looked up at the clouds floating by in the sky. He listened to the birds sing, then climbed up a little hill, where the grass was thicker, curled up, closed his eyes, smiled at something, and fell asleep. Anastasia ran off to take care of some sort of tasks of her own. I set out for a walk in the forest alone, immersing myself in thought to the exclusion of everything around me. At the same time I couldn't get rid of the alternating feelings of joy and disappointment.

I sat down under a cedar tree at the edge of the lake and decided to just sit there without moving until I thought of some way that I as a parent could contribute to my child's upbringing. I had to think of something to make him feel his father was the most important thing in his life.

When Anastasia approached, I didn't feel like talking with her at first. It was her laughter, in fact, that had distracted my son from me. Anastasia sat quietly by my side, her hands clutching her knees, thoughtfully contemplating the calm waters of the lake. She was the first to speak.

"Please do not be offended at me. Your communication struck me as so funny. I could not restrain myself."

"That's not what I'm bothered about."

"What is it then?"

"Many readers' letters ask about how to bring up children, they want me to ask you everything about your system of

raising children and to describe it in my next book. But what is there here to describe? There is no system — quite the opposite. What you have here is some kind of anti-system. For example, what should fathers do under such circumstances? — a reader might ask.”

“You used a most appropriate word — *anti-system* — you can describe that.”

“But who would be interested in that? People are looking for practical guides where it tells them what they should do with their baby when he’s say, one month old, and then when he’s two months old, and so on. An hourly schedule. Books that offer a dietary programme. A complete timetable for bringing up the child according to his age. But here you have only a complete indulgence of the child’s whims. An all-permissive attitude.”

“Tell me, Vladimir, what do you want our son to be like when he grows up?”

“What do you mean, what do I want him to be like? Of course I want him to be a happy, normal and successful individual.”

“And are there many happy people amongst your acquaintances?”

“Happy? Well, if you’re talking about completely happy people, I’d have to say: probably not very many. Everybody’s got something not quite right with their lives. Either there’s not enough money, or they’re plagued by illness or family squabbles. But I want my son to avoid any kind of unpleasant experiences.”

“Then think about it: how can he avoid them if you deliberately squeeze him into the system everyone is brought up in? And think: might there not be a certain pattern in the fact that all parents want to see their children happy, and yet they grow up and turn out just like everyone else — not very happy?”

"A pattern?" I queried. "What kind of pattern? If you know, tell me yourself."

"Let us ponder this question together."

"This is something people have been thinking about for ages, Anastasia. All kinds of scholars and specialists are pondering it. For this they have invented all sorts of systems of child-rearing, worked out schedules, trying to find the most efficient system."

"Take a more careful look around you, Vladimir. See the trees, grasses and flowers growing. How could one possibly draw up an advance schedule of the days and hours when they should be watered? You would not go watering flowers when they were being washed with water from heaven simply because someone worked out a detailed schedule for watering them."

"Now you're going too far. That's just nonsense — that's not an example for raising children. It's not something that can happen in life."

"But you know, Vladimir, this is exactly what *does* happen in life. No matter what the system. It is still only a system. It is always calculated to wean the heart and soul away from Man when he is still small and to subject him to the system. So that he grows up like everyone else, in a way that will fit the system. And so it goes on for ages on end, so as to prevent the human soul from experiencing clarity of vision. To prevent Man from discovering himself in his beauty as a whole, with a God-given soul. Yes, Man! The ruler of all the Universe."

"Hold on a moment, don't get carried away beyond my reach, speak calmly using everyday speech. What do parents need to do to make it so? So that children will grow up, as you say, with a soul that is free? To be rulers of the Universe, and happy? As God Himself has wished?"

"They must not interfere, they need to see their children clearly in their own thinking the way God Himself has

wished. It is the aspiration of all the forces of Light in the Universe that each newborn child be endowed with the very best of creation. It is the parents' duty not to hide the creative Light under the erudition of invented dogmas. For ages upon the Earth debates have arisen as to which system might be the wisest. But think about it yourself, Vladimir. Debates arise where Truth is hid from sight. Fruitless debates can go on forevermore as to what might be found behind the closed door. But one has only to open the door and it will be clear to all, and there will be nothing to debate, since everyone will be able to see the Truth for himself."

"But in the final analysis, who will open this door?"

"It is already open. All that remains is for the eyes of the soul to be opened to see and gain awareness."

"Gain awareness of what?"

"You were asking me about systems. You were mentioning the schedules and everyday régimes and how someone sets them forth for people in books. But think about it: who can tell more clearly about creation than the Creator Himself?"

"But the Creator doesn't tell anything. Up to now He has said hardly a word. Nobody hears His words."

"Words thought up by Man have many meanings. The Creator patiently and lovingly speaks with each one of us through splendid, imperishable acts. The rising of the Sun and the silvery sheen of the Moon, the soft mist and tender dew, playing with the Sun's ray and drinking in the heavenly blue. The Universe is filled with so many clear examples like that. Just look around you. They touch you and everyone else too."

Again, if everything Anastasia said about child-rearing were to be laid out, the result would probably be the complete opposite of how we handle this matter today.

I have already said that Anastasia, along with all her forebears through the ages, treats a newborn as a deity or an

immaculate angel. They consider it totally unacceptable to interfere with the child's thought process.

Anastasia's grandfather and great-grandfather were able to observe for long periods at a time how their little granddaughter would be fascinated by a bug or a flower, or the contemplation of something. They tried their best not to distract her with their presence. They would converse with her only when she herself paid attention to them and showed a desire to communicate. Anastasia maintained that at the very moment I was observing little Vladimir contemplating something in the grass, he was becoming aware not only of the bugs but of all creation.

According to her, a bug is a more perfect mechanism than any manufactured product, let alone a primitive construction set.

A child provided with the opportunity to communicate with these perfect beings will himself become more perfect than through communication with primitive lifeless objects.

Besides, as she maintains, every blade of grass, every bug, is interrelated with the whole of creation and subsequently aids the child in becoming aware of the essence of the Universe and of himself as part of it, to become aware of his innate purpose. Artificially created objects have no such connection and do not arrange priorities and values in the child's brain in the right way.

To my observation that the conditions in which she — and now our son — were being brought up were totally different from those in which children of our civilised world are to be raised, she responded as follows:

"Even in the mother's womb, and especially when a helpless infant, as it seems, is given birth in the world, the forces of Light in the Universe rejoice. They rejoice in the trembling hope that the newly arrived immaculate Godlike Man will become their kind ruler and intensify the Light of Love from the Earth.

"Everything has already been provided for him by the Creator. Through a bug, a tree, a blade of grass, a seemingly ferocious beast, the Universe is prepared to be a good nurse for him. Even in a Man outwardly small we see the great work of the Creator of all. In a burst of bright inspiration Man has been co-created by the Creator. And with his birth has been created for him a Paradise on Earth.

"Nothing and no one has power over the Creator's supreme co-creation. His burst of love and bright inspiration are already comprehended in each engendered moment for the world.

"Of all the beings in the unfathomable Universe only one is capable of influencing his destiny by coming between God, Paradise, a star of happiness and Man."

"So," I queried, "does that mean that there is a being in the world more powerful than God?"

"There is nothing in the world more powerful than Divine inspiration," replied Anastasia. "But there is a being equal to it in power, capable of coming between God — the most tender educator — and the angelic child — Man."

"And who is that, how is he called?"

"That being is *Man the parent*."

"What? But how can it happen that parents can wish unhappiness for their children?"

"Everyone *wants* happiness. But they have forgotten the path to happiness. That is why they are perpetrating violence out of good intentions."

"Can you offer proof, even just a little, of what you say?" I asked.

"You spoke of various systems of raising children," Anastasia responded. "Think about it. There are many systems. But there is only one Truth. And this alone means that the many are leading in the wrong direction."

"How can one tell the true system from a false one?"

"Try to look at life with an open heart. Purify thought from vain and fruitless art, and then you will see the world, the Creator of the Universe and yourself."

"Where are the eyes of the heart, in place of ordinary eyes? Who is capable of discerning all this? Couldn't you talk about things in more specific terms? And in simpler, conversational phrases? You said that your language would be similar to mine, but you are talking differently. And you are making me talk like you. I can sense how you are talking differently."

"Only a wee bit differently. And you will be able to remember the gist of what I say. And my speech will mix with yours. And do not worry, do not feel shy about the combinations of words you use. Your language will be understandable to many people. It will reveal to many hearts the essence concealed in those very hearts. Let the poetry of the Universe express itself in the way you write."

"What's going on here? I don't want anyone to change the way I write."

"But yet you were offended when a journalist called your language 'stilted'. I, along with your readers, can make it so your language may leap from 'stilted' into 'the best-sounding of all time'."

"Well, okay, let's have it that way down the road, but for now I just want to hear simple language. As it is, the issue is so complex, it is incomprehensible. How does it all happen, and how come *parents* are closing off the path to happiness for their children? And is that in fact what is really happening? First of all I have to be convinced that that's really the case."

"Fine. If you want to be convinced, try recalling scenes from your own childhood."

"But that's hard to do. Not everyone can recall things that happened in their infancy."

"And why might that be? Is it not because memory attempts to spare our feelings and excise what is empty and fruitless? It

tries to erase any suggestion of hopelessness, to rub out what you experienced in your mother's womb when you sensed the world's verbal abuse through the sufferings of your mother. Do you want me to help you recall the other things?"

"Well, you can give it a try. What other things were there that have gone from my memory?"

"The other things are not things you wish to remember — you are reluctant to remember how you, the ruler of the Universe, lay all by yourself helpless in your crib. You were so tightly wrapped up, it was like being bound in a cocoon, and smiling people decided when you should eat and when you should sleep. You wanted to think everything through for yourself, to make sense of what was going on. But so often they would simply make cooing sounds and toss you up toward the ceiling. But what for? — you never got a chance to think about that. After growing a little, you began to see a great many things around you that had no voice and no heart. But you were not allowed to touch them. You could touch only those things which people handed you. And you resigned yourself to trying to figure out: where was the perfection in any of the joy-toys you were offered? But there was no way you could have found, in this absurd primitive object, what had never been there in the first place and never could.

"But still you kept searching, you did not completely give up — you felt things with your hands, you tried to bite them, but to no avail. You did not find any explanation. That was when you first wavered, you who were born to be ruler of the Universe. You decided that you were unable to decide anything for yourself. You were betrayed by those who gave you birth, and you betrayed yourself."

"You talk about the events of *my* life. Was there anything in which I was different from other kids?"

"I am talking specifically about you. And about those who are listening to me at the moment."

"So that must mean there are many rulers of the Universe, if each one of us is born to be one. But how can *that* be? What sense does it make being a ruler, if there are many ruling over the same thing? Or does that mean there are many universes?"

"There is one Universe. Just one. Indivisible. But in that one Universe each one has his own space, and is responsible for the whole. Each one is responsible."

"So where is it — my space, I mean?"

"It has been lost. But you will find it!"

"When did I manage to lose it?"

"When you gave up."

"What do you mean, I 'gave up'? I was just like all the other kids."

"Like all the other children, you believed in the kindness of people around you, you believed in your parents, you began more and more to repress your own desires. And you accepted their belief that you were nothing but an ignorant, insignificant youngster.

"And the sensations inculcated in you by the abuse of your childhood keep on haunting you throughout your life, even to the point of attempting to reproduce themselves in your offspring. You went to school like everyone else. There you were told how Man was nothing but a monkey. How he was a primitive creature. How foolish he was to believe in God. You were told about how there was just one leader who knew everything. A leader chosen by the people. A leader who alone was more worthy and more intelligent than anyone else. And you got carried away with poems about that leader. You began glorifying him without a second thought."

"It wasn't just that I extolled and read verse as I was told — I actually believed it back then."

"Yes, many people read verse. There were even competitions to see who could extol him better than anyone else. And you tried to be the best."

"So did everyone else back then."

"Yes, the whole system demanded that everyone have the same aspirations. And thereby perpetrated violence on everyone. It tried to break people to preserve itself.

"But then, all at once, part way through your life, you discovered that there were a lot of systems out there and that they were all different. Then you discovered that Man, quite possibly, was never a monkey. And the very wise leader turned out to be a very stupid tyrant. And it turned out that your generation had been living life all wrong. Now there was a new system to live by.

"And then you became a parent. And unthinkingly you handed over your daughter to the new system, as though you were doing her a favour. You were not thinking, as you did before. You used to *wonder* when your toys made noise, but you don't wonder any more. Having accepted abuse yourself as a normal state of affairs, you began abusing your own child. Century after century various systems have come and gone, one after the other, but all with a single goal — to *kill you*, a 'ruler' and wise creator, and transform you into a soulless slave.

"The system always operates through parents. And through those who proclaim themselves to be wise teachers. They will come up with new teachings, thereby engendering a whole new system. And it does not take much investigation to see clearly that they are motivated by the age-old ambition to separate you from God. To come between you and make both you and God try to live and work only for them. This is the core of any system. And you, Vladimir, started asking me to create yet another system. I shall not be able to fulfil your request. You must look around you. Try to make sense of things through your heart alone."

"Tell me, Anastasia, what about our son? Do you mean to say that living out here in the dense taiga, among all the wild beasts, he has not known violence, even in the least?"

"He knows neither violence nor fear. He is ever more confident that everything here is subject to Man and that Man is answerable for everything."

"But wasn't it violence, at least in a small degree, when the bear lapped his dirty bottom after he woke up? When he fell on his stomach after the bear lapped him? And she did this a second time after he began crawling again. And the second time he fell down. The way I saw it, he really didn't like the bear lapping him like that. That was why he grabbed the bear by her muzzle, so she would stop pushing him with her tongue."

"And right at that point the bear *stopped* lapping him. A little later he will realise the significance of this procedure, but right now he sees it as a game. He himself plays with the bear and wants her to chase him."

"You say Man is the wisest creature in the Universe, Anastasia, but here our son is being raised by wild animals. That's not quite normal. I saw one time on TV how they showed a person who was already grown up. As a young lad he had landed among wolves, and when he was grown up people caught him, and it was a long time before he could talk anything like a human being. He seemed quite backward mentally."

"As far as our son is concerned," Anastasia replied, "all the wild animals around do not serve as child-raisers, but rather as good, kind, capable nannies, who sincerely love our little boy. And there is no doubt they would be ready at any moment to give their lives for their little fellow."

"Have you been giving them this kind of training for a long time? Did your grandfather and great-grandfather help you?"

"What need is there for training? Everything was done ages ago by the Creator."

"But how could He have foreseen everything in advance, to be able to teach each creature what to do in any given

instance? Back there in the glade, as I was watching, our son was looking at the squirrels, and one in particular caught his fancy. He held out his little hand to it, smiled, and uttered a drawn-out *eh* sound. And the squirrel dashed right over to him — that same squirrel that had caught his eye. The little one then played with it, took it by its paw and stroked its tail. Now how could the Creator have foreseen this particular situation and taught the squirrel what to do?”

“The Creator is wise. He made everything more simple and to perfection.”

“How?”

“From a Man who is free from aggression, selfishness, fear and many other dark feelings which came along later, emanates the Light of Love. Even though it is invisible to the eye, it is stronger than the light of the Sun. Its energy is life-giving. The way the Creator arranged things, only Man is endowed with such a tremendous ability. Only Man! He alone is capable of bringing warmth to all living creatures. That is why all living creatures are drawn to him.

“As Vladimir, our little son, was paying attention to the squirrels, he fixed his gaze on one of them in particular, concentrated his attention on it, and his warmth went out to that little squirrel. In this warmth the creature felt a sense of grace, and rushed toward the source, and was delighted to play with him. Our son can summon any animal that way.

“Thanks to the Creator all newborns have such an ability — when they are still in the Space of Love and nothing has yet erased this magnificent element within them. The Space of Love begins with the mother’s womb, and then only spreads apace. Only Man is endowed with the power to wreck or perfect this Space.

“My grandfather did train the eagle — you remember that — and thereby introduced a new element into the Space

of Love. This is what my forebears — my forefathers and foremothers — have been doing from time immemorial. Now, tomorrow will be a special day, and you will see what happens. Tomorrow will be an important day for the future.”

CHAPTER FIFTEEN



A bird for discovering one's soul

The next day we went to the glade and, as before, watched from a concealed vantage-point as our little son was engrossed in his play. The wolf lay at the edge of the glade, following everything with a keen eye. Her cubs played by her side. I noticed little Vladimir from time to time sticking his finger in his mouth and sucking on it, as all children that age do, for some reason. I knew parents are supposed to dissuade their offspring from this habit by some means or other — either by binding the child's hands with cloth or by giving him a soother. I mentioned this to Anastasia, and she replied:

“Not to worry, this is extremely beneficial. Our son is licking pollen from his fingers.”

“Pollen? What kind of pollen?”

“Pollen from the flowers and the grass. He touches the flowers and grass with his hands. Sometimes bugs will crawl across his hand, and they carry pollen too, on their legs. See, he is frowning. And taking his finger out of his mouth. That means he did not like the taste of some kind of grass pollen. Now he is bending down and trying to put a flower into his mouth to see how *it* tastes. Let him do that. Let him taste the Universe.”

“The Universe and a little flower — what's the connection? Or is it simply a figure of speech?”

“Everything alive in the world has a connection with the Universe.”

“But how? Where? Where can one see this connection? What instrument is capable of measuring it?”

"One does not need an instrument. One needs only one's soul. Then you will be able to see and understand what is visible around us every day, many times over."

"What can be seen — and then understood — with the soul? Give me an example."

"Take the Sun, for instance. It is far away from us — a planet of the Universe — yet as soon as it rises, it touches a flower with its ray, and the flower opens in delight. It seems as though they are so far apart from each other — the great huge orb of day and the tiny wee flower, but they are linked together. One cannot exist without the other."

Anastasia unexpectedly fell silent and began looking up. I looked up too. I saw a large eagle circling over the glade. I had seen eagles something like that at the zoo. It kept circling lower and lower, and all at once it touched down with its talons about two metres from the boy. The inertia of its flight kept it moving along the ground for a while. Then, after shaking its feathers all over, it stood forth proud in the glade.

The wolf pricked up her ears. Her fur was standing on end, but she made no move to attack the eagle, which was now strutting proudly across the glade.

The little one got all excited. He sat down on his little bare bottom and — without any awareness of danger — stretched out his hands toward the fearsome bird.

Strutting slowly on its talons, the eagle came right up close to the boy. Its hooked beak hung right over his little head.

The boy apparently felt himself in no danger whatsoever. He began to feel the eagle's feathers and touched its talon-tipped legs. He clapped his little hand against the eagle's chest and smiled.

All at once its huge beak touched the boy's head — then a second time, as if looking for something on it. Then the eagle went off to one side and spread its wings. With a beat of its wings it rose slightly off the ground, and again touched down

and stood still. The boy stretched out his arms in the direction of the huge, threatening bird and began uttering sounds: *eh, e-e-eh*.

And all at once the eagle... The eagle went behind the boy's back, and all of a sudden started running, and then it took flight! It circled low over the glade, dived down and without landing picked up the boy in its enormous talons.

But the talons did not pierce his flesh.

The eagle thrust its sharp claws under the boy's armpits and began circling low over the glade, beating its wings and trying to lift the little one off the ground.

The boy jerked his trailing feet along the grass, sometimes ever so slightly lifting them into the air. The boy's eyes were bulging, sparkling with the fire of excitement. And then, all at once, they rose into the air! They had risen a metre above the ground when they achieved synchronicity — when the push of the little feet against the ground coincided with the beat of the eagle's wings.

The eagle kept circling, lifting the two of them gradually higher, but the boy didn't cry out. They simply flew, rising together into the deep blue. By this time the eagle had lifted the boy above the tops of the tall cedars and was continuing to climb.

Overcome with shock, and still speechless, I seized Anastasia's arm. Her eyes remained fixed on the sky as she whispered to herself:

"You are still the strong one! Bravo! And you may indeed be old, but you are still strong. Your wings are still mighty. Fly! Fly even higher!"

And the eagle, bearing in its talons the wee child's little body, kept circling and climbing higher and higher into the heavenly blue.

"What's the point of subjecting the child to an execution like this? Why expose him to such danger?" I yelled at Anastasia, as soon as I had recovered from shock.

"Please do not worry, Vladimir. The eagle's ascent is not nearly as dangerous as the aeroplanes on which you yourself have flown."

"But what if he drops the boy from way up there?"

"He would never even think of such a thing! You just relax, do not allow either fear or doubt into your thoughts. The eagle's flight is making an extremely significant contribution to our son's conscious awareness. Note that the eagle has lifted the child above our Earth."

"What significance can there be here," I countered, "except for superstition? It is quite true that Man should not interfere in great works of creation. With that I agree. But an ascent like this was not provided for by the Creator. You yourself, along with your grandfather, taught the bird to do this. Out of some kind of superstition, most likely. What else could it be? There's no point in taking such a risk!"

"When I was little," came Anastasia's reply, "I too flew up high with this same eagle. I did not have a great deal of understanding back then, but it was so interesting, so extraordinary. The glade seemed so small from up high. And the Earth seemed so broad and unfathomable. Everything was so bright, and this extraordinary experience stayed with me for a long time, for ever. When I had grown some — by this time I was three years old — Great-Grandfather asked me a question:

"Tell me, Anastasia, do all the creatures like it when you stroke and caress them with your hand?"

"Yes, they all do. They keep wagging their tails to show how much they like my caressing. The grass and the flowers and the trees like it too, but not all of them have tails to wag, to show how good it feels to be stroked."

"So, everything desires to feel the embrace of your hand?"

"Yes, everything living and growing, small or large."

"And the wide Earth also wants to be caressed? You have seen the Earth, how wide it is?"

"At this point I recalled the vivid experience I had had with the eagle as a baby. The size of the Earth was not something I knew just from hearsay. And so I answered Great-Grandfather without hesitating:

"The Earth is wide, you cannot see its edge. But if everyone wants to be caressed, that means the Earth must want it, too. But who would be able to embrace the whole Earth? It is so great that even *your* arms, Great-Grandfather, would not be able to embrace the whole of the Earth!"

"Great-Grandfather stretched out his arms to either side, looked at them, and nodded in agreement.

"You are right. Even my arms are not long enough to embrace the whole Earth. But you said that the Earth, like everyone else, wishes to be caressed?"

"Yes, it does. Everybody wants to be caressed by Man."

"So you, Anastasia, should embrace the whole Earth as well. Think about how you could do this," Great-Grandfather said, and walked away.

"I began thinking a lot of the time about how to embrace the whole Earth. And I could not think of anything. And I knew that Great-Grandfather would not speak to me — he would not ask me any more questions — until I had solved this problem, and so I kept trying.

"More than a month passed, and the problem had not been solved. And then one day I found myself looking tenderly at the wolf, from a distance. She was standing on the other side of the glade.

"All at once, sensing my gaze, the wolf started wagging her tail. Then I began to notice how all the creatures were so delighted when I looked at them with joy and tenderness. How big they were or how far away they were was not important. They were delighted just from my looking at them or thinking about them with love. I realised they were just as happy as they had been earlier when I was stroking them with my hand.

"Then I became aware of something: Here was 'I' with my hands and feet, and yet there was also this other me, larger than could be shown by someone's hands. And this larger, invisible entity was also *me*. That meant that every Man was set up just like me. And this larger me was indeed capable of embracing the whole Earth.

"When Great-Grandfather showed up, I was all bubbling with joy, and I said to him:

"Look, Grandpakins, see how happy all the creatures are — not just when I touch them with my hand, but also when I look upon them from a distance. It is invisible, but something of me is embracing them, and it can embrace the whole Earth too.

"I shall embrace the Earth with my invisible self! I am Anastasia. There is the little me, and there is the greater me. But how this other me is called, I do not yet know. But I shall think about how to call it properly, and I shall say its name and give you the whole answer, Grandpakins! Then will you begin talking with me again?"

"Great-Grandfather began talking with me right away, and said:

"Call your second self, dear granddaughter, *soul*. *Your* soul. And cherish it, and act in accord with this limitless soul of yours.'

"Tell me, Vladimir," Anastasia said, addressing me, "how old were *you* when you first became aware of your soul, when you felt it for the first time?"

"I don't remember exactly," I replied, and wondered whether I had ever really discovered my soul, or whether others discovered it too, and at what age? And to what degree? Maybe we simply talk about our soul, not really feeling at one with it, not really thinking about our second, invisible self. And how important is it to feel all that, and what for?

The tiny dot moving overhead quickly began enlarging. The eagle kept circling lower and lower over the glade. When it reached the height of the tree-tops, I could see the little one's flushed face, and his eyes sparkling with excitement. The little fingers at the tips of his outstretched arms were moving in time with the wingbeats of the extraordinary bird. When the little one's legs touched the ground and started trailing across the grass, the eagle loosened its talons. The little one fell, rolled over in the grass and quickly got up on all fours. Then he sat up and started turning his head around, looking for his new-found friend.

The eagle staggered off a little ways, but then fell on its side. It lay awkwardly on the grass about ten metres distant, with one wing sticking out at an angle. It was having a hard time breathing, and its head was resting on the ground.

The little one saw it, broke into a smile and crawled over to it. The eagle attempted to get up and greet the boy, but once again rolled over on its side. Maliciously baring her teeth, the wolf took two leaps and landed between the eagle and the boy. Anastasia whispered, her voice trembling:

"How perfect and strict are Your laws. You gave everything to Man right from the beginning, Creator. The wolf is following your laws, but I feel sorry, very sorry for the eagle."

"What is going on? Why is the wolf acting so aggressive and malicious?" I asked Anastasia.

"Now the wolf will not let the eagle come to Vladimir," she replied. "She thinks it has fallen ill, since it has rolled over on its side. She could attack it to chase it out of the glade. Vladimir must not see the attack — he will not understand it at the present time. Oh, what to do? What can we possibly do?"

At this point the eagle shook its feathers, got up firmly on its feet, proudly threw back its head, and clicked its fearsome beak twice. With proud and sure step the eagle began

strutting toward the boy. The wolf appeared to calm down, went off to one side, but not far. She was ready at any moment to make her leap, and followed the proceedings like a hawk.

The little one first touched the enormous bird's beak, then began tugging on its wing feathers, ruffling them and demanding or asking something, repeating all the while: *e-eh, a-ab*.

The bird's hooked beak touched the crown of the boy's head, along with his shoulders, which still bore the marks of the eagle's talons.

Then the eagle bent its head to the ground and, using its beak to tear off a little flower, put it in the boy's open mouth, as though it were feeding its young. The little one all the while kept making the same vowel sounds. After performing this 'parental duty' the eagle began staggering again. The malicious wolf crouched for a leap. And then suddenly the eagle... it started into a run. There was a beating of wings and... take-off!

Time after time it would rise higher and higher, then make a sudden dive for the glade. About a metre and a half from the ground it would level out and ascend once more. The little one waved at it, stretched his arms out to it, called it, laughing with a toothless grin. Anastasia kept her eyes fixed on the eagle, and whispered with concern:

"You do not have to do that. You did everything just right. And you are healthy — I know you are not sick. Relax, my dear eagle, relax. Thank you! I believe... I believe you are well! You are just a little old! Relax!"

Once again the eagle executed its complex pirouette, in such a way as to touch the grass with its talons. Still, it did not land, or push off from the ground. Instead, with a powerful thrust of its wings, it managed to rise in the air, snatching a clump of grass along the way. It circled, showered the little one with the grass and began rising higher and higher into the sky.

As before, Anastasia followed the eagle like a hawk — not taking her eyes away even when it became nothing but a dot in the blue. For some reason I found myself following it too, as the dot grew ever more distant from the glade. At first it went straight up, and then veered sharply off to the side, away from the glade. Suddenly the dot headed for the ground, and it wasn't long before we could see that first one wing and then the other were spreading themselves — but simply from the wind, and not as a deliberate action by the bird.

It was not flapping its wings or soaring — it was simply falling. Its wings were ruffling in the wind — it was the wind that had opened them.

Anastasia exclaimed:

“You died in the sky, way up high! And there you remain. You did all that you could possibly do for Man. Thank you. Thank you for showing us your heights, my old teacher.”

The eagle continued to fall, while two young eagles circled overhead.

“Those are your offspring, they are strong already. You did everything for their future too,” whispered Anastasia to the old eagle, which had fallen somewhere beyond the glade. As though in death it could still hear her.

By this time the two young eagles were circling low over the glade. I knew they were its offspring, and the little one waved to them.

“Of all things!” I exclaimed to Anastasia. “Why this senseless sacrifice? What did he do that for? And do it all for Man? Why do they try like that, Anastasia? Why do they sacrifice themselves like that?”

“For the light emanating from Man. For the grace which Man can give them, and for a feeling of hope for their offspring. Now *its* offspring will see and sense the light of life-giving love from Man! Look, Vladimir, our son smiled at the young eagles and now they are flying over to him. Perhaps

the old eagle has realised that this light, this grace-filled light emanating from Man, will also include a particle of itself.”

“Are they ready to sacrifice themselves for the light emanating from *everyone*?”

“From everyone who is capable of emitting this grace-filled light!!!”

CHAPTER SIXTEEN



The system

Anastasia went off to get ready to feed our son, while I once again set out for a walk in the woods to do some thinking.

Two things were bothering me — unpleasant things. The first was how I, as a father, was still unable to find myself a niche where I could participate in the raising of my son. It had become clear to me that I could not come up with any more interesting toys than those he had already. And there was no point in bringing food in either.

Our son already has his mother's milk and fresh flower pollen, and then there will be nuts and berries. Naturally, packaged baby food is no substitute for a living, growing source of nourishment. Yet still I had a hard time mentally accepting this kind of situation.

After all, Anastasia has nothing, and yet at the same time she lacks nothing, and can even make liberal provision for the baby.

In the TV adverts there is such a hype about toys and other stuff for children that it almost seems a child won't survive without them. Here, however, they make no sense at all — more than that, they are actually harmful. A baby doesn't even need a crib here. With a crib like the one he has — namely the bear — of course, he is not going to freeze even when the temperature is minus forty. There's no need to wash sheets or diapers. The bear — can you believe it? — is also a stickler for cleanness. Each time she scrapes clean her groin-area with her claws, just like a comb. She rubs her tummy on the grass, and then bathes. When she comes out of the water she

shakes herself off, with spray flying in all directions, then lies down on her back with her tummy up and dries herself off, and then once again combs her groin area.

Anastasia took me over to her and had me feel the place where our little one sleeps. It is soft there, clean and warm.

But even if I am not required to make any kind of material provision, a father should still take part in raising his son — that's for certain. Only how? Maybe I should go to Anastasia and firmly demand a definitive answer. After all, I have fulfilled all her conditions — I have not picked up the baby, nor have I insisted on him making use of the presents I brought with me.

My other disappointment was in not being able to fulfil my readers' requests and lay out a specific system or timetable for raising children. There are a lot of questions in the letters about children, and they are always asked at readers' conferences. I promised that I would definitely question Anastasia about this, and in my next book I would set forth the system her family has used from generation to generation to bring up their young.

And there you have it! Not only does she reject systems in general, but she even declares *any* system to be harmful. Of course, that cannot be. Amidst all the harmful systems there has to be at least one that is right. And then it dawned on me. In all the readers' letters there was not a single question about child-raising addressed to me. Everyone was looking to Anastasia for an answer, and if people actually trust her more than the usual experts in our world — certainly more than they trust me — then it's up to her to answer the questions raised. She's the one who is obliged to do that. My part is simply to lay it out on paper. I've got enough on my plate just putting out the books.

Anastasia finished her tasks and came running over in all her rosy-cheeked cheerfulness.

"Everything is done. Our son is asleep. You have not been too bored here all by yourself?"

"I've been thinking."

"About what?"

"About how there was nothing more to write in my next book. I told you how people are waiting for answers to their specific questions. People are interested in child-raising. But what can I write about that? Sure, I'll tell about how you communicate with the baby, how he's getting on. But what's the point? In the conditions of our world that kind of régime is simply not practicable. Nobody's going to train a bear or a wolf or an eagle, and nobody has a glade with pure pollen on the flowers as you have here."

"But it is not the bear that is important, Vladimir! Nor the eagle. They are merely effects. There is just one thing that is important, and it will find the right path under any conditions."

"And what's that?"

"One's attitude to one's child. The thoughts surrounding the child. Believe me, and try to understand. Christ could be born only by a mother who believed that Christ would be born to her, and if the parents have the same attitude to their child as they would to Christ or Mohammed, their offspring will follow this thought. And he will become whoever he aspires to become. People will still explore Nature, and those who are able to feel and become aware of what the Creator has created — its sense and purpose — they will be able to make a bright and happy world for their child."

"But how do they feel this? There has to be, somehow, a gradual process. There has to be a procedure."

"This can be felt only with the heart. Only the heart is capable of understanding it."

"And more specifically?"

"You wrote 'more specifically' when you told about the dachniks,¹ yet you took no notice yourself. What is the point

of wasting more words? If the heart and the soul are not open, the words will simply vanish with the wind, barely noticeable.”

“Yes, I did write a few words about that. But nothing has come of them in real life.”

“Young shoots are barely noticeable, they are not seen by everyone right off. All the more so in the case of young shoots growing in the soul.”

“But if you can’t see them, what’s the point in writing? I write, I try, but still there are many who do not believe or understand what you are talking about. And there are some who even doubt your existence.”

“Think about it, Vladimir — perhaps you will be able to see some logic even in their doubts.”

“What kind of logic can there be in their doubts?”

“Doubts make counter-actions less likely, and that is why I exist for those for whom I exist. They and I co-exist together side by side, in each other’s hearts. If you think about it a bit longer, it will make sense to you. I exist because of them. They have the power to engender, to create and not to destroy. They will understand you and support you, and will be mentally by your side.”

“You can say what you like, but I am tired of listening to insulting remarks. Dispel the doubts of the unbelievers. Come and show yourself on television, show something of your extraordinary abilities,” I implored Anastasia, and she replied:

“Believe me, Vladimir, my appearance in the flesh and any miracles performed in public will not pour the light of faith into the faithless. They will only exacerbate the feeling of irritation on the part of those who do not like someone else’s perception of the world. And you should not waste your

¹*dachniks* — people who spend time (their days off, especially summer holidays) tending a garden at their *dacha*, or cottage in the country. See further details in Book 1.

energies on them. To everything there is a season, to everything there is a dawn, and if you wish, I *shall* come forth to people and I shall appear in the flesh. But before that I must make it so women who have involuntarily consecrated their lives to the kitchen can experience joys of a different order. And so that the light of love may shine upon young mothers who have been left alone with their children. And *the children!* You see, *the children!* Their souls must be liberated from the tyranny of theories."

"See, there you go again with your dream. A lot of time has gone by since you started to dream that way, but little has actually been done. We've got a book, there's pictures and poetry, but where are your global achievements for all people? Only don't talk of bright little shoots growing in people's souls. Show something tangible, something that can be felt in real life... You can't show anything, can you?"

"I can."

"Then show it!"

"If I show it, I shall be subjecting you to the temptation to open prematurely the little shoots which are just starting to come up, and then who will protect them from a damaging hailstorm?"

"*You* will."

"In that case I shall be obliged to do so, to correct my mistake. Look..."

At that point, thanks to Anastasia, I was able to witness a phenomenon which was even more extraordinary and overwhelming than anything I had described in my books to date. Within the space of a single moment — either inside me or in front of me, I'm not sure which — there paraded a multitude of marvellous faces of people of different ages and from different parts of the Earth.

This was not just any series of flickering images. Not just people's faces, but their splendid actions too appeared

before my eyes. I could see the circumstances surrounding them — the events that were happening to them or because of them over their whole lifetime. They were all drawn from our present reality. It would have taken many years to view such a quantity of information on a cinema screen, yet here it took but a single moment, after which Anastasia was standing once more before me, in exactly the same position she was in before. She began speaking the moment I saw her:

“You were thinking, Vladimir, that what you saw was merely a kind of hypnosis. I ask you please not to try to guess the means by which these people appeared before you. We were talking about children. About the most important thing! Did you see the children? Tell me.”

“Yes, I saw the children. Their faces looked intelligent and kind. The children were building a house all by themselves, a very beautiful house, and so big. And they were singing while they worked. And I saw a grey-haired man amongst them. This man was a scholar, an academician. And he appeared to me right off to be very wise. Only he was talking in a peculiar fashion. He seemed to think that children could be wiser even than those whom we call professors. The children were talking with this academician as an equal, and yet at the same time with respect. Indeed, there was a lot about children in my vision. About how different their education was, the things they dreamt about. But that’s *only* a vision, so what’s the point in carrying on about it? In real life things are not like that at all.”

“What you saw was indeed real life, Vladimir, and before long you will be persuaded of that yourself.”

And, to my amazement, it all came about, just as Anastasia promised. It happened! And I saw it!

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN



Put your vision of happiness into practice

Soon after returning from the taiga I went once again to the city of Gelendzhik¹ to attend a reader's conference on the *Anastasia* book. The Governor's aide in charge of the Gelendzhik district of the Krasnodar region took me to see Academician Mikhail Petrovich Shchetinin's² forest school.

A narrow gravel road led from the main highway into the forest, to a valley nestled amidst the mountain peaks. The road soon came to an end in front of a most unusual two-storey mansion. It was still under construction. From one of the still frameless window openings wafted the sounds of children's voices singing a Russian folk song. This building was part of the vision Anastasia had showed me back in the taiga forest, but now it was an altogether real experience.

Without a word to anyone I made my way through various construction materials to touch this mansion with my own hands. As I approached, I saw a little girl, about ten years old, climbing deftly down a ladder. She went over to a pile of river

¹The author's earlier experiences at Gelendzhik are described in Book 1, Chapter 30: "Author's message to readers" and Book 2, Chapter 33: "Your sacred sites, O Russia!". Gelendzhik is located in the Krasnodar region of the northern Caucasus, on the north-east shore of the Black Sea.

²*Mikhail Petrovich Shchetinin* (1944-) — director (principal) of the Tekos School near Gelendzhik. Originally a music teacher by profession, Mikhail Petrovich has had a long and distinguished career in experimental education. The recipient of several awards, in 1991 he was honoured with the title *Akademik* (Academician) by the Russian Academy of Education.

pebbles and began selecting and dropping stones into an old herring tin. When she started back up the ladder, I climbed up after her, in the direction of the alluring music pouring forth from above.

There on the second floor I watched as a group of kids like her, some a little older, were taking smooth pebbles out of a box and attaching them with a cement mixture to the wall, making an amazingly beautiful pattern. Two little girls at once carefully washed off each newly attached stone with damp rags. They set about their tasks in earnest, singing as they worked. No adults were present. Later I found out that the whole foundation, indeed, each brick of this structure, had been laid by a child's hand. The children had come up with the whole design by themselves, including every corner of their building.

And this is not the only such building on the little campus. In this amazing setting children are constructing not only their buildings, their campus, but their whole future in the process. And they *sing!* Here a ten-year-old girl is capable of building a house, doing splendid drawings and cooking meals, not to mention knowing ballroom dance steps and mastering the fundamentals of Russian martial arts.³

The children of this forest school are acquainted with Anastasia. They themselves told me about her. Three hundred pupils from different Russian cities study here.

At this school children take but a year to master the whole ten-year public-school maths syllabus, along with studying three foreign languages. They neither recruit nor produce child prodigies. They simply give the kids a chance to discover what already lies within.

Academician Mikhail Petrovich Shchetinin's school comes under the Russian Federation's Ministry of Education. It

³Photos of the campus, pupils and creative learning activities may be found on the colour insert of the present volume.

charges no tuition fees. Even though the school does not advertise itself, it has no vacancies. Indeed, there is already a waiting list of 2,500 hopefuls for an unexpected opening.

It is hard to find words to describe the joy on these children's beaming faces. I went to visit the school directly after the readers' conference at Gelendzhik. I went with a small group of readers who had heard about my intended visit.

One of these readers was Natalia Sergeevna Bondarchuk,⁴ an actress and film director who is also on the board of the Roerich Society.⁵ A specialist in esoterics, she gave a presentation at the conference on the Roerichs' legacy and on esoterics in general. She talked about Anastasia far more intelligently than I.

Natalia Sergeevna was accompanied by her ten-year-old daughter Mashenka.⁶ After the conference the two of them were to go to a film festival in Anapa,⁷ where Mashenka's beloved grandmother, the famous actress Inna Makarova,⁸ was

⁴*Natalia Sergeevna Bondarchuk* (1950–) — a popular Russian film actress and director. One of her first cinema roles was in Tarkovsky's famous 1973 sci-fi flick *Solaris*. She has directed a number of children's films, including several on the *Bambi* theme.

⁵*the Roerich Society* — founded by Russian expert on Oriental religions Elena Ivanovna Roerich [Rerikh] and her artist-husband Nikolai Konstantinovich Roerich (see footnote 18 in Book 1, Chapter 1: "The ringing cedar"). With branches in a number of countries, the society is devoted to the study and promotion of art and culture in relation to human creativity and spirituality. It sees Culture as a synthesis of ethics, religion, science and art, all contributing to Man's spiritual development.

⁶*Mashenka* — a diminutive form of the name *Maria*.

⁷*Anapa* — a Black Sea coastal resort with a population of approximately 60,000, located about 100 km north-west of Gelendzhik.

⁸*Inna Makarova* (1926–) — an award-winning Russian film star who made her début in 1948 with *Molodaya gvardia* (Young Guard). In 1984 she appeared in a film version of Gogol's classic novel *Mertvye dushi* (Dead Souls). She has also starred in several Bondarchuk films. In 2001 she received official congratulations from President Putin on her 75th birthday.

already staying. But Mashenka's words came as a thunderous call to new enlightenment:

"Mamochka, please, just for three days. Just three! While you go to the festival, arrange for me to stay here at this school!"

And the delicate little Mashenka stayed for three days at the school, to the great astonishment of her mother, who sadly said:

"Apparently we don't give enough to our children — even though we love them, we are inadvertently stealing from them."

Natalia Sergeevna was accompanied by a film cameraman. He began shooting as soon as the children of Shchetinin's school started talking about their communication with Anastasia and their understanding of life. I'd like to reproduce here some of our conversation with the children who were building this mansion. Natalia Sergeevna and I were the ones asking the questions:

"One gets the impression that each brick of your building here is filled with the bright energy of a great power."

"Yes, that's true," answered an older, red-haired girl. "So much depends on the people who touch them. We have done all this with love, we are trying with our mental attitude to bring only what is good and happy to our future."

"Who designed this building, the columns and paintings?"

"This was the result of our united, collective thinking."

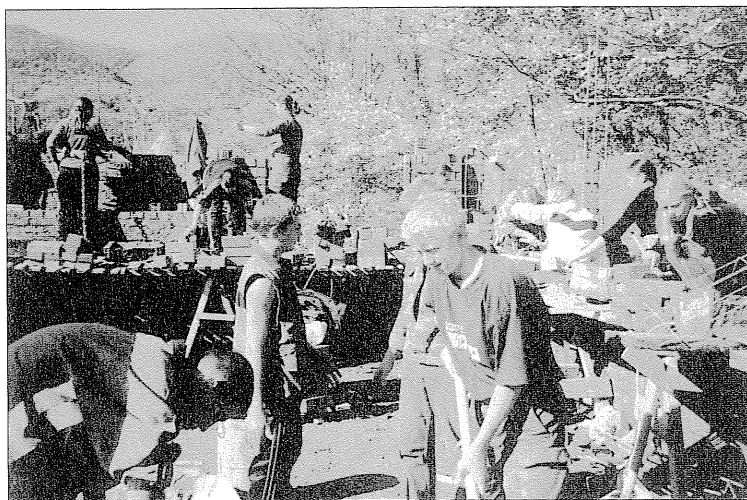
"Does that mean that while each one is outwardly working on their own individual task, in actual fact it represents a collective thought?"

"That's right. Every evening we get together and plan out, or visualise, the day ahead. We come up with the images we want to see expressed in the design of our mansion. Some of the pupils here take on the role of architect — they give specific form to our common work, tie it all together."



Above: Pupils at Academician Shchetinin's school (Tekos, Russia) perform a folk dance in the auditorium they themselves designed, built and decorated. Photo © 2004 by Alexey Kondaurov, Nizhny Novgorod, Russia.

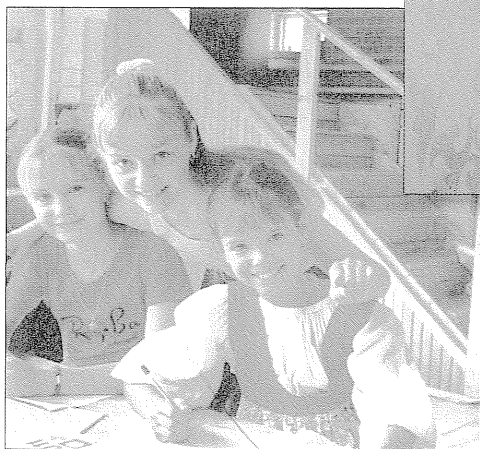
Below: Pupils at Shchetinin's school, 10–15 years old, are building a new hall on their campus without adult supervision. Photo © 2004 by Vladislav Kirbiatiev, Grishino eco-village, Russia.





Above: Main entrance to school. Photo © 2004 by Dmitry Samusev.

Right: A pupil decorating the wall of a new administrative office. Photo © 2004 by Vladislav Kirbiatiev.



Left: Pupils at a self-guided learning session. Photo © 2004 by Marina Kolmogorova.



Above: Martial arts performance by Tekos pupils. Photo © 2004 by Alexey Kondaurov. The school curriculum includes a wide variety of subjects, ranging from traditional disciplines to folk dancing, self-defence and architecture. Pupils are fully involved in the life of the school, from cooking meals to construction and self-governance.

Below: Decorations at the main entrance were designed and executed by the pupils themselves. Photo © 2004 by Alexey Kondaurov.

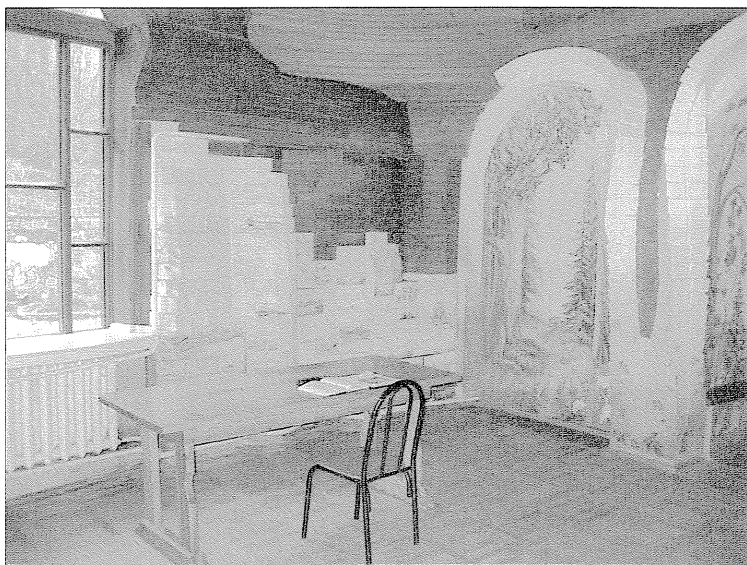




Above: Pupils' choir performance at one of the school's regular concerts. Mikhail Shchetinin standing in front with accordion. Photo © 2004 by Vladislav Kirbiatiev.

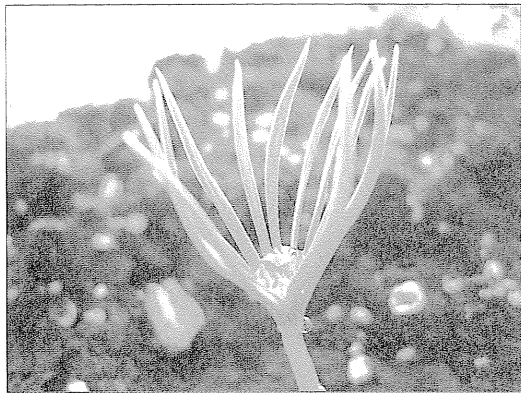
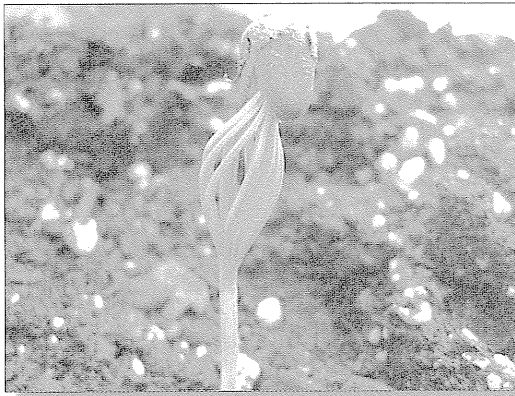


Left: A typical session: learning without teachers. The school is not divided into age-based forms or grades, and students learn efficiently without adult supervision. Photo © 2004 by Vladislav Kirbiatiev.



Details of the school's interior design. As with everything else on the premises, the pupils are fully responsible for the design, construction and decoration of all buildings. Photos © 2004 by Dmitry Samusev.





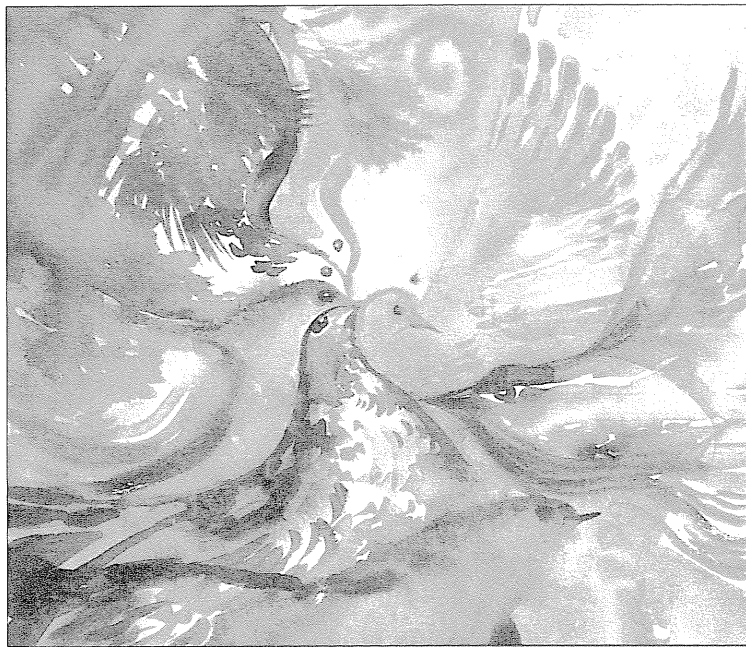
Top: Residents of Novosibirsk planting cedar trees in the spring of 1998. Photo from the Internet, author unknown. *Below:* Siberian cedar sprouting in New York City. Photos © 2005 by Ilya Kurkin.



Vladimir Megré arriving at the Ringing Cedars of Russia movement conference held in the city of Vladimir on 5 June 2004. The conference brought together over 400 delegates from 150 eco-villages from all over Russia and beyond. Photo © 2004 by Alexey Kondarov, Nizhny Novgorod, Russia.



Readers' art inspired by *Anastasia: This is not a dream* © 2006 Maria Ignatieva (above) and *Birds* by Andrey and Natalia Patokin (below).



“What image is expressed in the room we’re standing in now?”

“The image of Svarog⁹ — the primordial element of heavenly fire. You can see him here in the symbols, in the pebble amulets.”

“Does your group recognise one of its own as a principal or superior?”

“We do have a leader, but by and large it is the collective thought that is at work here — *lava*, we call it.

“Say that again — thought is *lava*?”

“That’s right — a state of mind, an image, a desire.”

“Do you all work with such great delight, everybody smiling, everybody with such sparkling eyes — everybody so cheerful?”

“Yes, our life is like that, since we are doing what we want, doing what we can, doing what we love to do.”

“You said each stone has its own pulse and rhythm?”

“Yes, and this pulse beats once a day — just once.”

“Is it like that with all stones, or do some beat twice a day?”

“Every stone’s pulse beats once a day.”

“Doesn’t it seem to you that your mansion is something like a temple?”

“A temple is not a form, but a state of mind. For example, the cupolas — they simply help you access a particular state of mind. The form is moulded by feeling. And it is not

⁹*Svarog* — in Russian and Slavic mythology, the god of fire, the father and divine light of celestial and earthly fires, who created (Russian: *svarganil*) our Universe (Sanskrit and ancient Russian: *svarga*). Svarog fought and captured a giant malicious serpent or dragon (*Zmey*), which he used to pull a plough, separating the land of the living (or the visible world, *lav*) from the land of the dead (or the invisible world, *Nav*) and thus establish order (or Rightness, *Prav*). In Christianity he is associated with, among others, the Archangel Michael.

by chance that the form of a cupola or hipped roof¹⁰ came to us — they represent our aspirations for heaven and the descent of Heavenly Grace.”

“This building, where every stone is laid with a good thought, is it able to heal?”

“Of course.”

“And *does* it heal?”

“Yes, it does.”

I couldn't help looking at the girls attaching the river-pebble ornamental design to the walls of the upper room. The girls were dressed in very plain, unsophisticated attire, they were beautiful, only with an unusual kind of beauty. I thought to myself: where do we go to meet our future wives? To dance-halls, parties and resorts, eh? We see our future wives all made up wearing the latest fashions, luring us with their slender legs and other charms of their figure. All this is what we marry, and then later, when the make-up is rubbed off, you look, and there you see sitting before you a *kikimora*,¹¹ and looking like a *kikimora*, grumbling away and demanding attention and... love. What happiness is there in living your whole life with a *kikimora* — what is there to talk about with her? And then she demands you support her financially too. Oh, what rotten luck! But just maybe we get what we deserve. Of course we get what we deserve. You have to be a complete idiot to marry make-up and long legs! But some of us

¹⁰ *hipped roof* — a pyramid-style roof with 4 or more sloping sides, narrower at the top than at the bottom — characteristic of many Russian churches of wooden or stone construction.

¹¹ *kikimora* — in Slavic mythology and folk customs, a malevolent female ghost said to attach itself to a particular house and disturb the inhabitants, males in particular. By extension, the term may also suggest an ugly woman in shabby clothing, ill-tempered and grumbling, striving to make life of her husband (and men in general) unbearable.

are lucky. Some of us end up marrying, well... these girls here, the ones sticking the ornamental stones on the walls. They will be able to build a beautiful house, and to cook meals with love, they know all sorts of foreign languages, they're wise, smart, beautiful, and when they grow up they'll become still more beautiful, even without cosmetics. Naturally, many will want to take them to wife, but who will they agree to marry? This was a question we put to these beautiful little girls wearing their plain clothing:

"Tell me, who would you like to marry, what kind of husband would you like? What qualities should he have?"

And right away, without hesitation, the first girl responded:

"Kindness, patience... and he should be a Man who loves his Motherland. A Man with honour and dignity."

"And what is honour, in your view?"

"For me, honour can be summed up in one saying: I have the honour of being Russian."

"And what constitutes a Russian Man?"

"It is a Man who loves his Motherland. First and foremost it is one who stands up for her and never fails her. Not for a moment, not even the most difficult moment. He feels himself a part of *Rus*."¹²

"And your children will live for the Motherland?"

"Yes!"

"And that means your husband must share this view as well?"

"Yes!"

The second girl answered the question as follows:

¹²*Rus* (pronounced *ROOS*, rhyming with *moose*) — the name of the Old Russian territory, which by the 9th century A.D. was centred around Kiev; more so than the later term *Rossiia*, it signifies an emotional attachment to the Russian Motherland.

“He should be a Man capable of giving light and warmth to other people. If he radiates light and warmth, it will be good for those around him, and our family too. A Man rich in spirit, healthy in spirit, and this can’t be compared with any other kind of riches.”

The littlest girl wasn’t asked any questions while the camera was running, but later I put the same query to her and got the following response:

“Maybe all the best men will get married while I am growing up, but my husband will still be very good, kind and happy — I shall make him that way, I shall help him the way Anastasia does.”

And I saw, and realised that Anastasia was sharing her abilities with these children. Why with the children of Shchetinin’s school? Because Academician Mikhail Petrovich Shchetinin is himself a great magician — one who has created and continues to create a big Space of Love, and it will continue to grow even bigger.

Right now these girls are little Anastasias with their light-brown braids. But they will grow up! They will spread across the Earth, creating oases like this one, until the whole Earth is filled with them.

As I was standing there in the upper room on the second storey of this extraordinary mansion, examining the ornamental design and drawings executed by the children’s hands (though more reminiscent of the art of the ‘old masters’), I had the impression of being in the greatest, brightest and most welcoming temple on Earth. This was probably because the amount of bright energy in this mansion, every millimetre of which had been lovingly caressed by children’s hands, was infinitely greater than in many religious temples.

And then I had another thought come to me. Here we’ll continue to go about restoring ruined churches and monasteries using modern technology and reinforced concrete

construction — not such a difficult thing to do, really — and then we'll come to these temples with the feeling that we have done our duty and begin asking: "Lord, bless our work!" But no blessings will be received. Because during this time God will be concentrating His attention on the children constructing this extraordinary temple building. And He will be concerned that they will run out of cement and not have enough bricks and boards for the floor. And God will lovingly bless all those who help them.

And I couldn't resist the temptation to show the world these little 'shoots'. I couldn't resist doing what Anastasia was so afraid of. And this is how it happened:

I was walking down the aisle between rows of kitchen tables set up outdoors for the children to work at, when I suddenly felt a soft warmth in my body, as though someone was training a heat-reflector on me. The sensation of warmth was similar to that emitted by Anastasia when she concentrated her gaze on a person. Only this time it was considerably weaker. In any case I stopped and looked in the direction the warmth appeared to be coming from. An eleven-year-old girl winnowing rice at a distant table was looking at me and smiling. I went over and sat down beside her. Up close I could see her eyes sparkling with a fiery blue light and I began to feel an even greater sensation of warmth. I asked her her name.

"Hello!" she replied. "My name is Nastia."¹³

"So, you have the ability to warm someone with your gaze, like Anastasia?"

"Did you feel it?"

"Yes, I did."

Little Nastia indeed had Anastasia's ability to warm a person's body with her gaze, although not to the same extent.

¹³*Nastia* — a diminutive form of the name *Anastasia* (a common girl's name in modern Russian).

Natalia Sergeevna, the actress, came and sat down with us, and the cameraman began shooting. With no trace of embarrassment and without interrupting her work, Nastia started answering our questions.

"Where do you get your knowledge and abilities from?"

"From the stars."

"What have you learnt through your communication with Anastasia in Siberia?"

"I've learnt how very important it is to understand and love our Motherland."

"Why is it so important?"

"Because our Motherland is what has been created by our forebears — both distant and close."

"Who are your parents? Where does your father work?"

"My Papa is a schoolteacher. It's nice in the school where he works too, but here it's better."

"Here you are all living as a single friendly, happy family. Have you forgotten about your parents?"

"On the contrary. We love our parents more and more, we send them good thoughts so they can live well, too."

The camera was running, and I very much wanted Nastia to show the sceptics her warming gaze. And so I asked her:

"Nastia, now you can show *many* people how to warm someone with your gaze. See the camera? Look straight into the lens and share your warmth with everyone who will see this."

"To warm everybody at once — that's really hard. I might not be able to do it."

But I kept insisting. I repeated my request. And exactly the same thing started happening with Nastia as happened with Anastasia back in the forest, when she tried to save with her ray at a distance a man and a woman from being tortured by bandits. I described this scene in my first book.¹⁴

¹⁴See Book I, Chapter 28: "Strong people".

Back then Anastasia had initially expressed reservations:

“It is not within my power,” she had said. “Everything has been, so to speak, programmed in advance, but not by me. I cannot interfere directly. They have the upper hand right now.”

And yet, after my repeated requests, she did what I asked her to. She did it, knowing full well that she might die in the process.

And now, after my persistent pleading, little Nastia attempted to do my bidding. Twice in a row, without exhaling, she inhaled air, closed her eyes for a few moments and then began to calmly look straight into the camera lens. The astonished cameraman fell silent. And then all of a sudden Natalia Sergeevna tore off her kerchief and put it over Nastia’s head. She was the first to notice how her body had begun to vibrate and her face had turned pale.

I realised I should not have persisted with my request — there was no point in wasting energy on unbelievers. It would only intensify their anger and resistance.

The grown-up visitors could not resist the impulse to touch the children. They touched them, hugged them and patted them as though they were kittens. And why had I brought along a whole group of these grown-ups? After all, I was aware that this school receives visits from all sorts of committees and delegations, and even individuals come to have a look and satisfy their curiosity, and tune into the grace emanating from its inhabitants. And they do come and tune in, and take away, but do not make any contribution of their own.

Perhaps Anastasia was right when she said:

“In trying to gain the grace of a holy place, think what you might offer in return. And if you have not learnt to emit light yourself, then why take it and bury it in yourself, as though in a grave?”

I too had come to the school more out of curiosity than anything else. It was thanks to Anastasia that I had been

so graciously received by Academician Shchetinin, and the children had prepared a feast for me and my whole entourage. And it was far more than food that we took away from the table. The sparkle in the children's bright eyes gave us infinitely more, and what were we to give them in return? A patronising pat on the head? I was so angry with myself that I withdrew from the group and went off on my own to think.

All of a sudden I became aware of the two girls whose acquaintance I had made — Lena and Nastia — standing at my side.

"Just relax," Nastia said quietly. "Grown-ups are always that way. They want to pat our heads and give us a hug. They think hugging is the most important thing. And you've been on pins and needles the whole day. Come along with us to our glade, and we'll tell you about Anastasia. I know what space she is in right now."

When we arrived at the glade, the cameraman who had joined us proposed:

"Let's get another interview with the girls. We'll get some excellent shots here — look what a splendid landscape there is, and no one's around to bother us."

"Maybe not," I hesitated. "We've probably tired them out already with so much questioning."

"But still they'll be delighted to talk with you. They don't really like visitors and journalists coming around here. We've got a golden opportunity under our noses. It'd be a shame to let it slip by. Please understand my professional interest."

I grabbed the microphone and told the girls:

"We have to do another interview with you. I'll be asking you some questions and you answer them. Is that okay with you?"

"If you need to, go ahead and ask," replied Lena, and Nastia added: "Of course, of course, we'll be happy to answer."

The girls took up a position right beside us and straightened their long brown braids. They looked me straight in the eye, waiting for my first question.

After two rather trite questions I fell silent, suddenly realising that these were the type of hackneyed, stereotyped questions they got from all the grown-up visitors, committee members and journalists, whereas in fact they were capable of answering questions on themes most adults would never even have crossed their minds in their whole lifetime. A Cossack hetman was right when he said:

"My son's been studying here only three months, and I already feel there's a lot more I need to become aware of myself and quickly, or I'm going to look positively stupid next to him."

In any case, aren't we talking down to the children with our immature questions, inadvertently implying they're not capable of responding to anything more? I stood silently before these girls, holding the microphone in my hand, and saw in their faces how concerned they were for me. They realised I had lost my train of thought and didn't know what I should talk with them about. I admitted as much to them:

"You know, I really don't know what to talk to you about, or even what questions I should be asking."

And then ensued an utterly comic situation. Here we were, the cameraman and I, two stout grown-up fellows, and there in front of us were these two young girls, enthusiastically giving each other support, without a second's hesitation explaining to us how to do an interview, how to make conversation with another human being.

"Just relax," they insisted. "You've got to learn how to relax. The most important thing is to be sincere and talk about anything you're concerned about."

"Don't think about us. Of course you should think about any other person you're talking with, but you don't need to think about us if you find that too hard. Just relax."

“Just ask your questions from the heart, we’ll be able to answer, don’t worry about us.

“As long as you’re having trouble, let us tell you something ourselves...”

The girls were walking around the meadow, smiling, feeling the blades of grass and talking. The depth of their understanding of the Universe, the purity emanating from their heart, their eyes sparkling with kindness, literally immersed us in a sense of peace and confidence. The cameraman shot from a distance, not bothering to attempt switching camera angles. Later I would spend hours watching and re-watching the videotape Natalia Sergeevna subsequently gave to me. I would be fascinated by these little charmers with their light-brown braids walking through the glade. They will grow up! There are three hundred of them at the school.

I am writing about this school not to prove anything to anyone, but to gladden the hearts of those who have come to feel and understand Anastasia through my books.

If anyone feels irritated by what I write and how I write it, they need not read my books at all. I have already had my fill of criticism — over my writing style, my grammatical mistakes and the suggestion of a commercial ulterior motive. In any case I am still working on my next book. If you don’t like my books, don’t bother reading the next one. The events it describes are even more penetrating than the ones recorded in the volumes to date, and my style is getting better, but not by very much. Both the contents and the style could make you quite distraught.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN



Academician Shchetinin

Who is he? We are accustomed to describing a person through his biographical outline, his record of service, the titles bestowed upon him. But in the present instance all that would be meaningless. In the Bible it says: “By their fruits ye shall know them.”¹ Academician Shchetinin’s fruits are the happy, beaming faces of the children studying at his school, along with those of their parents. Then, who is he?

Natalia Sergeevna Bondarchuk is not only an award-winning Russian actress, she is also a member of the board of the International Roerich Foundation (a UN non-governmental organisation). She told me:

“I have talked with many famous preachers and teachers in various countries of the world, but I have never been so impressed as here. We may well have come into contact with a great Vedun.² I say a *Vedun* not because of his acquaintance with the Old Vedic scriptures, but because he knows what many of us don’t.”

I should also like to record *my* impressions from my meetings with Mikhail Petrovich Shchetinin, but I am not a specialist in the educational field and hence my terminology may not be all that accurate, so I shall try to reproduce his own words as faithfully as possible.

¹Matth. 7: 20 (*Authorised King James Version*).

²*Vedun* (pron. *ve-DOON*) — in Slavic and Hindu traditions: a revered wise man. The word is derived from the Old Slavic (originally Indo-European) root *ved-* meaning *knowing* or *knowledge*.

At one point I was walking down a corridor of the school building, along with Natalia Sergeevna, her cameraman and Mikhail Petrovich. We came to a spacious hall opening onto the corridor, where a number of tables had been set up. At these sat children of various ages, all intensely engaged in some kind of mysterious project, from which neither our presence nor that of the videocamera could distract them. From time to time one or another of the children would get up and go off somewhere, and then come back again. Sometimes they would go over to examine numbers on a bulletin-board hanging on the wall, at other times they would thoughtfully pace around the room. Some of them were talking amongst themselves — arguing or explaining things to each other.³

“Mikhail Petrovich, what is going on?” asked Natalia Sergeevna.

“Here you are basically witnessing attempts to establish contact. If the contact is successful, the children will be able to master the ten-year school maths programme in just one year. That is their assignment. It will happen when the children are able to make contact with those who possess similar knowledge, and the degree of openness in their relationships is important. Their field elements⁴ will then be able to share information with each other.

“You’re familiar with the observation made by simple folk: ‘love at first sight’, when people in love catch each other’s meaning with hardly a word between them. You haven’t even opened your mouth, and he’s already got it. You can see the whole point here is to make the children feel free and

³A photo of a typical learning session may be found on the colour insert of the present volume.

⁴*field elements* — referring to the non-material elements making up one’s identity. For a more detailed discussion of ‘field’ phenomena see footnote 13 in Book 2, Chapter 1: “Alien or Man?”.

unencumbered. This is a place they can ask any question, get up, and come and go as they please. Maintaining relationships is the important thing.

"Working on relationships is not only very important for the children but also for the ones organising the activities. So we take off the brakes, so to speak, we refrain from focusing on age. Over there, right next to fifteen-year-old Ivan Alexandrovich is sitting ten-year-old Masha. We also have a university student named Sergei Alexandrovich, who's actually finishing university this year."

"And how old is he?"

"He'll turn eighteen this year."

"And he's finishing university at seventeen?"

"Seventeen, in this generation, but we generally try not to refer to the notion of age. That's a very important point. If you will notice, here the teachers tend to blend in with the pupils. True, it is a rather special group. The ones you see here are those that weren't able to participate in the construction. And they have quite a task ahead of them — assimilating the ten-year school maths course, so they in turn will be able to share their knowledge with those who are currently occupied in the construction. And it will all come about. Because what is germinating in them is a system of interdependent integration elements.

"Our collective ancestral memory has knowledge of the laws of the Cosmos, as well as techniques for living in cosmic space. So it is very important to reject any suggestion that there is something they don't know. If one of those doing the explaining entertains such a thought, his pupils will *not* know it. The explainer's basic task is to enter into a relationship with his pupils focused on solving problems, then the learning process takes place all by itself. So as not to distract them with attention to the actual learning or memorisation. The thought of somebody out there *teaching* has to be rejected.

As they work together, the consciousness of a dividing line between teacher and pupil is obliterated.

“The problem-solving process brings with it the necessary knowledge, and what actually takes place is a recalling of things forgotten. This is the reflex arc, you know, as in Pavlov:⁵ stimulus-reaction. When necessary, I decide.

“It is very important that what they do should have a direct effect on people around them. And now they are studying not for themselves, that is very important. They are concerned about how to share what they are learning with others. Marks aren’t important to them. They know that in a few days they will have to explain it all to someone else.

“They have been entrusted with the beginning of the learning process. Each pupil you see here has been assigned a group. He observes how his designated pupils work on the construction and watches to see that members of his group do not fall behind their schoolmates. Considerable emphasis is laid on motivation — the idea of service to others. And if they learn anything, they learn to understand the soul, the aspirations and the thoughts of another individual. It’s not the mathematics that’s important here, but rather Man learning mathematics. Not maths for its own sake, but maths for the sake of progress toward Truth. And the more powerful this *for the sake of* motive is, the more successful will be one’s immersion into a field of knowledge.

“It is important to be in an atmosphere of sincerity, with no feelings of being offended or irritated. *That’s wrong* is a phrase we never use. In the Old Russian language there is no stoppage of motion and no bad words. In ancient times people,

⁵ *Ivan Petrovich Pavlov* (1849–1936) — world-renowned Russian physiologist, recipient of the 1904 Nobel Prize in Medicine for his work on digestion; he later became famous for his experiments with dogs and theories of human behaviour based on conditioned reflexes.

no matter what their ethnic affiliation, never used a bad word in reference to anything. It simply doesn't exist, so why pay attention to it? What is bad does not exist. If you find yourself at a dead-end, then the words you would use to get out of that dead-end would be phrases like: *turn right, turn left, climb up* — hinting at which way one should go, but not snapping: 'You're standing the wrong way.' Today russophobes commit sacrilege by saying 'Speak Russian!', when they actually mean cursing. That is not Russian at all. Kobzev⁶ has a very succinct expression of this thought:

*From our Slav forebears we have heard
Midst happenings of great dimension,
They paid to language, phrase and word
A special homage and attention.*

"That is true. So people who work with them should have a deep vocabulary range which excludes thought-distracting, incidental words. Words warmed by feelings have special significance.

"Truth, their legacy — it's all spiritual. The child must be enrolled in a natural cosmic process — eternal self-reproduction. Then you have given the child eternity, the joy of life, real existence. Not just illusory forms, like: 'See here, son, I've bought you a shirt and trousers and shoes — now I can die.' But what have you really given your son? Your gifts, after all, won't last more than a single season! If only you had given your son your good name, your honour, your work, your

⁶Igor Ivanovich Kobzev (1924–1986) — a Russian poet known for his verse based on the history of Russia and the ancient Slavs — in particular, on the celebrated poetic chronicle *Slovo o polku Igoreve* (The song of Igor's campaign). In 1977 he helped organise a museum devoted to the famous chronicle. Kobzev himself is best known, perhaps, for his epic tale *Padenie Peruna* (The Fall of Perun).

friends, a flourishing people! If you had given him an understanding of the Truth of being and a life of wisdom, *then* you could say: 'Son, I have given you the most important thing, you will be happy. You will buy shirts and build houses, you know now how it is done.'"

Listening to Academician Shchetinin speak and observing his interactions with the children, I noticed that they were very much like what Anastasia had said about children, and I wondered: how could a lonely Siberian recluse and this grey-haired academic think so much alike — almost identically, in fact? And, come to think of it, why is he talking with me at all? Why did he receive me so warmly, even setting the table and offering me a meal? He's taken me around the school, shown me everything. Why? What kind of education expert am I? I'm nobody. One who used to get pretty poor marks in school. But of course — Anastasia's somehow been at it again."

Of course it was only thanks to Anastasia that I ended up at Shchetinin's school in the first place. But he and I didn't talk about her. We talked about all sorts of other things — everyday things. Each time I visited we would walk around and see how the construction of this unusual temple building was progressing. As for my book, he said tersely: "It's very accurate" — and that was it.

A few days after my first visit — after the day I had come with a group of conference participants, and had shown them Nastia, asking her to warm everybody with her gaze — the following incident occurred. Mikhail Petrovich and I were walking along one of the school corridors, and I was keeping my eye peeled for her. I searched for her the way people intuitively search for a source which emits light.

"Nastia's light has gone out," Shchetinin said all of a sudden. "Right now I'm in the process of restoring her strength. It's coming along, but slowly. She'll need some time to fully recover."

"What do you mean, it's gone out? Why? She's a strong lass. What happened?"

"Yes, she is strong. But she had a very powerful emotional outburst."

I stood there in Shchetinin's office, angry and irritated at myself. Why had I done such a thing? For just whose benefit was I trying to prove something? I had utterly failed to heed Anastasia's warning: "Neither my appearance in the flesh nor any miracles performed in public will pour the light of faith into the faithless. They will only exacerbate the feeling of irritation on the part of those who do not like someone else's perception of the world."⁷

That's enough, I thought to myself. I shall no longer try to show people and I shan't write any more. That's it. Look what a mess I've made with my writing! I was thinking this to myself, but then Shchetinin suddenly said out loud:

"You shouldn't stop writing, Vladimir." Then he came over to me, placed his hand on my shoulder and, looking me straight in the eye, began vocalising a tune. I could hear how easily he took the high notes, but even more amazing was the fact that the melody he was vocalising was very similar to the one Anastasia had sung for me in the taiga.

As I made my way back to the main door, I passed the same hall where the pupils were still scurrying about. There was Nastia, sitting on a chair. I went over to her. She got up, raised her head, and her rather weary-looking eyes brightened in a second, emitting light and warmth with their sparkle. I realised now that she was giving of her energy and warmth to others. She was giving her all, without reservation, to help that other Anastasia, the one in Siberia, fulfil her dream. For it had now become their shared dream.

⁷From Book 3, Chapter 16: "The system".

So what *was* going on here? What was the force behind that dream? Why were they...? With complete self-sacrifice... And the child's gaze... Is it possible to become worthy, even partially worthy, of such a gaze during a single lifetime? I wondered. Aloud I said:

"Well, hello, Nastia!" And to myself: "You don't have to, Nastia. Thank you. Forgive me."

"I'll see you out," the girl offered. "Lena and I will go with you to your car."

As we drove off, I kept looking behind me until the car rounded a corner, watching the little figures standing there at the end of the road, by the mansion, under a lamp-post, as they got smaller and smaller. They weren't waving their arms in the usual sign of farewell. Each of them held one hand raised in the air, palm out-turned in the direction of the departing vehicle. I knew what this meant — Shchetinin had explained it to me earlier. It signified: "We send you our rays of good, may they follow you wherever you go." And once more I felt fired up with the thought: "What do I need to accomplish to become worthy of your rays?"

CHAPTER NINETEEN



What to agree with, what to believe?

My meeting with Mikhail Petrovich Shchetinin and my acquaintance with his amazing school took place after my second visit to Anastasia. After seeing this school I had virtually no lingering doubts about Anastasia's pronouncements on raising children, or about the way she communicated with our son. But back there in the taiga everything within me had rebelled against her. I didn't want to believe her. At least not everything she said.

As I write these lines I can hear many readers saying, either aloud or to themselves: "Come on, how could he possibly doubt? After all, there have been so many times he was obliged to concede that she was right, and still he carries on like an idiot, unable to perceive a new phenomenon!"

My daughter Polina sent me a videocassette from one of the readers' conferences. I watched as a scholar from Novosibirsk by the name of Speransky¹ declared right from the podium:

"Megré is incapable of fully grasping what Anastasia says. He hasn't the brains for it."

I do not feel offended by him — on the contrary, his whole talk was most interesting. The audience listened with bated

¹*Sergei Vladimirovich Speransky* — a biology expert with Novosibirsk Scientific Research Institute, known for his experiments using mice to detect extra-sensory abilities; a Corresponding Member of the International Academy of Energy-Informational Sciences.

breath, and thanks to him I have been able to comprehend that Anastasia is an *Essence* — a self-sufficient substance.

I myself have no expertise in such matters — I've been involved in a completely different line of work. But what about all those who are into studying Nature, or children — why have they been keeping so quiet, barely uttering a peep about what they know? And even children in their letters to me tell me I should be more attentive to what Anastasia says and does.

But I can respectfully assure my readers that I have indeed become much more attentive to her; nevertheless, I cannot refrain from arguing with her, or from doubting. I cannot refrain since I am unwilling to admit that I and our whole society are complete idiots. I am unwilling to believe that we are heading down a path of degeneration.

And so I am trying to find at least some justification for our actions. Or some reason for saying her world-view is not applicable to our modern way of life. And I shall go on trying as long as I have the strength to do so. After all, if I didn't, I would have to own up not only to the fact that she is right but also to the terrifying situation you and I find ourselves in today. And if we are going to admit the existence of a hell, then we ourselves are paving the road to that hell.

Let's just take, for example, the matter of child-raising. I'm speaking not just for myself, but for all others in the same boat, and I think there are quite a few of us.

I was an average pupil in school; my father punished me every time I got a poor mark. It wasn't just a matter of keeping me from playing outdoors with other kids, or buying some toy — it was more severe than that. And all this struck fear into me — a fear greater than the strap. I was always in fear of something bigger. And every time I stepped up to the chalkboard, it was like stepping up to the scaffold. And I used to tear pages out of my *dnevnik*...²

*Marvellous schooldays still ringing —
Textbooks and notebooks and singing!
So fast and fleeting, alack!
No one can now bring them back.
Will they then vanish without any trace?
No, none can ever their mem'ry erase.
Marvellous schooldays!*

Remember the words to that song³ they taught us to make us believe how marvellous our schooldays were? Brainwashing, brainwashing! But we also remember — especially us ‘average’ kids (and we’re the majority, after all) — how glad we were to chuck those hated schoolbags aside just as soon as the summer holidays began!

And just how marvellous can schooldays be for a child who has a physiological need to move around, when here he’s required to sit a whole forty-five minutes in a prescribed pose, arms neatly folded on his desk, without hardly moving a muscle? Sure, the slow and sluggish types can take it, but what about the child who is agile, temperamental and impulsive by nature? But under the ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach, it’s as though everybody were robots, no individuality — “Sit there, or else...”, the child is told.

And the little fellow sits there, trying to endure the forty-five minutes and then, after a ten-minute break, another

² *dnevnik* — a notebook kept by each Russian schoolchild with a record of his or her marks, ranging on a scale from 1 (fail) to 5 (excellent). Some children would tear out pages showing lower marks so that their parents would not see them.

³ *that song* — a school song learnt by nearly all Soviet schoolchildren in the second half of the twentieth century. The words were written by Evgeny Dolmatovsky (1915–1994) and the music composed by Dmitry Kabalevsky (1904–1987).

forty-five, then a month, a year, ten years, and the only way out is to give in. Most importantly, to resign himself to the fact that he will have to keep resigning himself to things his whole life long. He will have to live the way society dictates, marry the way society dictates, and go to war directly the order is given. He must unfailingly believe in anything he is told.

People who willingly resign themselves are very easy to control. Only it's best if they're physically healthy and up to all sorts of tasks. But then they start drinking and taking drugs. But doesn't a Man do this to escape, even for a moment? Doesn't he try to escape from his prison of utter subjection to something his heart and soul cannot possibly comprehend? They don't, in fact, pass all that quickly, those schooldays — they drag out in torture periods of forty-five minutes each.

Our great-great-grandfathers, grandfathers and fathers believed — and we today believe — that that's how it should be, that the child is basically ignorant, and that he must be forced into things for his own good. And so today our children, our Vanyas, Kolyas, Sashas and Mashenkas⁴ attend school too, and we today, just like our forefathers centuries ago, believe that we are sending them there for their own good, for knowledge and the Truth. This is where we must *stop!* Let's think seriously about it.

Let us remember Russia in the pre-revolutionary days. Our great-grandfathers are sitting at their schooldesks, not yet grown-up children. They are taught religion, history and what kind of life they are supposed to lead. Those that don't learn by rote — or are slow to grasp the proffered world-view the way they're told to — get a sound drubbing on their hands or head from the teacher, 'for their own good'.

⁴*Vanya, Kolya, Sasha, Mashenka* — diminutive forms of *Ivan, Nikolai, Alexander/Alexandra* and *Maria* (i.e., typical Russian names) respectively.

But then the revolution comes along, and all of a sudden adults acknowledge that what the schools have been teaching the children is rubbish and brainwashing. Everything old is thrown out of the classroom, and a new indoctrination takes its place: "Religion is sheer nonsense. Man is evolved from monkeys. Put on red scarves,⁵ form up in lines, read poetry and, above all, glorify communism." And so the Pioneers glorify communism, read poetry at the top of their lungs and give honour to adults. "For our happy childhood we thank you, our native land." And once more those who don't try hard enough are subjected to deprivations, beatings and public condemnation.

But then, in our own era, before our very eyes, all of a sudden new directives are handed down: "Take off the red scarves. The Red Plague overcame us. Communism — that's nothing but terror and hypocrisy. Man from monkeys? Sheer rubbish. We have a different progenitor now. The Market! Democracy! This is Truth!"

Where the Truth is, and where false dogma — is still by no means clear. But children once again are sitting at their desks without so much as a stir. And over by the chalkboard still stands a teacher as strict as can be...

For ages children have been under the shadow of a 'spiritual sadism'. Like a ferocious beast, invisible and frightening, it tries to chase each newborn child as quickly as possible into a kind of invisible cage. The beast has some faithful soldier-allies — who are they? Who is spiritually scoffing at our children? Scoffing at every Man that comes into this world? What is their name? Their profession? What? — can we simply accept that their name is 'schoolteacher' or 'parent'? An

⁵*red scarves* — red silk scarves worn (during the Soviet period) by the so-called 'Pioneers' (schoolchildren 10–15 years old), whose uniforms bore a superficial resemblance to those of the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides in the West.

educated parent, perhaps? There's no way *I* can accept that right off — what about *you*?

Today in Russia teachers are not being paid their wages on time. The teachers are on strike. "We won't teach the children," they say. Tell me, is it good or bad when someone is not paid the wages owed them? Of course, it's bad. After all, people need something to live on. But what if there are actually 'spiritual sadists' among those on strike? Now tell me, is it good or bad not to give money to those who scoff at your child?

Anyway, the teachers' strikes gave me pause for some rather interesting reflection. Right now all the major cities have private schools, whose organisers select the most talented teachers and pay them a decent wage — in the neighbourhood of twice what they would get in regular schools. Not all parents manage to get their children into a private school, even if they have enough to pay for the tuition. Simply because there are not enough private schools to go round. And why aren't there enough?

The answer is simple — because there aren't enough good teachers. The founders of private schools can't find them.

Another question. If they can't find teachers even at a good salary, who are all those people on strike? Now *there's* a question for you. Only please believe me, I'm in no way wishing, out of the whole cross-section of our society, to point the finger at teachers alone. When I speak about them I'm including myself too. After all, I'm one of them. I too, after all — as a parent — made my daughter study what she was taught in school, and then, when *perestroika*⁶ came along, I asked her:

⁶*perestroika* — the policy of restructuring the economic and political system of the Soviet Union, initiated by Gorbachev in 1985, which eventually led to the collapse of the Soviet system and the break-up of the USSR in the early 1990s.

“What is your teacher telling you about history now?” — only to hear in reply: “The teacher talks, but it’s, like, he isn’t saying anything.” And what could I say to my daughter about that? So I simply advised her: “Well, don’t go philosophising about it. Just get on with your studies.”

Today we have strikes, but is it only the teachers? Doctors are on strike, so are miners, so are academic researchers. The strikers write on their placards: “Down with the government!” “Down with the president!” It’s all quite logical, according to the strikers. After all, if there’s no pay, it means the authorities are not carrying out their duties.

Everything in their demands seems logical to us today, but what about tomorrow? Again, a question to be answered. Perhaps it will come out tomorrow that the government and the president have been standing on the bright side all along, saving the whole Earth from invaders and vampires. Perhaps against their will, unwittingly, risking loss of power under a hail of malevolence by their refusal to give money to sadists and destroyers of people’s souls and bodies, as well as the Earth. And yet the latter have hysterically portrayed themselves as martyrs in the public’s eye.

Today it’s martyrs. In the context of today’s positions and dogma. But tomorrow there will be a different dogma, and who will be portrayed as what is not yet clear. Anastasia says:

“Everybody is choosing an unreliable path for themselves. They always get what is coming to them, not in the next life, but in this one. But with the dawn of each new day each one of us is given the opportunity to determine whether their path is true or not, and the choice is up to you! You are free to choose which path to take. You are a Man! Become consciously aware of what you really are! You are a Man, born to be in paradise.”

I asked her:

"Where is it, that paradise? Who's been leading us into some kind of swamp?" And she replied:

"Man creates everything for himself."

Just try to fathom what she said next! She was affirming, after all, that the time has now come for the speeding up of some kind of processes in the Universe. And those whose way of life does not correspond to the natural laws of being will be subjected to trials — at first in the most ordinary way — clear and understandable, and these trials will serve as a good sign for becoming consciously aware of their actions and the path they are following. For those who don't manage to do this, more troubles will ensue, and then they will have to forsake life in order to be regenerated as healthy beings — but only after nine thousand years.

And it turns out, according to her, that miners tearing open the veins of the Earth, modern medical doctors thrusting themselves into genetic engineering, scientists inventing deadly products — all these have already been shown the first sign in the form of their rejection by society and their failure to achieve financial peace of mind. Those of them who possess material goods today suffer even more from lack of moral satisfaction, as they are subconsciously aware of how harmful their activity is and how it is bringing no real good to anyone.

I tried to object, arguing that coal was needed for factories, but she countered:

"What factories? The ones that smoke and burn up the air intended for Man to breathe, and turn out steel to make machine guns and bullets?"

In other words, she maintains that the system we have created to provide artificial conditions for life is so imperfect that all its present achievements will result in terrible cataclysms.

The ground that has been dug up beneath our large cities — where natural underground streams and pure springs

welling up from the depths of the Earth have been replaced by systems of pipes and taps — is unable to restore itself and is rotting away, bringing this rot along with the water into everyone's taps. Anastasia went on:

"The time will come when mankind will understand. The most important scientists will come and pay a visit to the grandmother on her plot of land. Famished, they will ask her to give them a tomato for something to eat. The scientists and their illusory creations are not needed by that grandmother today. She knows nothing of them herself, nor does she want to know. She lives a quiet life without the scientists' help, while they cannot live without her. They inhabit a world of fruitless illusions, leading nowhere. She is with the natural earth and the whole Universe. The Universe needs her, it does not need them."

I tried to object that, if we don't produce weapons but only take care of the land, we'll become weak, and risk being easily conquered by technologically advanced powers that do have weapons.

"They are having a problem protecting themselves from their own weapons!" replied Anastasia. "And from the social cataclysms these weapons engender."

"Sure," I said, "they will abandon everything and come after our grandmothers on their plots of land — come after your *dachniks* — with their machine-guns, and our grandmothers will have no machine-guns of their own to fight back."

"But will they get that far? What do you think? Will they not fight to the death among themselves over our grandmothers?"⁷

So there you have it. If we're not going to argue with Anastasia and simply trust what she says, then we have to

⁷*fight ... over our grandmothers* — The Russian phrase here involves a play on words; it can also be understood in the sense of *fight over money*.

admit to ourselves that we're complete idiots, nothing but fruit-hungry worms. That's not something we're willing to own up to!

So, not understanding, perhaps, everything in Anastasia, I am trying to find at least some sort of justification of what we have been creating in our world. And should I not be able to find any reasonable justification, should I be obliged to admit that the path we are following is completely untenable, then... And what then? Let's think about it a bit. Perhaps we should give our children the freedom to grow up without our dogma. And then ask the children where and which way *we* should go.

Anastasia talks about how children whom we have not corrupted spiritually will find the way to winning salvation for both themselves and us or, rather, to attain the paradise given us right from the beginning.

It turns out everything in our world is simple, yet not so simple. Why — tell me — why not extend the experience of Academician Shchetinin's school to other places? Why not set up at least one such school in every major city? Well, it's not all that simple, it turns out. I asked Shchetinin to set up such a school in Novosibirsk, and he agreed. But who is going to provide the space? A good question. I asked Shchetinin:

"And what if people can be found in other cities to set up a foundation, would you be able to organise at least one such school in various cities?"

"It's impossible to settle everything right away, Vladimir."

"Why?"

"We shan't be able to find that many teachers for all the schools."

And again the thought: What's this about there not being enough teachers?! Who are all those people out on strike?

Academician Shchetinin's school is a regular government-supported institution, it's not a private school. It comes under

the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation and does not charge tuition fees.⁸ But why is it located far away in the mountains, in a ravine? Why? And why was there an attempt on Academician Shchetinin's life? And why was his brother killed? And why do the Cossacks⁹ help guard the school? Who doesn't like this school? Who is it interfering with?

I was invited to a meeting with the Education Committee of the State Duma.¹⁰ Officials there had read the first two books — *Anastasia* and *The Ringing Cedars of Russia*. And there were people on the Duma Education Committee who shared and understood Anastasia's views. Good people. I told them about Shchetinin — they know him very well, and have great respect for him.

"Then what's the problem?" I asked. "Why is nothing changing in the educational system in this country? Children are suffering as they did before — every time they step up to the chalkboard it's like going to the scaffold. And they still sit at their desks without stirring."

I was saddened by their response, which, unfortunately, has tragic consequences for those who are still children today. Paradoxically, it is the teachers, the teachers themselves who have turned out to be an insurmountable barrier, as I heard and understood this gruesome reply:

⁸Despite Shchetinin's school's official status, since this book was published in Russian in 1998, the Russian Orthodox Church has labelled the school a "totalitarian sect" and it has become a target of a concerted libel campaign in the mass media (described in Book 7 of the Ringing Cedars Series, *The energy of life*) aimed at discrediting the school and disrupting its operation. In 2001 the school's main building burnt down for unknown reasons but was rebuilt by pupils themselves in an even more impressive form.

⁹*Cossacks* (Russian: *kazaki*) — descendants of a race of independent professional warriors who traditionally hired out their services to the ruling authorities, especially in the Caucasus.

¹⁰*Duma* (pronounced *DOO-ma*) — Russia's national parliament.

“What would become, tell me, of the whole raft of academic titles and degrees, the countless dissertations on the subject of child-raising? What would become of our research institutes? After all, they’ve worked out a whole system. The machinery has been set in motion, and its flywheel can’t be stopped with the wave of a wand. Anyone who has defended a doctoral thesis, especially one who has achieved professorial rank, is going to stick as hard as he can to his own views.”

I also learnt how a woman member of the Duma lamented after visiting Shchetinin’s school:

“I don’t understand anything that’s going on in that school. It’s quite out of the ordinary — something like a sect.”

I wasn’t aware of the specific meaning of the word *sect* (Russian: *sekta*). Later I looked up the definitions in the dictionary, which read as follows:

Sekta (Sect) — from Latin *secta* — teaching, movement, school.

1. A religious community or group which has cut itself off from the prevailing church.
2. An isolated group of people absorbed in their own narrow group interests.

It is not clear in what sense the Duma member was using this word, but I feel neither definition is really applicable to Shchetinin’s school. And if it has indeed cut itself off, has it cut itself off from the good or the bad? I think, if it has cut itself off at all, then it has detached itself from the sadistic treatment of children. As for the Duma, as long as its members make such statements, I have nothing to say. Let readers themselves consider whether and in what measure the second definition quoted above applies to certain factions in the Duma: “An isolated group of people absorbed in their own narrow group interests”. Does that mean they’re a sect?

Shchetinin was shot at. But he is a man. Now the Cossacks, perhaps, will help to some degree. And Anastasia promised to protect the 'new shoots'. Now I realise it would be better for her not to come out of her taiga, at least for the time being. If she were just slightly more aggressive, she could easily zap dissertations, academic titles and all sorts of rot with her ray. But no way! "A gentler approach," she says, "is needed. People's consciousness needs changing."

Anyway, here I've gone and written down my thoughts about child-raising and our modern schools, only they've come out rather chaotic, not very sincere. Not very sincere, since if I were to describe how I really feel about our schools I'd have to resort to some pretty foul language. But my style of writing has somehow changed after my talks with Anastasia. There are a lot of words that simply wouldn't fit in.

I would still like to say a word to all those teachers who have been able in spite of the system to impart to their children even a smidgen of good and, as Shchetinin says, "enrol them in the natural cosmic process". *Thank you!* Along with my deepest respect!

And there's another thing I have learnt from what Anastasia says about child-raising — namely, that first and foremost comes the conscious awareness of the child as an individual. By comparison with us adults youngsters are, of course, physically weaker, but at the same time immeasurably kinder than we are, unsullied, not bound by dogma. And before we go filling children's heads with any kind of moralising, we need to understand something about the world ourselves. *Ourselves!* We need to think things through ourselves! And to forget about somebody else's dogma, at least for a time.

As for us entrepreneurs, we too have to somehow seek out teachers in each city, help create foundations for the schools where we shall be teaching our children and grandchildren.

CHAPTER TWENTY



Mediums

Day after day my stay in the taiga goes by, and I can't find any particular activity for myself. Anastasia keeps running off, still tending to her own affairs. Our son, even though he is still quite little, splendidly copes with everything through the help of his 'nannies' of the wilds. It's a strange turn of events: as though humanity has thought up so many activities simply to give it the feeling that it is doing something. And out here all you do is go for walks in the forest and think. So I take walks, and I think. Now I've come once more to the lake and sat myself down in my favourite spot by the shore, underneath a cedar tree. And I'm looking at the bag of readers' letters and thinking I'd better not forget to have Anastasia answer all these questions. As soon as she approaches, I ask her:

"You see these letters from readers? I've sorted them all out according to the type of question. There are questions on child-raising, various suggestions, questions on different religions, on Russia's purpose, on war, there's poetry and greetings, letters from mediums. You see?"

"Yes, I see."

And the first thing I did was to ask Anastasia about mediums.

"There are people who say — in fact, they write in their letters — that they communicate with extraterrestrial civilisations, with certain individuals in the past, that they hear different voices, and some record what they hear — they say that they record various kinds of information communicated to them by the Supreme Mind of the Universe. We have books published in huge print-runs on 'channelling' — contact

through mediums. Blavatsky,¹ for example — there's a woman writer by that name who has written quite a few weighty tomes along this line. And then there's the Roerichs,² known to a lot of people — they've written books and produced paintings which have been exhibited in many different countries where their books are read. Other people are afraid, terrified when they hear voices. Look — here's a letter from a little girl in the town of Klinty³ — she has a voice telling her he's a wise teacher and she should listen to him, and the girl is afraid and is asking for help. Are people like this really communicating with someone and how does it happen?"

"Tell me, Vladimir, what do you consider to be an extraterrestrial civilisation?"

"Well, I would say the population of some other planet or star, or something invisible existing quite close by. If people can communicate with individuals who lived in the past, it must mean these individuals reside in some kind of invisible world."

"Every Man, Vladimir, is so constructed that he has access to the whole Universe — both visible and invisible. Every Man may communicate with anything or anyone he wishes. It works pretty much the same as through your radio receiver.

¹*Elena (Helena) Petrovna Blavatskaya (Blavatsky)* (1831–1891) — Russian charismatic spiritualist writer who travelled the world in the 1850s and was especially intrigued by the religions of the Orient. In 1873 she emigrated to America, where she wrote her monumental *Isis unveiled* (1877) and along with Henry Steel Olcott (1832–1907) and William Quan Judge (1851–1896) founded the Aryan Theosophical Society of New York. In 1878 she and Olcott went to India and founded a Theosophical Society there; they later did the same in Europe (London and Paris), where Blavatsky's other major work, *The secret doctrine*, was published in 1888.

²*Roerichs* — see footnote 5 in Chapter 17: "Put your vision of happiness into practice".

³*Klinsky* — a town south-east of Bryansk, just north of the Ukrainian border.

There are so many stations broadcasting all kinds of information, out of which the owner of the receiver must select what he is going to listen to.

“Man is both the receiver and its owner. And which source finds a reception in his thought depends on his conscious awareness, his feelings and purity. As a rule, a Man receives directly information he is able to make sense of, understand and use. And all this must take place calmly and quietly, without intrusive attention drawn to greatness.

“When voices draw attention to their own greatness, they try to appeal to one’s sense of self-importance: ‘Look here, I’m so great, yet I have chosen only you out of everyone — you shall be my pupil, and you too shall be greater than everyone else.’ As a rule, this is what you would hear from inferior, soulless creatures. They are not granted a bodily existence, so they attempt to oppress the human soul and occupy another’s body. They act on Man’s mind, his sense of self-importance and his fear of the unknown.”

“But how do we save ourselves from such creatures?” — many readers are asking.”

“It’s really very simple — they themselves are cowards, rather primitive cowards at that. You need to give them an ultimatum: ‘Get out of here, and if you do not, I shall burn you with my thought!’ They know very well that Man’s thought is many times stronger than they are.

“Another thing you can do is chew a celandine⁴ leaf, but first you should put the leaf in the palm of your hand and say to it mentally: ‘Save me, little leaf, from all impurities’.”

“But what if a whole lot of people want to talk with the same source? What happens then? See, a lot of people say in their letters that they talk with you — is that true? And if so, how do you manage to answer everyone? After all, there are a lot of them, and they all claim that they talk directly with you and you answer them.”

“Every individual produces their own thoughts. And everyone’s thoughts still exist — they do not simply disappear into oblivion. What you and I think also exists in space — my dream is there, too, and my thoughts, and everyone who wishes to can hear them — many can hear them at the same time — it is only a question of the degree of distortion the receiver is capable of permitting.”

“What do you mean by *distortion*? What determines that?”

“It is determined by the purity of the receiver. Imagine, Vladimir, that you are hearing someone speak over an ordinary receiver. But instead of distinct words you get interference, static, and you do not know what some of the words are, and the concepts behind them are unclear, what do you do then?”

“Well, then I try to guess what words might fit into the gaps where I don’t understand.”

“Exactly. But a word you put in might change or detract from the original thought being conveyed by the sounds, or could even turn it in the opposite direction. Only one’s own purity is capable of hearing Truth undistorted, and if they are insufficient — your tuning and your purity, that is — then you should not blame the source.

“In your material life, in your world, there are a multitude of sources of sound on all sides, all of them claiming to be Truth and trying to control your mind and will, to make your

⁴*celandine* (from Greek *kbelidon* = swallow) — here referring to *greater celandine* (*Chelidonium majus*), a yellow-flowered plant whose blooming is associated with the arrival of migrating swallows, and whose leaves and flowers are used as medicine. Native to Europe, Eurasia and North Africa, it has also been naturalised in North America. In Russian the greater celandine is known as *chistotel*, derived from the root *chist-* (signifying ‘pure’ or ‘cleansing’) and *-tel* (signifying ‘body’) — a name consistent with its traditional use as a cure for a variety of skin diseases.

life suit their own purposes, but you are free to listen to them or not to listen. You are free to decide, with nobody to blame but yourself.”

“Let’s say that’s true,” I observed, “but what if there is some kind of question for which there is no answer in all the Universe? Let’s say you’re asked a question, and you don’t have any thoughts out in space on that subject to respond to the question, and you yourself haven’t produced any thoughts in response to that question, what then?”

“A question for which there is no answer in the Universe will immediately speed up the evolution of everything. Like a flashbulb bright and clear as a bell, it will reach into all corners of the Universe and everything will be set in motion as well, there will be a rejoining of opposites, an answer will be born and it will be heard.”

“So, that means, right off you’ll hear the question and glimpse the one who’s asking it?”

“Just like everyone else, I too shall hear it right off. But unfortunately, for centuries people have been asking the same questions over and over again — there are answers to them, but not many people who hear those answers.”

“But how can I tell what’s what? How can I tell when the source is communicating Truth, or rather, when Truth is being perceived without interference? After all, there’s no crackling sound in one’s ears when we hear something externally, and you say that the answer is born, as it were, in the form of our own thoughts — thoughts we produce ourselves. But what helps us tell whether the voice we hear is a good voice or no? After all, everyone that hears voices thinks they are listening only to the Supreme Mind.”

“It is when you hear more than just words. When suddenly there is a flash of feeling or emotion in the soul and tears of joy in your eyes. And when sensations of warmth and fragrances and sounds are born in you. When you feel within yourself

the impulse or urge to co-create and a thirst for purification, you may be sure that you are clearly hearing the thoughts of Light.

“When it is simply cold information that comes, an order or command, even one that talks about good — perhaps it seems wise, even very wise, and the originating source claims to be supreme and very powerful — know this: it is not good that is hiding behind good, but an entity not accorded a place in perfection that is trying to persuade you to follow it for its own purposes.”

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE



Should we all go live in the forest?

“Anastasia, here’s another issue. Some readers want to live the way you do in the taiga. Several are trying to come to see you and are asking directions, others want to organise settlements in the taiga. And they are sending in their proposals to the Moscow Research Centre as to how to do this. Besides, I’ve read that there are already settlements like this elsewhere in the world, where people leave their homes in the city and settle in communities in Nature. This is happening in India, in America, and also here in Russia — in the Krasnoyarsk¹ region, for example. And people are asking you the best way to realise their dreams.”

“But why go to another place to live?”

“What do you mean, why? People are leaving the dirty cities where the air quality is poor, where there’s a lot of noise and bustle. They are moving to places that are clean and ecologically pure, so they can become purer themselves.”

“But back there where it has become dirty, who is to clean it up? Others?”

“I don’t know who. But is it so bad when Man has the desire come to him to live in a clean place in Nature?”

“The desire is a good one, that is not the point. When a person who creates dirt around himself comes to a clean place,

¹*Krasnoyarsk* — a major industrial city of approximately one million inhabitants in central Siberia, a few hundred kilometres east of Novosibirsk. Krasnoyarsk is also a port on the Yenisei River which, like the Ob in Novosibirsk, flows north to the Arctic Ocean.

he pollutes that place with his very presence. You need to clean up the place you've been polluting first, thereby washing away your sins."

"So, everything starts with a clean-up, eh? And how do you suppose that's all going to happen?"

"Conscious awareness is the point of departure for any venture. The aspiration of one's thought finds the most effective path, just like any stream in Nature.

"It is all happening already in Russia today. Look closely, Vladimir. You will see that the factories with their smoking chimneys are not doing very well — that is not by chance, it did not simply happen that way all by itself.

"Another thing — there is less and less money for the nation's armed forces.

"But the main thing is that you have stopped treating as heroes people whom it would not be a sin to call vandals — people who have polluted the Earth by their actions.

"There is no need to go live in the forest. The space of the forest will not be quick to accept newcomers, and will take a long time examining their motives, habits and way of life. After all, the place where you were living, the place where you are living now — all that was once a forest too, planted by the Creator. And what has become of this beneficial oasis of paradise today?

"People who go live in the forest are no more significant — indeed, they are less significant — than the dachniks who plant gardens on desolate, abandoned land with their own hands. They are known and loved by every blade of grass on their plot, which endeavours to give back to them the warmth of the Universe. And the true feelings are to be found in those who themselves have set up this oasis of paradise, giving embodiment to the good in their souls amidst the bustle and gloom of death."

"But what then will become of the cities?" I queried.
"Who will maintain those in a state of normalcy? After all,

everything in the cities will decompose into a void, everything will decay and be destroyed.”

“There should not be a sudden transition from one base to another — a gradual movement is needed, and it is already taking place. It is splendid, and it will be even more splendid in the future.”

“Well, Anastasia, you are true to form! Just like before, all the dachniks are still your idols. The only thing is, they hardly ever talk about spiritual things, the way a lot of different religious organisations and communities do.”

“Are words needed when their deeds are holy?” Anastasia countered.

“Here are some more letters,” I offered. “One person has already sent me five letters. He claims that he hears voices and that his dowsing-rod tells him you are summoning him to the taiga, and he is trying to get to you; he threatens me and goes to see Solntsev at the Moscow Research Centre.² He says we are concealing you from everyone and demands that we organise a trip for him to come see you in the taiga. And he’s not the only one. How would *you* answer him? I think you know these people are in love with you. They think they should be with you, doing good deeds together. And live together with you in the taiga.”

“I would respond to everyone who is sincere: thank you for your love. But I have not invited anyone to the taiga. What would you do here? What could you contribute? If your intentions are good, let them be expressed right there where you are living. Let your love illuminate those living around you.”

²*Alexander Solntsev, Moscow Research Centre* — see Book 2, Chapter 25: “The Space of Love”.

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO



The Anastasia Centres

“In cities in Russia and even abroad,” I told Anastasia, “people have already started organising centres named after you. Let me read you just one example of the many letters my daughter Polina has been receiving. She herself has answered a number of them, and sent others to me, but I can’t possibly reply to them all, and there are some letters I’m not completely sure how to respond to. After all, there are people out there who think these centres represent some kind of sect. Just listen to this letter from one of the centres — how would you respond?”

I took one of the letters Polina had forwarded to me and read it to Anastasia in full. Here it is:

Hello, Polina!

I am a member of our school’s Anastasia Ecological Creativity Centre, Valery Anatolievich Karasiov.¹

Our Centre is still quite young, it was set up on 4 December 1997 and is now in the process of getting established. Its genesis was facilitated by your father’s book, for which we are all very grateful to him.

Anastasia, like a ray of Light in a dark realm, is now bringing together the creative forces of us adults and children who have not lost our creative capacities, with the aim of standing up for our honour and dignity. Such people as we aspire to bright ideals and believe that the happiness of Russia, our native land, is in our hands and our thoughts.

¹Karasiov — pron. *ka-ras-YOFF*

We realise how right now the forces of darkness are pressing down upon her, and we are trying to help her as much as we are able.

Teachers, schoolchildren and their parents are all working together at our Centre.

At the present time we are introducing Anastasia and her ideas to kids and their parents with the help of classes and seminars, making use of your father's books and distributing them along with magazine articles.

We are also trying to put together a collection of scientific accounts explaining Anastasia's abilities.

We are aware of the challenges involved in the task of awakening Man's conscious awareness, in overcoming the inertia of human thinking, and so we are going about our activities with calmness and confidence. And we have already made some interesting discoveries.

Some people we have been in touch with look upon Anastasia as a beautiful fairy-tale, while others tune in to our work right from their very first reading of the book. There are also a few who are starting to spread rumours that Anastasia is just another sect, which makes us smile.

But as it has been said, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."²

The main thing is, we are so happy that Anastasia has brought us together in this rural region with its dying agricultural industries and its decaying state-run farm, whose managers have completely forgotten about people's needs — especially young people's needs. And this has all happened on the very spot where Mikhail Kalinin³ was

²Luke 23: 34 (Authorised King James Version).

³Mikhail Ivanovich Kalinin (1875–1946) — as Chairman of the Soviet National Executive Committee in 1922, the USSR's first titular Head of State. In 1931 one of Russia's oldest cities, Tver (founded in 1135), and subsequently the Tver region (*oblast*) — where this letter is coming from — were both re-named *Kalinin*, and retained this name throughout the Soviet period. The city's historic name was restored in 1990. One of the ships in Vladimir Megré's river fleet was also named the *Mikhail Kalinin* (see Book 1, Chapter 1: "The ringing cedar").

born and the hugely successful Verkhnyaya Troitsa⁴ state-run farm once flourished.

Here at the Anastasia Centre located at the M. I. Kalinin rural school, our Raduga⁵ programme was initiated. It is designed to work out and put into practice creative solutions for the development of our native land, work education and the moral upbringing of the rising generation, to set up a basis for the manufacturing of ecologically clean agricultural products.

Raduga also aims to set up a young people's cultural and ecological manufacturing co-operative under the name Rus, which will include the Slavic cultural centre known as Lada and an ecological manufacturing complex called Rod.⁶

This is the kind of programme Anastasia helped us set up.

Let unbelievers believe in their unbelief, but we shall work on bringing our programme to fruition, no matter how unrealisable it may appear to some people.

Our goal is to allow our young people to feel the practical results of their creative forces.

One aspect of the Raduga programme involves getting to know our own country better — studying our native land's ancient history and the life and culture of our Slavic forebears.

⁴*Verkhnyaya Troitsa* — the name literally means 'Upper Trinity', although to the Soviet authorities in charge of the farm the term was strictly geographical. Workers on state-run farms (*sovkhozy*) received a monthly wage, just like factory workers. This was in sharp contrast to the period preceding the collectivisation of the 1930s, when peasant households owned their land and whole families often participated in the farm labour.

⁵*Raduga* — the word literally signifies *rainbow*.

⁶*Rus* (pronounced *ROOS*, rhyming with *moose*) — the name of the Old Russian territory, which by the 9th century A.D. was centred around Kiev; *Lada* — the name given to the Slavic goddess of love and beauty, also related to the word *lad*, signifying *peace, union, harmony*; *Rod* — an ancient Slavic name for God as Creator of all (see footnote 10 below).

A long time ago, right near Verkhnyaya Troitsa, the town of Medved was built, but hardly anything is known about it — it has literally been wiped off the face of the Earth. Along the banks of the Medveditsa⁷ River may be found old Slavic burial mounds. We are wondering whether some of these have a similar significance to that of the dolmens⁸ in Gelendzhik, since that was where the local Medved militia did battle with the Tatars and their Golden Horde.⁹ We need this information, as we don't want to be neglectful of our past. We shall take steps to preserve whatever we can, and do at least a partial restoration. That is our request, Polina, to Anastasia.

In the spring we shall start setting up a nursery to cultivate cedar seedlings — this will be possible thanks to one of our local residents, a forest warden by the name of Georgi Shaposhnikov, who gave us this amazing gift.

Our children's theatre, headed by Tatiana Yakovlevna Zaonegina, who comes from Siberia, will be putting on a play based on the Anastasia book. The kids are really fired up with the project.

We would very much like other centres and organisations Anastasia helped come into being to get in touch with us. May her Divine lines of Light join all our centres together throughout Russia.

Mutual communication, even if just through letters, will increase our strength and enable us to find answers more quickly.

Our postal address is as follows:

Anastasia Ecological Creativity Centre

M.I. Kalinin School

⁷*Medved, Medveditsa* (pronounced something like *mid-VEYTCH, mid-VEY-dit-sa*) — these names both signify *bear* (the animal), male and female, respectively.

⁸*dolmens* — See Chapter 4: “Score for the Universe”.

⁹*Tatars* (= Tartars), *Golden Horde* — a reference to the Mongol invasion of Russia under Batu Khan (grandson of Genghis Khan) in the 13th century; the Tatar domination of Russia lasted almost two hundred years.

Verkhnyaya Troitsa, Kalinin District,
Tver Oblast 171622

The following is a gift from our school to all for whom Anastasia exists.

HEAR YOUR ORDERS,
DEAR BROTHERS!

*To help with Anastasia's
World-happifying ideas,
To head off disaster for good
And never repeat it, we should
Awaken at six in the morning,
So as not to find anything boring,
And with smiles and sincere open hearts
We shall stretch out our arms to the stars
And draw ourselves close to her side —
To our mother dear, as to our bride:
"Here I am, your own blood to embrace!"
And a sly smile creeps over our face...
In an instant, not a moment beyond,
We see Mother's own face respond.
"To you, Mother Nature, good morn!
Who with God the Father¹⁰ have borne
Strong warriors — where would one find
In the Universe any more kind?*

¹⁰ *God the Father* — The Russian term is *Rod-Batiushka*. *Batiushka* is a tender name for 'Father', while *Rod* is the name ascribed to God by the ancient Slavs to designate the source of all life. Many current Russian words are derived from this root, including the word for *Nature* — *Priroda*, whose literal meaning is 'attached to God'.

*Oh Sister, of Slavic blood true,
 So long we have waited for you.
 We all have been touched by your Ray:
 Your orders we now will obey.”
 Dear brothers, your orders now hear!
 At six, like the book says, dark fear
 Will flee from our forthright attack —
 Fifteen minutes it takes, there and back!¹¹
 So that no threat will vex our dear sister,
 We must give this child our assistance.
 We answer to them, after all.
 Then how can we not heed their call?
 We are quite used to lending our aid
 To break through the dark foe’s blockade!¹²*

Valery, a Russian naval officer

*I wish you success and all the best, Polina. We at the Centre shall
 be happy to receive any information you can give us about Anastasia.
 Please give our very best wishes to your father.*

Happy New Year!

¹¹*fifteen minutes* — This whole poem is a reference to Anastasia’s ‘orders’ (an urgent request, at least) to “wake up in the morning at a set time — six o’clock, say — and think about something good. ... They can think about their children, about their loved ones, about how to make everyone happy. If they could only think fifteen minutes like that.” See Book 2, Chapter 8: “The answer”. The word *orders* harks back to the observation by the ‘colonel’ in Book 2 (Chapter 20: “The Ringing Cedars of Russia”) that Vladimir was “not good at following orders properly”.

¹²*blockade* — a reference to the 900-day Nazi blockade of Leningrad (starting in September 1941), which was broken by the will of the Russian people — first, during the winter months with the ‘Road of life’ across frozen Lake Ladoga east of the city, and then for good, finally ending in January 1944. During all this time the city never surrendered and was never taken by the enemy.

“Well, Anastasia, what do you have to say about this letter?”

“I can say that it shows marvellous aspirations of the human soul. But neither you nor I can take credit for that. It is beauty and the strength of their soul that alone are responsible. Their names would make an even worthier choice for naming the centre. I grew up in the cradle of the Creator, while *their* soul has strived to brave the tortures of hell and has survived.

“For years a string of hardships, deprivations, temptations and commotions have tried as hard as they could to distort their realisation of good. Their souls have been able to overcome it all. They are stronger than those who have cut themselves off from the world behind a stone wall. They are in the world and have enriched the world with their presence. *They* should be remembered in the centre’s name. If people plan to name all the centres after me, it will result in the formation of a cult, and that must not be. A personality or image cult always distracts Man from the essential thing, from himself.”

“Then what will be the result?” I queried. “There’s Solntsev’s centre in Moscow and Larionova’s in Gelendzhik, and already I’ve heard people speak of an Anastasia division at the International Academy of Spiritual Development. How will people be able to find out with precision what these centres are all about?”

“Intuition is a quality given the same to all, Vladimir, and a centre’s real essence and attraction is determined not by the name: it is the soul that should be able to feel one’s actions.”

“Now that’s an interesting turn of things, now I’ll have to do some more thinking. You are a quite unconventional woman, Anastasia, and conversing with you makes thinking work not just for me but for many others around too, and when is there time to relax? There is one more concrete question they ask

of you: what kind of burial mounds are located there on the river, on the Medveditsa?"

"There is no need to excavate the mounds. They have fulfilled their task, and people were born there who were the first to ask the most important question."

"What question?"

"Think about it yourself, Vladimir, please. But I shall tell you this for now: you go show people like these the ways to make better contact with each other. You can do your part by noting their addresses in your book. Let all the letters, like bright rays, help them warm each other's hearts. The St. Petersburg poet Korotynsky¹³ gave you a hint a long time ago when he wrote:

*This ray of Love from heart to heart
With thread Divine will gleam and glisten,
Make every soul from dust depart
And thirsting minds with heaven freshen."*

"Okay, I've got it," I said. "I myself was going to publish both the letters and the poems readers have sent in. I wanted to keep them and release them in a volume of their own. I myself felt there was something deeper than usual in them. And I can make their addresses known through the Moscow centre, so that people may end up helping each other. My daughter Polina can also participate — she has been very good about taking care of the letters to date.

"You know, Anastasia, it might not be a bad idea if people from all over the world could carry on communication with each other. They will find people of like spirit and like mind,

¹³ *Alexander Korotynsky* — a St. Petersburg scientist and poet. See Book 2, Chapter 25: "The Space of Love".

they can marry or at least become friends, they can start new common trends or spend their vacation together. Right, that's it! That's great! I'll get a selection of letters together and put them out as a collection.¹⁴ You know how our newspapers now offer a dating service — people place advertisements, let's say they're looking to meet a potential marriage partner, and they give their height, their age and the colour of their eyes, as though they were selecting a prize cow for breeding. But here, I wager, it will be much better, when people meet in spirit and start helping each other."

"Of course a union in spirit is better, more solid indeed."

"Yes... But there's just one problem..."

"A problem? What is it?"

¹⁴A 544-page volume of readers' poetry, art and letters was subsequently published in Russian, under the title: *V luche Anastasii zvuchit dusha Rossii. Narodnaya kniga* (The soul of Russia sings in Anastasia's ray. A people's book). It was followed by half a dozen issues of a periodical known as *Almanakh "Zvenjashchie Kedry Rossii"* (The Ringing Cedars of Russia Almanac). Most letters and poems are now shared through numerous on-line forums and e-mail lists, as well as on the pages of periodicals specially devoted to readers of the Ringing Cedars Series.

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE



Re-creating Shambala

“For some reason it all happens like that in Novosibirsk — it just happens that most people who are critical of me and my book come from there. Indeed, that’s the only place people criticise me.

“My first book is already being published in three foreign countries, and in many others contracts are being drawn up. But in Novosibirsk all they do is curse it. My daughter Polina is there — I can only imagine what she’s going through. And as for a collection of readers’ letters, they’ll only say: ‘What new thing are you dangling in front of us now? Why don’t you go back to your own business?’

“They did a programme recently on Novosibirsk TV about the early entrepreneurs.¹ I was included, and in the course of an interview with my daughter they asked her about my absence from my business. Polina tried to explain something about my spiritual interests, but they cut her off.”

“Just a little more time will go by,” Anastasia replied, “and most residents of Novosibirsk will think highly of both you and the book. The best of the friends you had last year will come back, and new friends will appear.

“In one of the city centres a short way from the Eternal Flame² your friends both old and new will plant a brand new avenue and name it *Cedar Allée*.”

¹*the early entrepreneurs* — i.e., following *perestroika* and the collapse of the Soviet system in late twentieth-century Russia.

²*Eternal Flame* — in memory of the soldiers from Novosibirsk who fell during World War II.

"Sure they will! Come on, now! You'd better think again — a 'Cedar Allée' near the Eternal Flame? You're really quite the schemer, Anastasia, dearest little dreamer of mine!"

She jumped up from the grass and stood on her knees, beaming all over, throwing up her hands, and all of a sudden whispering:

"Thank you for those words so fine — 'dearest', 'mine'. That *is* me you were talking about here, Vladimir, right? Have I indeed become dear to you?"

"It's more just a figure of speech we use. But still, your dream is very beautiful."

"And it will come about, believe me, it will. Just as I dreamt it, that is how it will turn out."

"But nothing comes about in the world all by itself. Now if you could attempt to create some kind of miracle in Novosibirsk... No, not just any old miracle — what's the point of a miracle which leaves people neither hot nor cold? If only you could grant, say, that every resident of the city became just a little bit richer and healthier — in other words, so that everyone in Novosibirsk could be happier — now for that, perhaps, people might plant an allée. But I have an idea that all your forces of Light, even all told, would still not be able to bring that about, Anastasia. That is not within the grasp of anyone's might."

"You are right, Vladimir, nobody has power over Man's will. Man must still work out his own plan, his own destiny, whether it be for joy or sorrow. Each one's conscious awareness will point out the path to follow."

"But who then is toying with our awareness? Who is impeding us from choosing the path leading out of sorrow to joy?"

"Why grope for causes outside your own self, Vladimir? In accusing others, what do you hope to change? A feeling so great has arisen within you: to create something good for the

citizens of your city — I find it very appealing. It is a thought I myself now must dream with...

“Ah! Great indeed! I have it! Yes, that is it! All the people of Novosibirsk will go down in the history of our nation, for it is there that a generation of happy people will be born. Every one living there today will become happier right away.

“Let us think together what we can say to the people of this whole city you are concerned about, how we can learn to break through to each one’s heart and soul...”

“And what do you want to say to each one of them?”

“That together they will all be able to re-create Shambala.”³

“And just what might this Shambala be? Elaborate more precisely.”

“People have been looking for æons for a holy place on the Earth. They think that it is called Shambala, that anyone there can link with the wisdom of the Universe. But no one has ever been able to find Shambala, though seekers have galloped through many foreign nations looking for it. And find it they will not, as long as they look for it therein, for ever since time began, Shambala has been re-created — both within each one and in its outward manifestation — by Man.”

“More specifically,” I interjected, “what must be done to establish a link with the wise Universe and to make one happier — show me a step we can take here that lies not within ourselves? All that’s within ourselves is somehow unclear. Show me some outward things we need to sow, build or break?”

“Let each resident of the big city obtain a little nut from a resinous cedar cone, place it in his mouth and hold it there in his saliva. Let him plant it in a little pot of earth in his home

³*Shambala* — a Tibetan word indicating ‘the source of happiness’. See footnote 1 in Book 2, Chapter 27: “The anomaly”.

and water the earth every day. Before watering he should put his fingers in the water, and should be in a good humour. And the main thing — he should be wishing good for himself, his children and descendants, and a conscious awareness of God. This he should do every day.

“When the seed sprouts, one may share with it one’s innermost thoughts. On summer days and frost-free nights the little pot with the little sprout should be placed outdoors among other plants growing in the ground so that it can commune with stars, the Sun and the Moon, so that it may know the rain and the breeze and the spirit of the blades of grass all ‘round, and then come back again to its friends, its parents. This may transpire many times now, while the desire is there and time allows.

“The seedling will grow and develop through the ages — a cedar, after all, will live more than five hundred years, beget offspring and tell the young cedars about the soul of those that cultivated them. When the sprout has grown in the home to about thirty centimetres, it may be planted in the earth in early spring. Have the city authorities allot at least one square metre of earth for their sprout to all those that have no plot of their own.

“And these sprouts will be planted around the edge of the city, among the houses and in the centre of busy squares. Let each person take care of his sprout and help each other in this.

“From the ends of the Earth people will come to this city to see and touch the sacred trees, and exchange at least a word or two with these happy people.”

“Why would people suddenly start coming here from all over the world?” I asked. “Now if only you could discover some kind of new sacred sites in Novosibirsk! Dolmens, for example, as in Gelendzhik. You told about the dolmens of Gelendzhik, and now seekers from various Russian cities and

other lands are flocking to see them. I noticed that every day now they have tours to the dolmens.

"And every year in September readers from many places come together for a conference. Artists organise exhibits, and they record things on video. And now, surprise of surprises, trees are growing in the city. Well, not actual trees yet, just cedar seedlings."

"These will not be ordinary seedlings," Anastasia pointed out. "They are like the *ringing* cedars. Warmed by the kindness of human hearts, having touched the human soul, they will take in the best rays the Universe has to offer and start giving them back to Man. And Man and the Earth together will begin to shine once more in that place — now and forever. And there will come a new conscious awareness, and discoveries of universal importance will go forth from such people through the whole Earth!

"Do you know what a sacred site is? Believe me, Vladimir, you will come to know one in your own native city."

"That's all very tempting, of course," I said. "But you know, Anastasia, there's hardly anyone that's going to take your word alone. There's no way this can be known from our history books, and it's not something our modern science is going to condone. Now, if there were just something a little more influential than you, someone better known with the proper credentials, who could show this..."

"The Koran makes some wise statements on the significance of trees. Buddha too got this wisdom when he went off for a long time into the woods. Tell me, Vladimir, you have been reading the Bible, have you not?"

"Yes I have, what of it?"

"The Old Testament notes that long before Christ Jesus' birth the wisest of the Earth's rulers, King Solomon, used cedar wood to build a temple to the glory of God and a house for himself. He hired a work force of considerable size to cut

down the cedars and bring them in from far-off places. King Solomon was very wise, as the Bible says, and the Song of Songs he wrote has come down to us as an oasis of wisdom in the present day.

“The Old Testament also tells us that toward the end of his days the wives of his harem from various lands and various faiths began leading Solomon away from his faith. He came to know a variety of faiths. And do you know which one satisfied him the most?”

“Which one?”

“The one where trees are not only cut down but also planted. And on his death-bed this wise king comprehended that his temporal house and temple would be destroyed, that his descendants would not be able to maintain their power or greatness. It would mean that the might of his kingdom would lapse into a void. And it all came about exactly as he had foreseen.

“And to this day his soul is dismayed by the great mistake he had made. And the wise king realised that it was impossible to do a deed pleasing to God, and at the same time take the life of any of His own creations. The torment that affected his soul and many human souls extends through whole millennia, as they watch one mistake making itself again and again over thousands of years. But the mistake can be corrected, and then a splendid dawn will once more rise over the world. News of your city will spread through all the channels of the Earth and the Universe.

“Of all the miracles on Earth that have come down to us today, nobody has ever heard of a city where every citizen thereof cultivated trees such as these this way — with extraordinary love and tenderness of soul, thereby transforming their own city of stones into a true, living temple of the Universe, into a Space of Love. For this a whole conscious awareness is needed of the Divine, so may it, oh may it rise up so fine and

good within each one's heart, and do its destined part to help the Universe be understood."

"Perhaps, just perhaps, there is a germ of rationality in what you've said, Anastasia, and I shall, perhaps, write about it, so that people may determine everything for themselves, but I must warn you that you're missing something here. You spend all your time carrying on about trees... But... well, how can I put this? You'll never be able to get married officially. You don't have the documents you need to take your turn at the Civil Registry Office, and here you're talking with such earnestness about trees. As it is, the church clerics consider you a heathen, and when I write these words of yours, they won't even let you in the nearest church, and certainly will not officially wed you to anyone."

"Vladimir, *do* write down my words, let people read them and decide for themselves. And do not be ashamed of these words, humble your pride. Not everyone, perhaps, will understand the meaning of these words, and not right away. But in your city there are many scholars who will supplement in scientific words what I have begun to say, if you believe that people will understand them better than my own words. And then there are the journalists. Do not be angry over their criticism; not all the journalists have had their turn. And if the time should ever come for me to wed, believe me, Vladimir, one will be found to hold the crown above my head."

"And what if people create something like that in another city, other than Novosibirsk?"

"Any city can be reborn. For achievements like these to be fulfilled, a different conscious awareness in people must be instilled, and when it appears, the face of cities will be changed for years to come. But among them there will be a first to perceive the Grace."

"Blessed Anastasia, you are so naïve, it seems, you never have anything but bright dreams. Well, okay then, I shall

write what you say, so that people will know these things too."

"Thank you, thank you! I do not know how else to thank you."

"What for? That's not hard to write. You can add something more, if you like."

"I ask you, people, do not just read what I say as empty words, you need to make sense of what you have heard."

"Here you are, Anastasia, answering questions from readers, and you speak of Man as a creator, but you're a woman, don't you see? You know what the leader of one of our religious denominations said about women?"

"What did he say?"

"He said that women are incapable of creating — their proclivity, then, is to look beautiful and inspire men to various achievements and creativity, but it is only men that do the actual creating."

"But you, Vladimir, do you agree with statements such as those?"

"One could agree with them, I suppose. You know about statistics, which is an impartial science. Well, if you go by statistics, you come up with this —"

"What?"

"Andrei Rublev, Surikov, Vasnetsov,⁴ Rembrandt and other famous artists were all men — there simply aren't any women among them — at least, I don't recall any women artists. The

⁴*Andrei Rublev* (pron. *roob-LYOFF*) (1365?–1430?) — one of the best-known early Russian painters, known especially for his icons and frescoes. His images are considered to convey a sense of humanity and deep spirituality. *Vasily Ivanovich Surikov* (1848–1916), a member of the *Itinerant* (*Peredvizhniki*) school of Russian art, known for his huge paintings of historical Russian battles. *Viktor Mikbailovich Vasnetsov* (1848–1926) — another Itinerant, who also painted monumental historical canvases (his younger brother Apollinari was not only a fellow artist but an archæologist as well).

inventors of the airplane, the car, the electric engine, the space satellite, the rocket-ship — they're all men, too. Right now one of the most popular art-forms in our society is the cinema, and in order to produce a film you need a director, and he's one of the most important figures in film-making. And once again, all the best film directors are men. Occasionally you find a woman director, but they're very rare. And unlike men, they don't produce any really outstanding films. And the best musicians are invariably men, just like the philosophers — both the ones we know from antiquity and in our modern world — they're men, too."

"But why are you telling me all this, Vladimir?"

"Well, I just had a thought. Maybe it'll help you."

"What is your thought? Could you share it with me?"

"It's like this. Maybe you, Anastasia, should concentrate more on some kind of home improvement here, along with child-raising, and not burden yourself down so much with concerns about the outside world and other people — after all, *men* can take care of everything there. Men alone, according to statistics, which is an exact and impartial science. Historically, too, all the important things have been done by men, and we can't get away from history. Do you understand how irrefutable this argument is?"

"I understand what you are saying, Vladimir."

"Just don't you go and get upset, now. Better understand everything right off the bat, so that you can busy yourself with your own affairs and not with those that others can do better. You're trying to change the world for the better, but only men can do *that*, you see — they are better inventors and better creators than women. Do you agree?"

"Vladimir, I agree that men appear outwardly to be creators. If you look at it from a material viewpoint, that is."

"What do you mean, 'outwardly'? And from what other viewpoint can you look at irrefutable facts? You'd better not

get philosophising here. Just tell me out-and-out: can you at least create *something*? For example, can you at least do embroidery? Can you embroider a beautiful design on a piece of fabric with a needle?"

"I would not be able to embroider a design with a needle."

"Why not?"

"I would not be able to take a needle in my hands. A needle that has been manufactured out of the depths of living Nature. What is the point of creating something if it involves first destroying a great, living creation? Think, Vladimir, when a demented person takes a work by one of the Great Masters, as you said, and rends the canvas to pieces to cut out rabbit figures, would you call his actions *creativity*, making an allowance for his dementia? But if another person, this one rational and aware of what is around him, did the same thing, then his actions would be defined in quite a different way."

"How?"

"Think about it. For example, his actions could be termed vandalism."

"Come on, now, you're not serious?! Does that mean that all creators and artists are vandals?"

"They are artists and creators in their perception of the world as seen on their own level. But if their consciousness should rise to a higher level, they would create by entirely different means."

"And what 'different' means would these be?"

"The means by which the Creator has created all in His own impulse of inspiration. And the power to perfect His creations and to make new creations of their own is something He has given to Man, to Man alone."

"And just how did the Creator create everything? And what instrument did he give to Man for creativity?"

"Thought is the chief instrument of the Great Creator. And thought has been given to Man. Creations are true when

thought is brought to fruition through the soul and intuition and feelings, and the main factor here is and will always be: the purity of one's awareness.

"Look how the little flowers thrive at our feet — their splendid shapes and colours and tints are constantly changing in creation alive. These are something you can perfect with your thought. Concentrate, try to change them, give them a better look."

"What look? For example?"

"Indulge your fantasy, Vladimir."

"Well, I can at least do that. Let this camomile here, for example, take on one red petal, and the next one stay as it is, so the alternation will make it better, more cheery."

And all at once Anastasia fell stock still. She began concentrating her gaze on the white camomile. And you know, the camomile — slowly and quietly as could be, but still, right before my eyes — began to change its colours. There they were, alternating — first there was a red petal, then a white, then a red one again. At first the red petals were barely noticeable, then the colour became stronger, and the red hue kept getting brighter and brighter until finally they were simply blazing with a shining red radiance.

"You see how it happened, Vladimir — you came up with the idea, and I created it all with my thought."

"What are you saying, Anastasia — that everybody can do this?"

"Yes! And they are doing it. But they use material for this, which they first slay, and dead material can only deteriorate. So mankind through the ages has struggled to stop his creations from deterioration, even as human thought becomes more and more preoccupied with just plain rot, and Man has no time to think about what constitutes genuine creation.

"Every thing is preceded first by thought. It is only with time that it gets embodied in matter or the changing strands

of the social order. But whether they are creating for better or for worse — they do not immediately understand.

“Look how you wanted to change the colour of the camomile’s petals. I changed them with my thought — the camomile obeyed Man’s thought. But look closely now, did you really think up something better? More perfect than it already was?”

“In my view, it’s splashier and more cheerful.”

“But why are you not excited when you talk about the new Creation?”

“I don’t know, maybe it’s because there’s still something lacking, maybe some kind of colours — I can’t tell right now.”

“The colours have come into conflict with each other — the tenderest tints have paled for the sake of splashiness. A loud splashiness fails to evoke calm and tender feelings.”

“Okay, okay. Try to change everything back the way it was.”

“It is not *I* that shall do it, but the camomile itself will be able to. The red will fall away. After all, we did not slay the camomile. It is alive. Nature itself will bring everything back to a state of harmony where it can thrive.”

“So, in your view, Anastasia, are all men ignorant vandals and are women the creators?”

“All men and women are one — in each of them two principles merge into a single one. And in the creativity they feel, they are inseparable — earthly existence is there for them both.”

“But how can that be? I don’t understand. I, for example, am only a male of the species.”

“And what do you consist of, Vladimir? The flesh of a male and the flesh of a female have merged into one, they are united in you; similarly the spirit of two has merged into one spirit within you.”

“Then why do people go and state in treatises exactly what a woman is and what a man is, and state which of them is stronger and more important?”

“Think about it yourself, who would want to, and for what purpose, replace your awareness — your consciousness which the Creator gave to everyone in the beginning — with his own dogma?”

“Well maybe the Creator just happened to give someone more than others, and this person, as a teacher, is striving to share his wisdom and awareness with everyone?”

“Every little sprout on the Earth — the seed of a birch tree, a cedar tree or a flower — is filled with the knowledge of the Creator. So how could the thought come to you that the Creator could deign to withhold something from His Supreme Creation? What could be more insulting for a Father than a complaint like that?”

“What are you talking about? I’m not complaining about anyone. I was just consulting with myself, thinking out loud.”

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR



Who are you, Anastasia?

Before asking Anastasia this question, I took a good look at her. Here sitting before me was a woman — a young and beautiful woman, hardly different in her outward appearance from many others in our modern civilisation. Perhaps it is just that her body conveys a lightness — barely perceptible, even outwardly — in the way she stands, the way she moves her hands, and especially when she rises to her feet and walks, all of which she does with an extraordinary lightness.

The burdened, ponderous gait of a ‘senior citizen’ is noticeably different from the movements of a young, energetic, vivacious person. But that gives you some idea of the difference between the way Anastasia moves and walks and the motions of even the trimmest of our young athletes. She gives the appearance of being light as a feather on her feet, yet physically very strong. She easily carried my heavy backpack fifteen kilometres, at the same time helping me make my way along.

During our brief stops she didn’t lie down, or even sit down in exhaustion, but kept moving — either running off to collect herbs, or massaging my wounded leg. And she did all this with a sense of lightness, cheerfulness and a smile. Where did this vivaciousness come from all the while?

Just try observing some time the flood of people walking along the street — take a look at their faces. I did. Almost all of them look absorbed in thought, downcast or just plain glum. Especially when a person is walking all by himself along a road. Even when they aren’t carrying any heavy load, and

they're neatly dressed, evidently not starving, since they're smoking expensive cigarettes, and yet their faces are marked with tension, weighty thoughts — and there are many like that, the majority in fact.

Anastasia, on the other hand, never allows her smile to leave her face. She constantly delights in the Sun and the grass, the rain and the clouds, like a carefree child constantly beaming with gladness, and even when you talk about serious matters with her, she betrays no sadness.

Just like now... But *no*, her appearance at the moment was not typical at all. Anastasia was sitting there, her head slightly bowed and her eyelids lowered, like someone upset or even a mite depressed, as though she could sense what I was about to ask. But I still asked her:

“If you look at all the letters, Anastasia, you will get an idea of all the different things people call you — even an alien from another planet. In one of her books the well-known psychologist and writer Oksana Lavrova¹ has called you a biologist from an extraterrestrial civilisation. Ordinary readers call you a goddess, but strangely enough, those who call you that also write as if they were talking to a close friend. You are probably the first person to be addressed both as a goddess and a close friend (without genuflection) at the same time.

“Most scholars and religious leaders call you an *essence*, an elevated essence, or a self-sufficient substance.

“Look, here I've been talking with you all this time, I've written a book about our conversations, and I still can't figure

¹*Oksana Vladimirovna Lavrova* — founder of a psychological consultation centre named *Squaring the circle* (*Kvadratura kruga*) aimed at making a range of psychological services more familiar to the general population. She also heads a professional training institute known as the Samara College of Practising Psychologists, located in the city of Samara (a major port on the Volga River south-east of Moscow).

out just who you are. Can you yourself give an explanation to me of who you are — clearly and precisely?”

“Vladimir, whom do you see in me yourself?” Anastasia asked, without raising her eyes. “And why is it so important to you what other people say?”

“The thing is, that I myself don’t even know what I’m looking at. To be honest with you...”

“Say what you have to say honestly and sincerely, Vladimir, and I shall try to comprehend it all.”

“Well, okay, I’ll say it out-and-out... The first time I saw you, Anastasia, you gave the appearance of being a simple woman. Then that first time I walked with you into the forest, we sat down to rest and you took off your dress and your kerchief and I saw how beautiful and attractive you were — well, you know, the kind of girl we say is sexy or has sex appeal. I really wanted to... well, do it with you — you know what I mean. D’you remember?”

“I do.”

“But now, maybe on account of all these complexities compiled thereon, I don’t really want it any more, even when I see you with nothing on.”

“You’ve come to fear me, Vladimir, is that it?”

“Not fear you, no, not really. But things have got, well, complicated. You’ve borne a son, see, but you’ve become somehow more and more distant, even when you’re right here beside me, like you’re sitting right now, and still you don’t seem very close — you seem far away to me. At least that’s my impression. My head keeps telling me you’re some kind of ‘essence’.”

“I may be an essence, but you are an essence, too.”

“No. I’m no essence, nobody ever calls me that in their letters. Even if some readers curse me, still, nobody doubts that I’m Man, a human being.”

“Excuse me, Vladimir — you know, I am a woman. Which means I too am Man.”

“You say you’re Man too, but you don’t seem to want to do the most basic thing to prove it. You don’t want to live the way people live. The way the whole world lives. Everybody wants to have an apartment, furniture, a car, but oh no, not you. There’s money coming in now from the book, and soon there’ll be lots more. Let’s buy ourselves an apartment, furniture, a car, let’s go round together and visit the sacred places. We’ll take our son along, too. Our society is now restoring the temples and monasteries, and other countries have lots of sacred sites and historical monuments we can visit. But you have nothing here — no sacred sites. What’s holding you back? What have you got to lose?”

“Vladimir — this is my Space here. The Creator’s creation in its pristine state. My foremothers, my dear mother, along with my forefathers, tenderly cared for every blade of grass with their love, and every majestic cedar remembers their gaze and the warmth of their hands. And in the spring it comes about that the seeds of all the plants bring forth sprouts. And each grain that touches the ground in the spring contains all the information of the Universe. As well as information about how they will see the Light of Grace.

“And the seed grows apace until it becomes a sprout, and the Sun attempts to help it out, and the sprout reaches out to Man for more than just the Sun — it reaches out to Man for the Light of Grace.

“Thus the Creator created all. He designed everything so that Man could continue creating along with Him. My parents saved and preserved the creations thereof, and there is a Space of Love! My parents gave it to me.

“What in the world could be more sacred than the creations of the Creator, of my parents, of living Love filling all Space?

“This is how every Man that is a parent should act. They should give the child born to them the Space of Love!

Marvellous as a mother's womb, only in the Space of Love is there room for their future offspring — indeed the future of their own — to be truly happy.

"It is this holy place and the Space of Love that is my gift to our son."

"You are giving this of yourself, Anastasia, but where is my Space of Love? What can *I* give our son?"

"The links of the continuum have been violated in many people's lives. But the strand is not broken. The strand that ties humanity as a whole and every creature in particular to the Creator needs only to be comprehended and felt by each, and then to each may be extended both light and might. Vladimir, expand the Space of Love. Right there in the world where you now live, create a Space of Love. For the sake of our son, for all the children of the Earth, make the whole Earth into a Space of Love."

"I don't understand. What do you want from me? To change the whole Earth?"

"That is exactly what I want!"

"And for all people to love each other, for there to be no more wars or crime and for the air to be pure and sublime? And the water too?"

"Let it be thus throughout the Earth!"

"And only then will it be construed that I am a father true, that I have given something to my son?"

"Only then will you be a father true, worthy of your son's respect."

"Does that mean that otherwise he will not respect me?"

"What can he respect you for, Vladimir? For which of your achievements do you wish to receive respect from your son?"

"For the same reason that children all over the world respect their fathers. Their fathers gave them life."

"What kind of life? When a child comes into the world, where, in what place does he find any gladness? And why, in

the space given to him by his forefathers, is there so much sadness? And the child born again must live in this same sadness, and yet the one who gave him life does not surmise that he himself is to blame. And so we live and crave respect, and are surprised when we do not get it.

"Believe me, Vladimir, very few children respect their fathers as they should. This is why, as soon as they grow a bit, they leave their parents by and by, and refuse to remember them, thereby accusing them, albeit intuitively, and repeating in their turn the parents' mistakes. If you wish to earn the respect of your son, Vladimir, you will have to make the world a happier place for him."

"Aha, so... Now it's clear!" I jumped up. My head was ever so filled with despair and anger. My thoughts became jumbled together.

I realised it now, as I hope it has become plain to all: Anastasia is a fanatical recluse. I surmised this right from our very first encounter. Maybe a recluse with extraordinary, unexplainable abilities and perhaps she has an excuse — perhaps these same abilities — her Ray, for example — do not allow an accounting of her own — I mean, do not allow her to take account of her possibilities. You will remember she said she would transport all people across the dark forces' window of time.² Well, she herself realised that she was not in a position to do that, and now she is resorting to luring me and my readers into her fruitless vision. I knew for sure that along with being abnormal and fanatic she is incredibly deceptive and makes use of her guile to do whatever she can for her dream!

She bore a child, and she's managed to get a book written by now. And then — something really wild! — she says if I'm to earn the respect of my son, I shall have to make the whole world into a Space of Love to give not only to my son but to

²See Book 1, Chapter 27: "Across the dark forces' window of time".

every child!... Methodically and by intricate art she is drawing everyone into her dream and keeps complicating my part before my very eyes. First write a book, says this girl, then make a Space of Love throughout the world, and then what? We have known of more than a few fanatics who have tried to change the world, and now they are where? Vanished like smoke into thin air. And here I find another one sitting in front of me with head bowed, with the same aim in mind: to change the world.

I knew that it was useless to argue with eccentrics and fanatics, that I needed to calm down and walk away, but I was unable to prevent myself. And to this girl sitting there on the ground with downcast eyes, as before, I still said:

"I know now, I realise precisely who you are. You are a mixture of *essence* and *Man*. And you know how to deceive. You deceive so nicely, you took me right in. Oh wow! what an intricate web of guile you weave! To get me first to write a book and then entice me by bearing a child.

"You tried with your non-human logic to hide your fanaticism, only a hole appeared in your plans. A loophole appeared, you understand. While I was writing the book, I had the chance to talk with many people. I learnt a lot indeed, and was given all sorts of religious books to read. And there's no way I can tell what *you* know of them, but this one thing I can say:

"Several thousand years ago the world saw wise men of greatness and piety arise, whose spiritual currents in all their variety continue to flow until this day. There are more than two thousand different religious confessions on the Earth, you see — I learnt this from a recent talk session on TV. They one and all proclaim the good, they aim to give advice to everyone on how they should live, and every leader tries to make it known that the path to Truth lies through him alone. We have our fill of sacred sites all around, but still, has anything really profound, far-reaching or sincere resulted from their

gabfests over the many, many years? Or from the multitude of their teachings?

"There's just one thing I've understood: millennia pass, but war has never ceased for good. The war of dogma against dogma. The strongest wins a fight and thinks that he is right, but not for long. Time passes, a new war ensues, and a new song, a new dogma gains ascension with its views. But no one thanks the losers in this contention, nobody pays them any attention. I'm saying all this openly and frankly... Do you know who *you* are? Do you know what you are calling me and all the readers to?"

Anastasia arose, looked me calmly in the eye and said:

"You need not go on, Vladimir. Believe me, I know what you still might say to me anon. Let me declare it myself. I can say it more briefly and without swearing."

"Yourself? Well, why not give it a try? And all right, then, without swearing. What was *I* going to say?"

"You were going to say, Vladimir, that there are a multitude of prophets on the Earth, and a multitude of teachers too. There are so many different dogmas it is hard for you to decipher them all. But when I speak, you will be able to understand everything — if you really want to, that is.

"*Water* will prove to be the criterion, the measure of all things. Every day that passes, water seethes with more and more contamination. And the air becomes more difficult to breathe.

"The parade of worldly rulers, no matter what grand temples they might have built, will be remembered only by the filth they have bequeathed to their descendants. The legacy they give makes life more dangerous every day, but we continue to live. You have surmised, Vladimir, that I am one of those who tries to teach everyone how they should live. One of those who creates just another religious denomination, only too ready to put himself at its head.

"But I can assure you now that the sense of self-importance which has ended up burning all that were initially enlightened, is not something I shall ever resort to myself. I shall be able to win and I am winning! I shall stop the factories spewing their stinking dirt, the miners will comprehend that they cannot rend apart the precious veins of the Earth.

"I beg of you, people, change your professions just as soon as you can — all those professions which bring hurt to the Earth, to the great works of the Creator.

"I beg of you, Man, to grasp this fact just as quick as you can, that no one on Earth can be truly happy as long as he keeps causing harm to the Earth.

"Yet a little while and human misery will start feeling the pain of agony, it will burn in its own flame.

"People's conscious awareness will transport them across the dark forces' window of time. Look around, Vladimir, and you will find that what I sought in my dream is already coming to pass, my dream has been caught up by the Universe itself, it is resounding in the hearts of all people, and is already transporting mankind over the abyss, and only the doubters will run amiss and fall into its snare. But mankind, believe me, Vladimir, mankind shall be spared.

"People will see what children can be — people will learn life in paradise.

"The events now taking place in Russia are not coincidental. Assume a closer vantage-point, Vladimir, to observe these events. I am nullifying the portent of doom hanging over the Earth."

"But *who are you?* Who do you consider yourself to be?"

"Oh, do you still not comprehend me in the least? Dogma has instilled in you a distrust of your own soul. Do you still perceive me to be a sorceress, do you still believe my dreams and aspirations to be fruitless? You are inflamed by doubts — you believe in yourself, and yet you do not believe, it turns

out. For that I am to blame, unskilled as I am — my speech is too bewildering and confused. But I say to each one of you who reads this: forgive me — I cannot find the words to make myself clear to all without exception. Forgive me, Vladimir, for my deception — not everyone is grasping what you wrote, and some are simply trying to get your goat.

“But how am I to expiate my guilt? I have got it! If you wish, I shall play the fanatic for you to the hilt. Or I can simply show you what I am. You can take it any way you like, but please do believe my one desire: that I sincerely aspire only to good for all.

“I beg you, please do not frown. Smile and see how great is everything around. Do not torment yourself, let nothing anywhere be kept hid. And if it is easier to accept me as a sorceress naïve, feel free to consider me as whatever you perceive.”

“Now that’s better,” I observed. “Things are clearing up again. Does all this mean you’ve just been playing a game?”

“And have you begun to perceive my play with your Soul?”

“Well, all play ought to involve some fun!”

“Of course you’re right in that. I should keep everything light and simple, and fun for everyone.”

The Sun’s rays shone through the dark clouds on the lake and the shore. They lighted upon the blades of grass and the raindrop-laden leaves, while the raindrops formed intertwining circles on the surface of the lake. Anastasia, who before this had been speaking quietly yet emotionally, her eyes constantly fixed on me, suddenly looked about her, clapped her hands and broke out laughing.

Her laughter was loud, alluring and infectious as it rang through the cedar branches and across the shore and surface of the lake. She began spinning about with childlike excitement, delighting in the rare drops of rain with a girlish, boisterous laughter. But every three minutes or so she interrupted her fiery dance.

I watched as the Sun's rays played in the glistening rain-drops, or perhaps it was in the tears streaming down her face ablaze with colour. Everything around fell still, and Anastasia's sonorous, confident, yet despairing words filled all space as they were carried off into the air. And the air over the taiga took on a greater tinge of blue, and the birds fell silent, too. As though they were listening to all her words as off into space these flew.

"Woe unto you, prophets! For centuries you have been prophesying about the frailty and futility of earthly existence, terrifying people with doom and hell's flaming judgement. Tame your ardour — you are the ones that have made Man's comprehension of Heaven so much harder!

"Woe unto you, Nostradamus! The dates of the fearful cataclysms upon the Earth were not so much your divinations as the creations of your thought. You made millions of people persuade themselves of these by what you taught and thereby aim their thoughts at the implementation of the same. Your thought still hovers up there, hiding in the blue, still frightening people with your prophecies of despair, but now they will no longer come true. Let your thought join in fray with mine. Of course you knew all this ahead of time, and that is why you are so eager to flee away.

"Woe unto you who call yourselves teachers of human souls! You try to suggest to Man that he is abject and weak in spirit, knows nothing of himself and that all Truths are accessible only to a few elect like yourselves — and only through worshipping *you* can he detect God's voice and the Truth of the creation of the Universe. Cool the passions of your heart, and may everyone now know: the Creator has given all to each one right from the start, and we need only refrain from hiding the Creator's great creations under the murky domain of dogma and conventions, the murk of inventions for the sake of one's own selfish pride. Stand not between the people and

God. The Father wishes to speak with each one equally. The Father abides no intermediaries.

"The Truth has been there right from the start in each one's soul. Not tomorrow, but here today each Man may be happy and whole! The Creator has filled each moment of every year with gladness. And in His thought there is no room for His beloved child to feel torment from sadness."

Just listen to her play! So inspiring! Yet so despairing! Of course she's playing, but why above her in the sky over the taiga is there shining bright such an extraordinary light? As though the heavens could record every inspiring and despairing word that from this forest recluse upon the Earth could be heard:

"Woe unto you, prognosticators of the ages, foretelling but gloom for Man, thereby creating both gloom and hell! Oh, how earnestly you have been feeding your own *egregor*;³ frightening people in the name of the Father and more. Well, here I am. You can all come to me. With my Ray I shall take but a moment to burn up the murk of age-old dogma. All anger on Earth, leave your deeds and make haste to me, join fray with me, try your utmost.

"But you, militants of all faiths, it is you who have created all the wars. Dream about wars no longer. Lure not people into war with your obscure deceptions for the sake of your own mercantile connections. I stand alone before you. Try to defeat me. To defeat me, all of you come meet me together. The fight will be fightless, as clergy of all religious confessions will greet me with their merged assistance.

³*egregor* (also spelt *egregore*) — a non-material collective psychic entity or field uniting members of a human group or organisation (e.g., religion, state, association), generated and maintained by thought energy of the members of the group. *Egregor* can, in turn, influence the psyche of the members of the group and, taking on life of its own, persist even when the original members leave the group.

"Foremothers of mine, Fathers of mine, imbue them with the True Light. Give them everything you have been so carefully saving for *me*. Give freely to all who are able to accept the Light.

"Let evil join fray with itself and with my flesh, not with my soul. I give the whole of my soul to people. In people I shall prevail through my soul. Prepare yourself, all wickedness and evil-mindedness, to leave the Earth behind and fall upon me!

"I am Man! I am a *Man of pris-tine or-i-gins*. Anastasia I am. And I am stronger than you."

"Stop!" I shouted, thinking that it was some kind of game, continuing all the while to play itself out. "Why are you taking it upon yourself to call up all these vile things?"

"Vladimir, be not afraid of them, they are cowards every bit. Besides, you yourself said that I was deceptive. Deceptive? Yes, deceptive indeed. I have outwitted them. They were mocking you, treating me as an invention of your imagination, while all along I was involved in creation. And the strength which my foremothers and my fathers showed, which they had brought with them from their pristine origins, I have now bestowed on many people."

Anastasia stamped her foot and chortled out loud, and then spun round again, just like a ballerina. And I got carried away with her play and began giving her my moral support.

"So go to, Anastasia, burn them! Let all the evils of the Earth throw themselves at you and you will burn them! Only be careful, don't get burnt yourself!"

"To dispose of me, Vladimir, they would have to let go of many of their earthly gains, free many human souls from their chains.

"But even if I should perish, my dream shall come to pass all the same. The strings of the harp of the Universe have struck up a happy strain, and human souls are hearing them. They understand them!

“Sound forth, O Universe! Sound forth with your happy strain! For them, for all the people of the Earth. May everyone know the melody of the Soul!

“Look, Vladimir, human Souls are sending their rays to the weary Earth.”

With these words Anastasia ran over to the plastic bag with the readers’ letters, dropped to her knees and placed her hands on the package. And with childlike joy and enthusiasm she exclaimed:

“When an elderly man, a soldier who had been in the war, read your book and tears suddenly appeared... When a young mother’s whole attitude to her newborn child changed overnight... When a young girl, about twelve years old, saw everything clearly for the first time and started to love life... And look, when a young man stated he would no longer take drugs and went home to his mother...

“When people send you letters from prison, you can see and feel how their souls sing, and they take on a whole new strength...

“These are all signs I found that people’s souls are understanding the combinations of the sounds of the Universe, now they are resounding in their thoughts, and they are accepting them... Not all of them yet, but there will indeed be many! And the heavens know thereof and wait to meet each one with love.

“Look, just look how people are expressing their understanding in their poetry.”

She was so sincere in her delight and kept talking about the letters, that I got carried away with the scene before me and thought: Well now, let her have her joy, let her play her little scheme and believe that her dream will come to pass. I shall tell everybody about her playing. She thinks up everything herself and delights in every thought.

I was trying to calm myself down, when suddenly in my consciousness everything again got jumbled together. I began

once more to dismiss everything as her own caprice and fancy, yet there was one thing, can you imagine, that simply blew my mind away. Can you imagine, she talked about things that really were in those letters! And even in the letters I hadn't brought with me to show her! But how could she know? After all, she hadn't read them.

I watched and listened in absolute astonishment as she read poems that were still in the envelopes, as she took a sudden delight in something or stood preoccupied in silence, as though she had read all the letters together in a single moment.

She kept on talking about the letters with complete accuracy. Complete accuracy... Stop! So even before this, then, she must have been describing everything else with complete accuracy, too. It hadn't been a game at all... Was she dreaming? Of course she was dreaming! But she had also dreamt before — about the book, and people's poetry, and now all this lay right there before her eyes. Wow! Her dreams really did come true! They actually came true!

The book was lying right there in front of her. A material object.

Fantastic, indeed!

No, this can't be real!

Dear reader, are not you too holding in your hands right now a part of this despairing recluse's dream, materialised in a book?

And what next?

Can it be that everything else may actually come to pass?

When I got over my initial sensation of amazement, I asked her:

"Anastasia, how did you know what people had written in their letters? It was as though you had read them all. And even those I hadn't brought with me!"

Anastasia turned around, all beaming with joy:

"It's all very simple, on the whole, how one can hear what is being said by the soul."

And all of a sudden Anastasia fell silent. And in this silence she walked calmly over to me and said thoughtfully:

"It is not that hard to answer all the questions, but the answer still will not take away the problem, as one question but begets another. Right now mankind keeps biting into Adam's apple, not realising that this will never fully satisfy him. Besides, anyone may hear the answer for himself within."

"And how may each one recognise when the true answer comes, as opposed to one that is not so true?"

"Only one's sense of self-importance can lead people about, lead them away from the Truth. Vladimir, try to hear me out."

We sat down on the grass beside the package containing the letters. I saw how her eyes were sparkling, and there was a rosy blush in her cheeks, as she said:

"I shall tell you about *co-creation*, Vladimir, and then everyone will be able to provide an answer to his own questions. Please listen carefully, Vladimir, and write about the Creator's great co-creation. Listen and try to take it in with your soul..."

And thus began Anastasia's inspired account of co-creation. But it is a long one. And no room to include it here right away. But this one thing I'll say: after I heard it I really did want to pray.

With my sincere respects to you, dear readers, and until we meet in the next book,

Vladimir Megré

To be continued...



Lada's message

In place of an Editor's Afterword

As I was finishing writing my lengthy afterword, my four-year-old daughter Lada, named after the goddess of Love, walked in from the garden, hiding a 'present' behind her back — two cucumbers she had just picked, one for me and one for her Mama. I hardly paid any attention to her approach, immersed as I was in my work. Lada quietly sat on a chair and patiently waited for me to become aware of her presence. She considered it totally unacceptable to interfere with an adult's thought process.

At that moment I was busy compiling citations from the unheeded sages of many millennia ago as well as of the recent past, who have all been trying to convey the same message: simple life in close contact with Nature is an absolute condition of happiness and peace.¹ I had noted how significant it was that the understanding of humanity's deep spiritual connectedness to Nature and especially trees — the understanding that once served as foundation of entire cults and

¹Leo Tolstoy, for example, wrote in his *What I believe* in 1884: "One of the first and universally acknowledged preconditions for happiness is living in close contact with nature, i.e., living under the open sky, in the light of the sun, in the fresh air; interacting with the Earth, plants and animals. Being deprived of these experiences has always been seen as a huge misfortune. It is felt most acutely by people locked up in prison. Just look at the life of those who adhere to the dogmas of today's world: the greater success they enjoy in terms of what the world teaches, the more they are deprived of this precondition for happiness."

cultures² — still survives today in folk customs and such universal symbols of rebirth as the Christmas *tree*. I had also been writing about our former much closer relationship with wild animals and gave examples of people living in our world today — such as Tom Brown, Jr.³ — who, just like Anastasia, can relate to wild animals in the same way we relate to household pets...

I had had things to say on education, too. Just think about it: a century and a half ago — at a time when compulsory schooling had not yet become a “natural” part of our lives — Leo Tolstoy (who, as a proponent of ‘anarchical’ ideals of love, compassion and non-violence, would later be denied a Nobel Prize in literature) already discerned the havoc wreaked on children by the educational system or by what Megré calls ‘spiritual sadism’ and founded a school based on freedom rather than compulsion.⁴ And today John Taylor Gatto, a teacher with thirty years’ experience and a recipient of numerous teaching honours — including the New York City and the New York State “Teacher of the Year” awards — speaking from his decades of teaching experience and his own extensive investigation of contemporary American education — shockingly declares point blank that the school system has been *deliberately* designed

²In fact, the words *cult* (a system of religious worship or ritual) and *culture* both derive from the Latin verb signifying *to take care of the land or to till*, and reflect the understanding of the sacredness of humanity’s connection to the Earth. To the present day the primary meaning of *culture* found in dictionaries is “cultivation of the soil”.

³See *The tracker* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1978), *The search* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1980) and other books by Tom Brown.

⁴In Tolstoy’s view, “education does not educate, it only spoils”, and “the best educational system is having no system at all”. For further details, please see his article “Education and Instruction”.

to “dumb children down” and kill their creative potential, so as to turn them into compliant members of a “faceless workforce”.⁵ Interestingly enough, Gatto also describes the early childhood years, in terms very similar to Anastasia’s, as “a prison of games” in which children are confined and children’s toys as “suffocating your little boy or girl’s consciousness at exactly the moment when big questions about the world beckon...”⁶

Lada apparently thought that as long as she continued sitting quietly, I would never pay any attention to her. And so she gently whispered:

“What are you doing?”

“Writing good words about the new Anastasia book,” I said, finally turning my head and looking at her.

“Read them to me.”

Responding to her request, I read two paragraphs out loud, and then, remembering Vladimir Megré’s suggestion to “ask the children where and which way we should go”,⁷ I enquired: “Well, what do you think?”

“Papa, it’s so long and boring!” came a frank reply.

“All right!” I laughed, sensing I would probably have to make my afterword much shorter. “D’you suppose you could put it all more briefly?”

“You should live close to the plants,” Lada said in a very serious tone. “In cities cars pollute air and turds from your toilet flow into rivers and make fish unhappy over the dirty water. And papas have to go away and work for money to buy food to

⁵See John Taylor Gatto’s *Dumbing us down* (Philadelphia: New Society Publishers, 1992), *The underground history of American education* (New York: Oxford Village Press, 2001) and other books.

⁶John Taylor Gatto. *The underground history of American education*, p. 383.

⁷Chapter 19: “What to agree with, what to believe?”.

eat. Do not cut down trees. God co-created everything. All are His little children.

“You want to go see how huge my tomato grew? And the water-melon’s so handsome!” she finished off.

“I do,” I smiled and, taking me by hand, Lada led me out into the light of the garden.

Brixey, Missouri, U.S.A.

Perun’s Day (2 August 2005)

Leonid Sharashkin

READERS' COMMENTS

Ordering a set for a friend... these books are awesome. Hard to put down when you start reading.

— *David, British Columbia, Canada*

I love these beautiful energies of Anastasia's loving spirit and vision. I am sharing them with all my friends.

— *Grace, Colorado, USA*

The Ringing Cedars Books have indeed been a Life Saviour for me, it is changing me back to where I once was as a child, giving me renewed hope! I think that we were all a little bit like Anastasia when we were children, we were possibly just not allowed to remember... Lots of Love and thank you from the bottom of my heart.

— *Cissy*

Book 1 was extraordinary. A sense of deep well-being came over me at different times during the reading of it — which took place in one sitting on the evening I received it in the mail! Anastasia's comment that illness is a conversation with god just blew me away. I have had a chronic illness for 21 years now and that is exactly what it has been for me - a conversation with god. Thanks for making these wonderful books available for us in English!

— *Robert, South Pasadena, California, USA*

I have just finished reading 'The Space of Love', and since I first started reading 'Anastasia', and then through the 'Ringing Cedars of Russia', I have such a feeling of hope and some long forgotten remembrance that this is absolute truth. I want to weep with the joy of it all, and I want to weep at the sorrow of how I could have wandered so far astray. I want to weep with gratitude, and long for the first manifestation in my life that I am capable of the unconditional love that you share with all, Anastasia.

Thank you Anastasia, and your forefathers and mothers, for holding the Perfection of Being for us until we are able to recognize our destructive ways and turn back to Love and Purity of Thought. Thank you Vladimir, for your courage and determination in writing these books. And thank you John and Leonid, for being the English language connection and working so hard to conserve the purity and authenticity of the message... and what a message! Now I'm off to start reading 'Co-Creation'. I don't want to do anything but sit and read these wonderful, inspiring books. In love and gratitude,

— *Lucette*

After reading book 1 I'm convinced we should indeed all read this book, no matter nationality, ethnicity, gender or age. We need to reconnect as a society and this first gives us something to discuss that we cannot receive from modern media (television, news URLs, papers). This allows us to expand upon ideas heartened by our cells/bodies/souls with our common man, neighbor and bus-rider to create a community our children can thrive on.

— *Doug, Portland, Oregon, USA*

Words truly cannot describe the feelings that the books have imparted upon me, and an effort to try and describe these feelings would not be sufficient, excepting to say that there has been great joy and sadness in my heart through the words found in these books.

For Anastasia, I know that this beautiful Man, this woman is indeed a great great blessing to humanity, I say that she is indeed bringing in the 'second coming of the Christ (energy)' upon earth, that of unconditional love. To this beloved sister of ours, may your wish indeed come true my friend.

For Vladimir, you are a wonderful reminder of what we have let ourselves become, and I mean no offense to you personally. We have let ourselves become so caught up in being better than the next person, keeping up with the jones'es by having to have the best of the new technologies available, that it is sometimes only when we stop, listen and feel the love and light that nature provides, do we feel so

belittled and useless in comparison, that it is as if we are almost a virus upon this planet, destroying this beautiful oasis that is here, NOW!!! Do not blame yourself or anyone for what you have done, or thought, but let yourself NOW enjoy that which life and specially Anastasia's loving words have to offer. Peace and Light and Love upon this Heaven on Earth that we are now beginning to co-create. God Bless you All. With Love and Light,

— *Anthony, Australia*

What a blast... My partner bought books 2, 3 & 5 at Adyar [Book Store] so I have ordered 1 & 4 from you... but sadly have now run out of reading as I digested the 5 in a week.

I have not been as engrossed in a series of books since I discovered Lobsang Rampa in the 1970's. Every Australian reader should insist their Local Member read these, we're so far behind the Russians, and it (unlike the Cold War Arms Race) is a race that could just save our Planet. Or at the very least ourselves... Cheers and best wishes.

— *George*

To say the content is thought-provoking would be a great understatement and would certainly do the writings an injustice. The messages contained in the book have the ability to change one's understanding in all areas of life. It is written in an easy-to-read manner, almost like an exciting novel gradually unfolding, providing deep insights and new perspectives.

— *Healthsynergy*

I found *Anastasia* to be one of the most thought-provoking books I have ever read. I found myself with a new revelation on nearly every page and it brought many of my thoughts / beliefs / instincts? full circle. *Anastasia* reinforced many of my deepest beliefs while also providing me with many new perspectives on our interconnectedness with the natural world and each other. I have found myself referring back to and reflecting on *Anastasia* daily and it has given

me much insight and plenty to think about and act on in my daily life. I'm very thankful I learned of this book. I really look forward to digging into the second book.

— *Lawrence, Rutland, Ohio, USA*

Anastasia will impact a new generation of readers, like the works of Carlos Castaneda did for a previous generation — only this time through awakening the latent spiritual connection each of us has with nature. This is not about a walk in the woods, rather these books catapult us to an entirely new way of being on planet Earth.

— *Steven Foster, Arkansas, USA, author of
A field guide to medicinal plants and herbs*

My husband finished reading Book 1... Today he said he had read hundreds and hundreds of books on spirituality but no one book had made such an effect on him like this one. Knowing him I will tell you that this is quite a statement! Thank you very much for all your effort in making possible this exquisite translation. We are now reading Book 2.

— *Olga, Colorado, USA*

Anastasia's wonderful! I truly believe this is the book that will make all religious systems and all social structures respond. It is so much in tune with mankind's transformation that takes place and will immensely contribute to that transformation in the best possible way — practically, metaphysically, theologically, philosophically... The freedom that this book carries in its life-concept for individuals and the society as a whole is so beautiful that everybody who reads the book *will* respond and will become a better person than what he or she was before reading it! It only takes to have an open mind and be ready to accept *Anastasia* not as a fiction but rather as a living person next door! Just a bit different from you and me. Of course we, "very well educated people", find it hard to admit that the lifestyle we have in this society is pretty close to slavery

compared to the potential for freedom, for love, for compassion, for God in ourselves. We are losing sight of higher values and are running after dollars, mortgage and garbage...

Thanks a lot for bringing this wonderful book into the English language! Thanks for the joy and love this book will trigger in the souls of people in the English-speaking world! I sincerely hope it will help to avoid some of the 'predestined' paths for us people on this continent. Thanks for giving me an opportunity to become a better person myself and offering this gift to us all!

— *Rada, Toronto, Canada*

Thank you for the book! It arrived day before yesterday and I just cannot put it down. How fantastic! It makes me even more "home-sick" for I love living close to nature and yet am forced to be associated with a city like Chicago. What an irony of life! My "wild" imagination takes me right into the taiga and as I lose myself in reading, I can actually "see" in my mind Anastasia and her beautiful "home!" Fantastic story, the more fantastic as it is really true!

— *Anna, Chicago, Illinois, USA*

At work I walked by a book lying face down on a messy table and it called me. I picked up the book, flipped it over and the cover clicked. I sat down and started reading. That night I took the book home and over the next few days I found a piece of life, of the spiritual cosmos, which I knew had been missing.

In my disgust and shame at Vladimir Megré's reaction to Anastasia, I saw a reflection of my own attitudes towards concepts I was uncomfortable with. Although Anastasia herself is a little odd, I had no difficulty believing in her presence, her existence. After reading the book, I slept under the stars, near some current bushes, but some possums awoke me in the middle of the night. I then did some reiki and sent the energy to Anastasia, and felt myself floating in cedar branches, softly brushing me, with a bright yet soft ball of radiant light shining back upon me (kind of like the sphere on the cover). In a tarot read I asked about Anastasia and drew the Guardian card.

Three years ago my family moved to the country, our own dacha. I now look forward to next spring and “coding” the seeds and creating a space of love for both my garden and my family.

— *Dietrich Jakobi, Missouri, USA*

It is obvious that Megré is not a great and stylish writer... He doesn't have to be... With the highest level of respect to Megré, his value in this process is that of the one who has the technocratic ability, the expertise, the ability to get the information to the people, his personal opinions, thoughts, or rewards from this process are immaterial... Anastasia is the messenger, Megré appears to be successfully delivering it... If the Anastasia person had these technocratic abilities, this worldly savvy, the message would probably be tainted... As it is the message is pure.

In the actual reading of the books I find that I sort of have to wade thru the subjective ramblings in order to gather up the objective truths that I am re-minded of. At one point the doubter in my spiritual nature said... “Who is this guy Megré... how do I know he had these experiences, perhaps this is just Megré exercising his entrepreneurial skills”... But as I read on, the basic truths that were conveyed rang so true, all doubting fell away.

In my 71 winters on this planet my experience has been that when basic truths have come to me they sort of ring true deep in the core of my heart as opposed to beliefs or theories that register in my brain and have to be learned and remembered... The information in these books doesn't need to be proven or investigated... you just know, it's the knowledge you originally came here with... that you once knew and over time, forgot... As I read on I find myself saying out loud... “Oh Yeah”... “That's Right”... “I remember That”... “That's What I Always Felt”... “Of Course”...

These books are like service manuals for maintaining and living one's life in a good way, they spark long lost, forgotten memories of the original plan... indications on how man is to live his life on this planet in a perfect way, the original plan designed to result in the ongoing experience joy and happiness.

I do believe that we are here to experience pleasure and

entertainment... that's not a bad thing... it's just what pleasure and entertainment have currently evolved to that's the problem...

On one hand one may be... quietly resting under a giant cedar at dawn witnessing the planet comin' alive... and on the other... there is gazing at this glass screen compulsively typing away... Hmm? Respectfully,

— *Avid*

Anastasia and subsequent volumes tell the story of a return of mankind to a state of grace through love, actualizing real love to everything around us and keeping our thoughts, hearts, minds in the place of love, touching with love the earth and celebrating the God's creation through loving it and caring for it. I think the most important lesson for us is to move back to the work of the Creator and away from ways which destroy it. That is what I take from the Series and find myself inspired to work harder and being joyous, thankful and loving.

In my own life, our family works toward goals that aren't measured in dollars, which is a much richer life than working for material wealth. We have a certified organic and wild crops farm, so I am very receptive to the medicines of the earth and see the importance of people interacting in a healing way with God's Creation — the earth. In a very humble way, our work with native plants on our farm could be seen as demonstration of a way people can take some of the Ringing Cedars ideas and put them to work.

I think if people find a larger purpose for their lives than collecting material goods, everyone will be happier rediscovering the scope of humanity's tools from the Creator. The Ringing Cedars books help with explaining ways to have a richer life, raise healthier children, filling one's heart rather than one's pockets. I do not agree with everything written, and many people will find ideas threatening. Yet if we don't discover new ways of being human beings and put them to work, if we don't have a spirit rich enough to live with love and respect for God's creations, we have no future.

— *Penny Frazier, Missouri, USA*

As a 75 year-old American who finished the third *Anastasia* book by Vladimir Megré, *The Space of Love*, I am in the process of digesting its substance.

The American must pick up and go to a place that Vladimir Megré shows him. Megré shows him wonders. But those expecting wonders to be valid only if found on American soil will be taken aback to learn they are in a land that rarely thinks of the *New World*.

Anastasia's Siberian taiga is a land that measures history in millennia instead of decades. There, Vladimir meets those who have a mystical affection for their country and culture. He finds values resting on rock-solid Christian principles not bearing Christian labels. They are values descending from ancient insights, approved by generations faithful to the soil of their forbearers. Their love for *Mother Russia* is a love not understood even by the most patriotic American.

Christians will recognize much from the *Old Testament* as well as from the *New*, especially *Isaiah*, Chapter 11. This is not to say the *Anastasia* Series promotes or detracts from that teaching. Instead, it parallels and edifies. The Christian emerges with his faith firmer and a respect for Megré's *Anastasia*.

After three books, I am digesting, and there are moments when my credulity vanishes. Then, lines appear that can have been written *only* to me. Then my unbelief is overturned. It is like the story of Lazarus. I believe, but help my unbelief! Coincidences are endless.

— *Gallagher Rule, Ponca City, Oklahoma, USA*

I am very touched by the energy that the books carry (hard to put into words). A new awareness of who I AM and how I can more deeply connect with my / All That IS Light and Life within.

I'm having fun with a little planting and the energies connected with that action.

NO QUESTION for me that the book's story and message is TRUE. But I am grateful for the powerful Seeds sown in the readers who may not be able to perceive its truth on their first reading. Blessing to you and your ministry of getting this Series out to the (in near future) Millions of English Readers.

— *Linda, Virginia, USA*

Thank you for publishing these wonderful books! to read them has been an amazing experience for me and my life has changed since then. I have now moved and started to grow my own garden. For a city girl like me it is quite a challenge... but so rewarding. I was just admiring the first sprouts this morning, thinking of Anastasia...

— *Virginie, Germany*

A friend has lent me Book One and it's rearranging my cells. So lovely. I've been on a spiritual path for decades, and what I'm getting both confirms and deepens my understanding. My garden is especially happy! Thank you for making these available. Blessings.

— *Holly, Portland, Oregon, USA*

When I embark on a new learning experience such as reading Book One, *Anastasia*, I am interested certainly in gaining new knowledge and of course in discovering new perspectives on consciousness and life in general. And on those two fronts, I will say that what I have absorbed from Anastasia by all means fulfills my interests.

However, there is an added, rather magical quality to the experience of getting to know Anastasia that I do not recall ever experiencing without being in someone's actual physical presence. It was not so much a book that I read but rather reading the book allowed me to meet a truly remarkable being whose love is beyond measure. In fact, her love is beyond what I could ever imagine a human being could experience. She has added to the depth and breadth of my beingness beyond what knowledge alone could impart. She has added to the lustre of my soul with the song of her being.

I am deeply impressed by her attention to the importance of everything. She notices the grandiosity of God's Vast & Wonderful Creation in even the smallest detail, even details I have never noticed as having anything to do with the vastness of Love in action. I take from this, my first reading of Book One, a profoundly deeper sense of the sacred in every living detail occurring all around me as well as in every detail of possible discovery within me.

— *Garrett, Colorado, USA*

THE RINGING CEDARS SERIES AT A GLANCE

Anastasia, the first book of the Ringing Cedars Series, tells the story of entrepreneur Vladimir Megré's trade trip to the Siberian taiga in 1995, where he witnessed incredible spiritual phenomena connected with sacred 'ringing cedar' trees. He spent three days with a woman named Anastasia who shared with him her unique outlook on subjects as diverse as gardening, child-rearing, healing, Nature, sexuality, religion and more. This wilderness experience transformed Vladimir so deeply that he abandoned his commercial plans and, penniless, went to Moscow to fulfil Anastasia's request and write a book about the spiritual insights she so generously shared with him. True to her promise this life-changing book, once written, has become an international bestseller and has touched hearts of millions of people world-wide.

The Ringing Cedars of Russia, the second book of the Series, in addition to providing a fascinating behind-the-scenes look at the story of how *Anastasia* came to be published, offers a deeper exploration of the universal concepts so dramatically revealed in Book 1. It takes the reader on an adventure through the vast expanses of space, time and spirit — from the Paradise-like glade in the Siberian taiga to the rough urban depths of Russia's capital city, from the ancient mysteries of our forebears to a vision of humanity's radiant future.

The Space of Love, the third book of the Series, describes author's second visit to Anastasia. Rich with new revelations on natural child-rearing and alternative education, on the spiritual significance of breast-feeding and the meaning of ancient megaliths, it shows how each person's thoughts can influence the destiny of the entire Earth and describes practical ways of putting Anastasia's vision of happiness into practice. Megré shares his new outlook on education and children's real creative potential after a visit to a school where pupils build their own campus and cover the ten-year Russian school programme in just two years. Complete with an account of an armed intrusion into Anastasia's habitat, the book highlights the limitless power of Love and non-violence.

Co-creation, the fourth book and centrepiece of the Series, paints a dramatic living image of the creation of the Universe and humanity's place in this creation, making this primordial mystery relevant to our everyday living today. Deeply metaphysical yet at the same time down-to-Earth practical, this poetic heart-felt volume helps us uncover answers to the most significant questions about the essence and meaning of the Universe and the nature and purpose of our existence. It also shows how and why the knowledge of these answers, innate in every human being, has become obscured and forgotten, and points the way toward reclaiming this wisdom and — in partnership with Nature — manifesting the energy of Love through our lives.

Who are we? — Book Five of the Series — describes the author's search for real-life 'proofs' of Anastasia's vision presented in the previous volumes. Finding these proofs and taking stock of ongoing global environmental destruction, Vladimir Megré describes further practical steps for putting Anastasia's vision into practice. Full of beautiful realistic images of a new way of living in co-operation with the Earth and each other, this book also highlights the role of children in making us aware of the precariousness of the present situation and in leading the global transition toward a happy, violence-free society.

The book of kin, the sixth book of the Series, describes another visit by the author to Anastasia's glade in the Siberian taiga and his conversations with his growing son, which cause him to take a new look at education, science, history, family and Nature. Through parables and revelatory dialogues and stories Anastasia then leads Vladimir Megré and the reader on a shocking re-discovery of the pages of humanity's history that have been distorted or kept secret for thousands of years. This knowledge sheds light on the causes of war, oppression and violence in the modern world and guides us in preserving the wisdom of our ancestors and passing it over to future generations.

The energy of life, Book Seven of the Series, re-asserts the power of human thought and the influence of our thinking on our lives

and the destiny of the entire planet and the Universe. It also brings forth a practical understanding of ways to consciously control and build up the power of our creative thought. The book sheds still further light on the forgotten pages of humanity's history, on religion, on the roots of inter-racial and inter-religious conflict, on ideal nutrition, and shows how a new way of thinking and a lifestyle in true harmony with Nature can lead to happiness and solve the personal and societal problems of crime, corruption, misery, conflict, war and violence.

The new civilisation, the eighth book of the Series, is not yet complete. The first part of the book, already published as a separate volume, describes yet another visit by Vladimir Megré to Anastasia and their son, and offers new insights into practical co-operation with Nature, showing in ever greater detail how Anastasia's lifestyle applies to our lives. Describing how the visions presented in previous volumes have already taken beautiful form in real life and produced massive changes in Russia and beyond, the author discerns the birth of a new civilisation. The book also paints a vivid image of America's radiant future, in which the conflict between the powerful and the helpless, the rich and the poor, the city and the country, can be transcended and thereby lead to transformations in both the individual and society.

Rites of Love — Book 8, Part 2 (published as a separate volume) — contrasts today's mainstream attitudes to sex, family, childbirth and education with our forebears' lifestyle, which reflected their deep spiritual understanding of the significance of conception, pregnancy, homebirth and upbringing of the young in an atmosphere of love. In powerful poetic prose Megré describes their ancient way of life, grounded in love and non-violence, and shows the practicability of this same approach today. Through the life-story of one family, he portrays the radiant world of the ancient Russian Vedic civilisation, the drama of its destruction and its re-birth millennia later — in our present time.

To be continued...

THE AUTHOR, Vladimir Megré, born in 1950, was a well-known entrepreneur from a Siberian city of Novosibirsk. According to his account, in 1995 — after hearing a fascinating story about the power of ‘ringing cedars’ from a Siberian elder — he organised a trade expedition into the Siberian taiga to rediscover the lost technique of pressing virgin cedar nut oil containing high curative powers, as well as to find the ringing cedar tree. However, his encounter on this trip with a Siberian woman named Anastasia transformed him so deeply that he abandoned his business and went to Moscow to write a book about the spiritual insights she had shared with him. Vladimir Megré now lives near the city of Vladimir, Russia, 190 km (120 miles) east of Moscow. If you wish to contact the author, you may send a message to his personal e-mail megre@online.sinor.ru

THE TRANSLATOR, John Woodsworth, born in Vancouver (British Columbia), has over forty years of experience in Russian-English translation, from classical poetry to modern short stories. Since 1982 he has been associated with the University of Ottawa in Canada as a Russian-language teacher, translator and editor, most recently as a Research Associate and Administrative Assistant with the University’s Slavic Research Group. A published Russian-language poet himself, he and his wife — Susan K. Woodsworth — are directors of the Sasquatch Literary Arts Performance Series in Ottawa. A Certified Russian-English Translator, John Woodsworth is in the process of translating the remaining volumes in Vladimir Megré’s Ringing Cedars Series.

THE EDITOR, Leonid Sharashkin, is writing his doctoral dissertation on the spiritual, cultural and economic significance of the Russian *dacha* gardening movement, at the University of Missouri at Columbia. After receiving a Master’s degree in Natural Resources Management from Indiana University at Bloomington, he worked for two years as Programme Manager at the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF Russia) in Moscow, where he also served as editor of Russia’s largest environmental magazine, *The Panda Times*. Together with his wife, Irina Sharashkina, he has translated into Russian *Small is beautiful* and *A guide for the perplexed* by E.F. Schumacher, *The secret life of plants* by Peter Tompkins and Christopher Bird, *The continuum concept* by Jean Liedloff and *Birth without violence* by Frederick Leboyer.

ORDERING INFORMATION



USA:

- *on-line* — www.RingingCedars.com
- *tel. / fax (toll-free)* — 1-888-DOLMENS (1-888-365-6367)
- *tel. / fax (from outside US & Canada)* — 1-646-429-1986
- *e-mail* — sales@RingingCedars.com
- *mail (US)* — send US\$14.95 per copy plus \$3.95 shipping and handling for the first copy and \$0.99 s&h for each additional copy in your order to:

Ringing Cedars Press
415 Dairy Rd., Suite E-339
Kahului, HI 96732, USA

Make a check or money order payable to "Ringing Cedars Press". Please indicate clearly the quantity and title of the book(s) you are ordering and be sure to include your US postal address with your payment. Allow 2-4 weeks for delivery. Prices are subject to change without notice.

UNITED KINGDOM:

- *order on-line* — www.RingingCedars.co.uk
- *by phone (toll-free)* — 0800-011-2081
- *e-mail* — books@RingingCedars.co.uk

AUSTRALIA:

- *order on-line* — www.RingingCedars.com.au
- *by phone* — 1800-248-768
- *e-mail* — books@RingingCedars.com.au

NEW ZEALAND:

- *order on-line* — www.RingingCedars.co.nz
- *by phone* — 64-9232-9792
- *e-mail* — sales@RingingCedars.co.nz

SOUTH AFRICA:

- *order on-line* — www.RingingCedars.co.za
- *e-mail* — books@RingingCedars.co.za

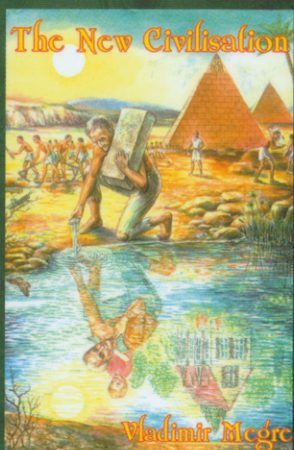
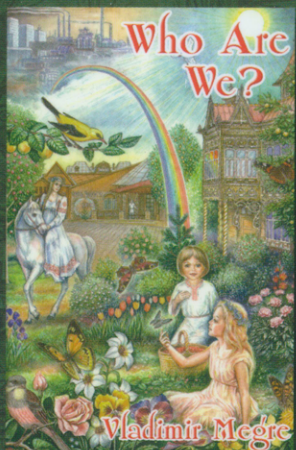
The Space of Love

Spirituality / Childrearing / Nature

Book 3 of The Ringing Cedars Series by V. Megre

"Full of ecological common sense and profound wisdom, The Ringing Cedars Series reveals a genuine spiritual path to a world where Love is the primary creative force behind real physical events. It shows how our thoughts and lifestyles affect the destiny of the whole planet and guides us in creating a space for happiness and Love for ourselves, our children and our Earth."

— Dr Richard Bolstad, author of *RESOLVE: A New NLP Model of Therapy*



RINGING CEDARS PRESS

www.RingingCedars.com

1-888-DOLMENS

US\$14.95 CAN\$19.95 AU\$24.95

ISBN 978-0-9763333-2-6



9 780976 333326



5 1495 >

Co-creation



Vladimir Megre

Vladimir Megré
The Ringing Cedars Series

English translation by John Woodsworth

- Book 1 Anastasia
(ISBN: 978-0-9763333-0-2)
- Book 2 The Ringing Cedars of Russia
(ISBN: 978-0-9763333-1-9)
- Book 3 The Space of Love
(ISBN: 978-0-9763333-2-6)
- Book 4 Co-creation
(ISBN: 978-0-9763333-3-3)
- Book 5 Who Are We?
(ISBN: 978-0-9763333-4-0)
- Book 6 The Book of Kin
(ISBN: 978-0-9763333-6-4)
- Book 7 The Energy of Life
(ISBN: 978-0-9763333-7-1)
- Book 8, Part 1 The New Civilisation
(ISBN: 978-0-9763333-8-8)
- Book 8, Part 2 Rites of Love
(ISBN: 978-0-9763333-9-5)



Published by Ringing Cedars Press
www.RingingCedars.com

Anastasia herself has stated that this book consists of words and phrases in combinations *which have a beneficial effect on the reader*. This has been attested by the letters received to date from thousands of readers all over the world.

If you wish to gain as full an appreciation as possible of the ideas, thoughts and images set forth here, as well as experience the benefits that come with this appreciation, we recommend you find a quiet place for your reading where there is the least possible interference from artificial noises (motor traffic, radio, TV, household appliances etc.). *Natural sounds*, on the other hand — the singing of birds, for example, or the patter of rain, or the rustle of leaves on nearby trees — may be a welcome accompaniment to the reading process.



Ringling Cedars Press is an independent publisher dedicated to making **Vladimir Megré's** books available in the beautiful English translation by **John Woodsworth**. Word of mouth is our best advertisement and we appreciate your help in spreading the word about the Ringling Cedars Series.

Order on-line	www.RinglingCedars.com	ordering
call / fax toll-free	1-888-DOLMENS	details
or call / fax	1-646-429-1986	see last page

Generous discounts are available on volume orders. To help spread the word as an independent distributor, or to place the books in your bookstore, or to be kept up to date about future book releases and events, please email us at:

info@ringlingcedars.com

or write to the Publisher, Ringling Cedars Press, 120 Hana Hwy #9-230, Paia, HI 96779, USA. We also welcome reviews, poetry and artwork inspired by the Series.

Vladimir Megré

CO-CREATION

The Ringing Cedars Series
Book 4

Translated from the Russian by
John Woodsworth

Edited by
Leonid Sharashkin



Ringing Cedars Press
Paia, Hawaii, USA

Co-creation by
Vladimir Megré

Translation, Afterword and footnotes by
John Woodsworth

Editing, Afterword, footnotes, design and layout by
Leonid Sharashkin

Cover art by
Alexander Razboinikov

Copyright © 2000 Vladimir Megré
Copyright © 2006 Leonid Sharashkin, translation
Copyright © 2006 Leonid Sharashkin, afterword, footnotes
Copyright © 2006 Leonid Sharashkin, cover art
Copyright © 2006 Leonid Sharashkin, design and layout

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, except for the inclusion of brief quotations in a review, without permission in writing from the publisher.

Library of Congress Control Number: 2006920095

ISBN: 978-0-9763333-3-3

Published by
Ringling Cedars Press

www.RinglingCedars.com



Contents

1. All this exists right now!.....	I
2. The beginning of creation	8
3. The first appearance of <i>you</i>	13
4. The first day.....	21
5. Problems confirming the perfection of life.....	23
6. First encounter.....	25
7. When Love... ..	33
8. Birth	37
9. The unsatisfying apple.....	43
10. Avoid intimate relations with her	55
11. Three prayers.....	58
12. Anastasia's line.....	68
13. To feel the deeds of all mankind.....	76
14. Dining in the taiga.....	83
15. They're capable of changing the world?	91
16. An extraordinary power.....	95
17. When fathers will understand... ..	105
18. He celebrated the joy of life.....	110
19. A secret science.....	113
20. Our genetic code.....	124
21. Where do we go in sleep?	127

22. Other worlds.....	135
23. The invasion centre.....	149
24. Take back your Motherland, people!.....	160
25. Two brothers.....	170
26. Even today everyone can build a home.....	178
27. A fence.....	182
28. Home.....	192
29. The energy of Love.....	195
30. In His image and likeness	198
31. But who is to blame?.....	203
32. The old man at the dolmen.....	207
33. School, or the lessons of the gods.....	212
34. Anomalies at Gelendzhik.....	231
Hope for the world. Afterword.....	244
Series at a glance.....	254

CHAPTER ONE



All this exists right now!

“I shall tell you about *co-creation*, Vladimir, and then everyone will be able to provide an answer to his own questions. Please listen carefully, Vladimir, and write about the Creator’s great co-creation. Listen and try to understand with all your Soul the aspirations of the Divine dream.”

After uttering these words, Anastasia fell into a silent distraction. She looked at me but said not a word. Her distraction was probably due to her feeling or noticing in my facial expression signs of incredulity in what she might have to say about Co-creation, about God.

But really, how could I — or anyone else, for that matter — not entertain at least some measure of incredulity? What could not this passionate recluse dream up next?! She doesn’t have any historical proofs to offer. If anyone can talk convincingly about the past, then surely that would be the historians and archæologists. And there’s lots of talk about God in the Bible and in the books of other denominations. In all kinds of books. Only for some reason, when they talk of God, they can’t seem to agree. Might not that be on account of the fact that nobody has any convincing proofs?

“There *are* proofs, Vladimir,” Anastasia suddenly broke in confidently and excitedly in answer to my silent question.

“And where are they?”

“All the proofs, all the truths in the Universe are preserved for ever in every human soul. Lies and falsehoods cannot survive for any length of time. They are exposed by the soul. That is why so many different kinds of religious treatises are

thrown at Man.¹ Lies constantly need new disguises to survive. And that is why mankind is constantly changing its social structures, trying to find in them the truth it has lost, yet only distancing itself from the truth even more.”

“But who has proved, and how, that each one contains the truth within? In Man’s soul or any other part? And if it is indeed there, then why does it stay hidden?”

“On the contrary, not a single day goes by but in the sight of each one of us the truth strives to bring itself out. Life around us is eternal and it is through the truth that eternal life comes about.”

Anastasia quickly pressed the palms of her hands to the ground, ran them over the grass and then held them out to me.

“Look, Vladimir, perhaps these will dispel your doubts once and for all.”

I looked, and saw in her outstretched hands seeds of grass, a small cedar nut, and some sort of bug crawling. I asked her:

“And what does all this mean? The nut, for example?”

“Look, Vladimir, such a tiny wee kernel, and yet if you plant it in the ground, it grows into a majestic cedar. Not an oak, not a maple, not a rose, but only a cedar. The cedar in turn gives birth to a kernel just like this, and it will contain, just as the very first one did, all the information about its pristine origins. And if millions of years ago or millions of years from now a kernel like this makes contact with the earth, still, only a cedar will sprout out of the ground. In it, in every kernel of God’s perfect creation, all possible information has been fully implanted by the Creator. Millions of years may go by, but

¹ *Man* — Throughout the Ringing Cedars Series, the word *Man* with a capital *M* is used to refer to a human being of either gender. For details on the word’s usage and the important distinction between *Man* and *human being* please see the Translator’s Preface to Book 1.

the Creator's information will never be erased. And Man, the apex of creation, has been given everything by the Creator at the moment of co-creation. All truths and all future achievements have been inculcated by the Father, inspired by a grand dream, in His beloved child."

"Well then, how do we attain that truth, in the final analysis? From somewhere within ourselves? From our kidneys, our heart or our brain?"

"From our feelings. You should try to determine the truth with your feelings. Trust yourself to them. Free yourself from mercenary dogmas."

"Well, okay, if you know something, say it. Perhaps somebody will be able to understand you with their *own* feelings. What is God, for example? Can scholars draw a portrait of Him with some kind of scientific formula?"

"A scientific formula? A formula would extend many times around the Earth, and when it stopped, another would be given birth. God is no less in worth than what can be born in one's thought. He is the firmament and the empty space, and that which cannot be seen. There is no sense in trying to understand Him with the mind, however keen. Take all the formulas on the Earth and all the information in the Universe as a whole and squeeze them into the tiny kernel of your soul and turn them into feelings, and let your feelings then unfold."

"But what am I supposed to feel? Talk in terms more simple, clearer and more real."

"Oh, help me, God!" Anastasia pleaded. "Help me with the creation of a worthy image out of today's word combinations."

"Well now, not enough words, eh? Why don't you go take a look at a dictionary? It's got all the words people use today."

"All the words available *at the moment*. But modern books do not contain the words your forefathers used to describe God."

“Are you talking about Old Church Slavonic² words?”

“And even earlier. Before the Old Church Slavonic alphabet was invented, there was a means by which people set down their thoughts for their descendants.”

“What are you talking about, Anastasia? Everyone knows that our proper writing system came from two Orthodox monks. Their names were... something, I can’t remember.”

“Cyril and Methodius, perhaps, you have in mind?”

“Yes. They created our kind of writing system, after all.”

“It would be more accurate to say: they *changed* the writing system of our forefathers and foremothers.”

“What d’you mean, they ‘changed’ it?”

“They were following orders. To make sure the culture of the Slavs would be forgotten for ever. To make sure the remnants of knowledge of our pristine origins would disappear from human memory, and a new culture would be born, so that our peoples would subject themselves to different priests.”

“What have writing systems and a new culture got to do with that?”

“Suppose children today were taught to speak and write a foreign tongue, and forbidden to express themselves in the one they already know. Tell me, Vladimir, how would your grandchildren learn about events of our present day? In people deprived of a knowledge of the past it is easy to inculcate new teachings, simply by treating them as important. And

²*Old Church Slavonic* — a literary language developed from the Slavic dialect used by two monks named Saints Cyril [*Kirill*] and Methodius [*Mefodii*], who first translated the Bible into a Slavic tongue in the 10th century A.D. and invented an alphabet (which many people identify as *Cyrillic*) wherein to write down their translation. It was used as the liturgical language of the Russian Orthodox Church up until the 12th century. Its present-day derivative is known simply as *Church Slavonic*, and is still used in Orthodox liturgy today.

they can tell them anything they like about their forebears. Once the language had gone, culture went along with it. That was the aim, at least. But those who formulated that aim were wholly unaware that the sprouts of truth remained unseen for ever in the human soul. All it takes is to drink in a single drop of dew so pure for the sprout to grow and mature. Look, Vladimir. Please, accept my words, and try to feel what lies behind them.”

As Anastasia spoke, she would either slow down her speech or quickly rattle off whole phrases at a time, or else suddenly fall silent for a moment, ponder something for a moment, and then pluck unfamiliar, drawn-out phrases literally out of the air. And occasionally a word or two I had never heard before would weave their way into what she was saying. But each time she said an unclear or unknown word, she seemed to give a start and replace it with a correct or more understandable variant. And it always appeared as though she were trying to prove something whenever she talked of God:

“Everybody knows Man is the image and likeness of God. But in what respect? Where are God’s characteristic traits within you? Have you ever thought of that?”

“No, not really,” I admitted. “Never had any occasion to. Why don’t you describe them yourself?”

“When a Man, exhausted after his daily cares, lies down to sleep, when he ceases to feel his weary body, his set of invisible energies and his ‘second self’³ leave the body to some degree. And at that moment earthly limitations do not exist for them. They know no time or space. In less than a second, your consciousness crosses all the distances in the Universe. And your complex of feelings senses past and future events, analyses them, measures them against the present day and dreams on. All this means that Man feels the unfathomable

³‘second self’ — see Book 3, Chapter 15: “A bird for discovering one’s soul”.

Divine universal creation not only with his flesh. His God-given thought is at work creating afresh. Human thought alone is capable of creating other worlds or changing what has been created.

“Sometimes a person will cry out in their sleep when they are scared by something. Their complex of feelings, free from earthly cares, is frightened by events of the past or the future.

“Sometimes a person creates in their sleep. Their creations strive, quickly or slowly, to embody themselves in earthly form. And how ugly a form they take or how harmoniously they shine forth depends wholly or partly on the degree to which inspiration plays a role in their creations. On the degree to which all aspects are taken into account in all their accuracy and detail at the moment of creation. On the degree to which inspiration empowers your Divine ‘self’.

“In the whole Universe creation is something inherent in God alone, and in God’s son, Man.

“God’s thought serves as the principle of all. His dream is transformed into living matter so that it may be seen. And human actions are preceded by the human dream.

“The opportunities for creation are equal for all the people of the Earth. It is only that people use their opportunities in different ways. Here Man is accorded full freedom. And freedom he has!

“Tell me now, Vladimir, what kind of dreams do God’s children have today? You yourself, your friends and acquaintances, for example? For what purpose do they use their creative dreams? What purpose do *you* use them for?”

“Me? Hmm... how d’you mean, for what purpose? Just like everyone else, I’ve tried to make more money so I can somehow get my life on a solid footing. I got myself a car — several, in fact. Plus a lot of other things I need to get by — good furniture, for example.”

"And that is it? Is that all you have used your creative, God-given dream for?"

"That's what just about everyone uses it for."

"For what?"

"For money! How can you live without money? To have a decent set of clothes to wear, to eat a little better, buy things, get something to drink. What could be clearer than that? And you ask what for!"

"Something to eat, something to drink — you realise, Vladimir, that all this has been given to everyone in abundance, right from the very beginning."

"Given? Well, then, where did it disappear to after that?"

"Think for yourself: where might it have gone?"

"Well, I would imagine the original clothing simply got ragged and worn out, and the original food got eaten up æons ago. Times are different now, clothing fashions have changed, along with tastes for food."

"Vladimir, God gave His son indestructible garments, and his food reserves are not the kind that can ever be exhausted."

"So where's all this today?"

"It has all been preserved, it exists right now."

"Then tell me where. Where do I find the hiding-places where so many supplies are stored up even today?"

"You shall see. They shall be seen. Only look with your feelings. Only with your feelings will you be able to grasp the essence of the creation of God's dream."

CHAPTER TWO



The beginning of creation

“Picture what it was like in the very beginning. There was as yet no Earth. There was as yet no matter to reflect the light of the Universe. But still, even as now, the Universe was filled with a great multitude of diverse energies. Living energy elements thought in the dark, and created in the dark. They needed no external light-source. Within themselves, for themselves, they shone. And each contained everything — thought, feelings and the energy of aspiration. Yet still there were differences among them. In each one a single form of energy predominated. Just as now, the Universe included an element of destruction and an element which creates life. And other elements involved a multitude of various shadings, similar to human feelings. There was no way these elements of the Universe could come into contact with each other. Within each element multiple energies created movement — either languidly creeping or, all at once, lightning-swift on the dot. What was self-created within each one could also destroy itself on the spot. Their pulsations did not alter the Cosmos — visible they were not — and each considered that they were alone in space. Alone!

“Uncertain of their purpose, they were unable to bring about any lasting creation that might give satisfaction. And so in a time of stagnation without limitation there were these pulsations, but there was no overall motion or action of any kind.

“And all at once, as by an impulse, each element was touched by *communication*! All of them at once, throughout

the unfathomable Universe. Throughout those complexes of living energy one suddenly began illuminating the rest. Whether the complex was old or young could not be expressed in ordinary tongues. Whether it arose from the vacuum of space or from the spark of all the possibilities one could imagine is not important. Whatever its semblance, the resulting complex bore a most striking resemblance to Man! To Man who is still living today! It was similar to his second self. Not the material, but the eternal, sacred self. The living energy of its aspirations and dreams first began to lightly touch all elements in the Universe. And he alone was so fervent in his devotion that he was able to bring all sensations and feelings into locomotion. The sounds of communication began to resound through the Universe. And if the first sounds were to be expressed through translation into modern words, we would feel the sense of questions and answers. From all across the unfathomable Universe one question was uttered by all, addressed only to Him:

“What do you so fervently desire?” everyone enquired.

“And He, confident in His dream, replied:

“Conjoint creation and joy for all from its contemplation.”

“And what may bring joy to everyone in the Universe?”

“Birth!”

“The birth of what? Each one of us has been self-sufficient for as long as we can recall.”

“A birth in which will be included particles of all!”

“How is it possible to reunite in a single whole that which is all-destructive and all-constructive at the same time?”

“Through opposing forms of energy, after first bringing them into line, balancing them in one’s self, you see!”

“And, to achieve this, who so strong would there be?”

“Me.”

“But there is the energy of doubt. Doubt will attempt to decoy and destroy you, and the diverse multitude of energies

will tear you into tiny particles. No one can unite and hold opposites in a single whole.'

"But there is also the energy of confidence. When confidence and doubt are equal, they will facilitate exactitude and beatitude for future co-creation.'

"And how do you call yourself?'

"I am God. I shall be able to deploy particles of all your diverse energies within Myself. I shall stay great! I shall create! To the whole Universe creation shall bring forth joy!'

"From all quarters of the Universe all elements simultaneously released the multitude of their energies into Him alone. And each endeavoured to gain ascendancy over the rest, so that it alone might establish itself as supreme in its new home.

"Thus began the great struggle of all the forms of energy in the Universe. There is no measure of time or space to describe the scale of that struggle. Calm returned only when in each one's consciousness one fact gleamed: that nothing could be higher or stronger than the One energy of the Universe — the energy of the Divine dream.

"God possessed the energy of the dream. He was able to take in and compile all within Himself, bring all into balance, reconcile opposites and begin to create. And to create still within Himself. Indeed, in His creating of future creations still within Himself, He cherished each detail with speed on a measureless scale, and worked out the interrelationships with everything else for each and every creation. He did it all alone. Alone in the darkness of the unfathomable Universe. Alone he set into motion the diverse energies of the whole Universe. The uncertainty of the outcome frightened everyone and removed them a distance from the Creator. The Creator found Himself standing in empty space. And that empty space was expanding.

"A deathly cold appeared. Dank fear and alienation held sway around, while He alone beheld the awesome dawn of

each new day, heard the singing of birds, and breathed the sweet fragrance of the blossoming of the ground. With His fervent dream He alone unfolded His marvellous creations in their sheen.

“‘Stop!’ they pleaded. ‘You are in empty space. You are going to explode! How do You contain the energy within Yourself? Nobody is helping You squeeze or contract, and now Your only course is to explode. But if You have a moment remaining, stop! You must act to gently release your creative energies.’

“And He replied:

“‘My dreams! I will not betray My pact with them! For them I will continue to contract and accelerate My energies, My powers. My dreams! In them I see the ants hurrying and scurrying across the grass, among the flowers. And the eagle in his bold ascent into the sky is teaching his young how to fly.’

“‘With His own unfathomable energy God accelerated in Himself the motion of all the diverse energies of the Universe as a whole. Inspiration squeezed them into a small kernel in His Soul.

“And all at once He sensed a touch. Everywhere, from all quarters in turn, He felt the burn of a new unfamiliar energy, and then it withdrew to warm Him with its warmth from a distance, filling all with some kind of new power. And all that was previously empty space suddenly began to radiate with grace. And the Universe resounded with new sounds, when God enquired with tender ecstasy:

“‘Who are you? What kind of energy are you?’

“And He heard the words of Music in reply:

“‘The Energy of Love and Inspiration am I.’

“‘A particle of you is within Me. It alone is able to restrain and cage the energy of disdain, hatred and rage.’

“‘You are God. Your energy — the dream of Your Soul — has been able to bring everything into the harmony of the

whole. And if my particle has been of assistance there, then hear me out, O God, and to help me be prepared.'

"What do you desire? Why have you touched Me with all the power of your fire?"

"I have realised that I am Love. I cannot remain simply a particle of... I desire to give my whole self to Your Soul. I know, so as not to disrupt the harmony of good and evil, You will not admit me as a whole. But I shall fill with myself the empty space around You. I shall warm with my cheer all the room within and around You. You shall not be touched by the cold of the Universe and its gloom — it shall not even come near.'

"What is going on here? What indeed? You have begun to shine even brighter!"

"I am not doing this alone. This is the presence of Your energy! Your Soul! It is only being reflected by me. Your reflected light comes back, back to your invisible Inner Self.'

"Aflame with courage and aspiration, God, inspired by Love, exclaimed:

"Everything is proceeding with acceleration. Everything is astir in Me. O, how marvellous is inspiration here above! And now let the dreams of My creation come to fruition in most radiant Love!"

CHAPTER THREE



The first appearance of *you*

“The Earth! The core of the whole Universe and the centre of everything appeared as the planet Earth loomed in sight! And all at once, along with it loomed the stars, the Sun and the Moon. The invisible creative light radiating from the Earth found its reflection in them.

“In the Universe a new plan of existence appeared for the first time! A material plan, and how it did shine!

“Up to the moment the Earth appeared, nobody and nothing possessed visible matter. While the Earth came into contact with everything in the Universe, it was an independent body, too.

“It was a self-sufficient creation. Things that lived all around, things that grew in the ground, things that swam in the sea and things that flew on high did not die or disappear somewhere. Even decomposition brought forth flies, and flies became food for other life, and everything fused together into a single magnificent life.

“In their excitement and astonishment all the entities of the Universe began looking to the Earth. The Earth came into contact with everything, but nobody was able to touch it.

“With God a sense of inner inspiration surged apace. And in the light of Love, which had filled the empty space, the Divine being changed its design, and took the form which in time became known as the human body.

“The Divine thought worked with no sense of speed or time. Indeed, it worked infinitely faster than all the diverse energies of thought and created with inspiration!

And again another creation which was still invisible, still within itself.

"All at once the illumination flared up, and the energy of Love gave a quiver of agitation, as if set aflame with its newly felt heat. And in joyous elation God exclaimed:

"Look, O Universe, look! Behold my son! Man! He stands upon the Earth. He is material! And in him are particles of all the diverse energies of the Universe. He dwells on all the planes of being. My image and likeness he is, and in him are particles of all your diverse energies... So love him! I urge you: love him!

"My son shall bring joy to all living on the Earth. He is creation! He is birth! He is all of all! He will create a new creation, and will transform into infinity his ever-repeating regeneration.

"When alone, or when infinitely multiplied, he emits invisible light, merging it into a whole, he will rule the Universe. He will endow everything with the joy of life. I have given him everything that is Mine, and will furthermore give him for his own all that may be thought at a future time.'

"Thus for the first time you stood alone on the splendid Earth," Anastasia ended her narrative.

"Who are you talking about?" I queried. "About me?"

"About you, Vladimir, and about anyone who happens to see these lines you shall be writing down."

"How so, Anastasia? There's a complete disconnect here. How can all my readers stand on a spot where you say only one person was standing. And it talks about that in the Bible. There was just one Man at first — Adam, he was called. And you yourself said God created just one Man."

"Quite correct, Vladimir. But look and see: it is from that one that we all have come. His particle, and the information contained therein, has been infused into all others who have

been given birth upon the Earth. And if your willing thought is ready to cast aside all your worldly cares, then all the feelings held up to now in that tiny particle will be felt. It has been there all along, and remembers everything. It is in you right now and in every Man living upon the Earth. Let it unfold, let yourself feel what you have seen, and you who are in turn reading these lines at the moment, you shall feel what you saw at the very beginning of your journey through time."

"Oh wow! Then is it true that everyone living today was there, on that Earth, right at the very beginning?"

"Yes. But on *this* Earth, not on 'that' one. It is only that the Earth looked different back then."

"And is there a single term by which we can be called?"

"You are probably more accustomed to hearing the name *Adam*? I shall use it, but picture it as referring to you. And let everyone picture themselves when they come across that name. I shall use some words to help in this."

"Yes, please do. For some reason I still have only a rather faint idea of how I might have appeared in those times."

"To make it easier, picture yourself as entering a garden on the border between summer and spring — a garden in which there are also the fruits of autumn. There are also beings here which you are seeing for the first time. It is hard to take everything in at one glance, when it is all so new and everything radiates perfection. But recall how you, Adam, saw your first flower and concentrated your thought upon it. On a very tiny flower.

"It was cornflower blue, the petals were smooth and made up of lines. The petals gently glowed, as though reflecting in themselves the light of the sky. And you, Adam, sat down beside the flower, admiring this creation. But no matter how long you looked at it, the flower's appearance was constantly changing. A breeze caressed the flower, making it sway on its slender stem, and the petals quivered under the Sun's rays,

changing the angle of reflection, giving new shadings to its tender hues. When the petals were not trembling in the breeze, they seemed to be waving to the Man in greeting, or moving in time to the music ringing in the soul. And the flower gave off a most delicate fragrance in its efforts to embrace you, the Man.

"All at once Adam heard a mighty roar and, rising, turned in the direction of the sound. In the distance an enormous lion was standing with his lioness. And the lion announced himself with his roar to everything around.

"Adam's gaze became entranced by the lion's stately and powerful stance, crowned by a bushy mane. No sooner had the lion spied Adam than the creature bounded toward him with mighty steps, the lioness right behind him. Adam could not help but be impressed by the play of their powerful muscles. Three metres from the Man the creatures came to rest. Man's gaze caressed them, a feeling of delight was emanating from the Man, while the lion, sensing the gentle calm, settled to the ground in delight. The lioness lay down beside him, keeping perfectly still so as not to interfere with the warm and gracious light emanating from the Man.

"Adam ran his fingers through the lion's mane, examined and touched the claws of his mighty paws, put his hand on his great white fangs and smiled when the lion purred with delight."

"Anastasia," I couldn't help asking, "what kind of light first emanated from the Man to stop the lion from tearing him apart? And why is there no such radiance today? Nobody emits light that way today."

"Vladimir, have you not noticed what a huge difference there is even today? Man's gaze distinguishes all that is earthly — the little blades of grass and flowers, the wild beasts and the rocks with sluggish thinking. It is curious, mysterious, full of unexplained power. Man's gaze can be calming. And yet it can also wrap all living creatures in the cold of destruction.

Tell me, has it ever happened that you have been warmed by someone's gaze? Or perhaps someone's eyes have caused you inner discomfort?"

"Yes, it's happened. You can actually feel someone watching you. You can feel a pleasant gaze, or one that is not so pleasant."

"There, you see... that means you too know that a calming gaze will create a sense of warmth within you. And that an opposite gaze will bring a feeling of cold and destruction. But Man's gaze was many times stronger during those first days upon Earth. The Creator saw to it that all life aspired to be warmed by this gaze."

"And where has all the strength of Man's gaze gone now?"

"It has not all gone. Enough of it is still around, but vanity, superficial thinking, a different speed of thought, a misapprehension of basic concepts and apathy have darkened perception, and prevented it from opening up to what everybody expects of Man. Inside each one of us a warm heart abides. Oh, if only each one of us could open it wide to everything! All reality could then be transmogrified into a magnificent pristine garden."

"Is this possible with everyone? Just as in the beginning with Adam? Could something like that actually transpire?"

"Everything may be born, which is to what human thought, merging from all into one, aspires.

"When Adam was alone, the power of his mind was equal to what today is found in all mankind."

"Aha! That's why the lion was afraid of him!"

"The lion was not afraid of the Man, not a trace. The lion was bowing before the light of grace. All life aspires to know this grace, which Man alone is capable of creating. For this all life, and not only upon the Earth, is ready to perceive Man as a friend, a brother, a god. Parents always strive to instil in their children all the very best abilities. Only parents sincerely want their children's abilities to exceed their own. The

Creator has wholly given Man — His son and creation — all to which He Himself aspired in a burst of inspiration. And if all are able to understand that God is perfect, then may all feel exactly who God the Creator planned to create His child to be — His beloved son, or Man. And how He feared no burden of responsibility, and how he undertook never to abandon His creation, having uttered the words that have come down to us over the millions of years: ‘He is My son, this Man. He is My image! My likeness!’”

“Does that mean that God wanted His son, His creation — Man, in other words, to be stronger than Himself?”

“All parents’ aspirations may be seen as a confirmation of this.”

“Well then, did Adam justify God’s hopes for him on his first day? What transpired after the meeting with the lion? What did he set about to do?”

“Adam aspired to know all living things. To define the name and the purpose or need for each living creature. Some of these were solved quickly, others he became involved with for quite a time indeed. For example, before the Sun set on the first day he was attempting to define the purpose of the brontosaurus, but here he did not succeed. And so the brontosaurus disappeared from the face of the Earth for all time.”

“Disappeared — why?”

“It disappeared because Man did not define its purpose.”

“That brontosaurus — is that the one that’s several times bigger than an elephant?”

“Yes, bigger than an elephant it was, and little wings it had, and a little head on a long neck that could spew flame out of its jaws.”

“Just like in a fairy tale. The folk tale about the Gorynych Serpent,¹ for example, which spewed fire, too. But that’s a fairy tale, not something real.”

“Sometimes folk tales tell about a past reality metaphorically, but sometimes they can be quite accurate.”

"Really? And just what would such a monster be made of? How could fire come out of the jaws of a real living creature? Or is the fire to be taken metaphorically? Let's say, for instance, to portray a monster breathing hatred?"

"The huge brontosaurus was good, not evil. Its huge size served to compensate for its enormous weight."

"How can its huge size serve to lighten its weight?"

"The more a hot-air balloon is filled with whatever is lighter than air, the lighter it is."

"Well, what has that got to do with the brontosaurus? *It's* not a hot-air balloon!"

"The brontosaurus was indeed an enormous living hot-air balloon. Its skeleton was constructed of very light-weight material, while its insides contained little in the way of organs. Just as with a balloon, its insides were empty, except they were constantly being filled with a gas that was lighter than air. With a leap and a flap of its wings, the brontosaurus actually managed to fly a bit. When there was an excessive build-up of gas, it breathed it out through its mouth. Flint-like fangs protruded from its jaws, and their friction could create a spark and ignite the gas welling up from its abdominal cavity, sending fire out of its mouth."

"Hmm! But hold on there, hold on — just who kept filling it with gas?"

"Listen to me, Vladimir: the gas was produced all by itself inside as its food was being digested."

"Impossible! Gas exists only in the bowels of the Earth. That's where it is extracted from, then they use it to fill

¹*Gorynytch Serpent* — a fire-breathing dragon in Russian folk tales, with as many as twelve heads, associated with fire and water, capable of flight, yet making its lair in caves and holes in the ground wherein to hide its captured treasure, including kidnapped princesses. *Gorynytch* literally means "son of a Mountain", referring to its great size.

propane tanks or send it through pipes to people's kitchen stoves. But from food — is it really that simple?"

"Yes, Vladimir, it is really that simple."

"I can't believe in something that simple, neither will anyone else. And that means everything you've told me, for that matter, not just about the brontosaurus, but everything else too — nobody's going to believe it! So I shan't write about this."

"What is it, Vladimir? Do you think I am capable of being mistaken? Of lying?"

"Well, I don't know about the lying part, but you're definitely mistaken about the gas."

"I am not mistaken."

"Then prove it."

"Vladimir — do you not realise that your stomach, and other people's stomachs, produce the same kind of gas even today?"

"Impossible."

"You can prove it for yourself. Just take a match and light the gas when it comes out of you."

"What d'you mean, 'out of me'? Out of where? Where would I light the match?"

Anastasia broke out laughing and, still laughing, said:

"What are you, a little child? Think for yourself — it is a private experience."

I thought about this gas from time to time. And for some reason the thought began to eat away at me. And finally I decided to try the experiment. I tried it directly I returned from my visit with Anastasia. It worked! And now I think back even more vividly on what she said about Adam's first days — or, rather, *our* first days on the Earth. And I get the feeling that somehow we have forgotten to take with us today something from those days. Or maybe it was just me that forgot. That's something each one can decide for himself when he learns how Man spent his first day on the Earth. This is how Anastasia described it.

CHAPTER FOUR



The first day

“Adam was interested in everything. Each blade of grass, each intricate little bug, the birds in the sky above, and water. The first sight of a stream, its transparent running water sparkling in the Sun, filled him with wonder and admiration, and in it he could behold life in its infinite manifestations. When Adam bent down to touch the water, his hand was immediately embraced by the current which caressed all the folds of his skin and drew him in. Upon immersing himself in the water he found his body becoming lighter. The gurgling water supported him and comforted his whole body. Splashing the water in the air with his hands, he was delighted to see the play of the Sun’s bright rays in each and every drop, before the drops were once more received back into the stream. And it was with a great sense of delight that Adam drank the water from the stream. And before the Sun set he gladly contemplated, and bathed again, and meditated.”

“Hold on, there, Anastasia. You mentioned him drinking, but did Adam eat anything the whole day? What food did he eat?”

“All around him were a multitude of fruits with a variety of tastes, berries and edible grasses. But during those first days Adam felt no sense of hunger. He remained satisfied with fresh air alone.”

“With fresh air? But you can’t live on air. There’s even a saying about that.”

“One certainly cannot live on the air Man breathes today. Today’s air is dying, and is often harmful for one’s body and

soul. You mentioned the saying that one cannot live on air, but there is another saying: 'I have been fed by air alone', which corresponds to what was available to Man in the beginning. Adam was born in a marvellous garden, and the air surrounding him did not contain a single harmful particle. Pollen had been dissolved into that air, along with drops of purest dew."

"Pollen? What kind of pollen?"

"Pollen from flowers and grasses, from trees and fruit, which diffused fragrances into the air. Some came from those close by, while breezes brought others from distant places. Back then Man was not distracted from his great works by any problems of finding food. He was fed by everything around him through the air. This was the way it was all designed by the Creator right from the very beginning, so that all life on Earth should strive to please Man, and the air and the water and the breeze would be life-giving, under the impulse of love."

"You're right about one thing: air can be very harmful, but Man invented the air conditioner. It purifies the air of dangerous particles. And people sell mineral water in bottles. So, you see, the problems of air and water have been solved — at least for the many people who aren't poor."

"Alas, Vladimir, the air conditioner does not solve any problems. It keeps back harmful particles, yes, but the air continues to die. The water preserved in air-tight bottles dies for lack of fresh air. All it does is feed the old cells of the body. For new birth, so that the cells of your body may constantly renew themselves, *living* air and water are needed."

CHAPTER FIVE



Problems confirming the perfection of life

“Adam had all that?” I asked in amazement.

“Yes, he did! This is why his thought moved so quickly. In a relatively short period of time he was able to define everything’s purpose. One hundred and eighteen years swept by like a single day.”

“A hundred and eighteen years! Adam lived all by himself to such a ripe old age?”

“All by himself lived Adam, the first Man, caught up in all sorts of interesting projects. A hundred and eighteen years did not bring him age, but a blossoming of life.”

“Well, a person’s pretty old at a hundred and eighteen — he’s known as an ‘old-timer’, at the mercy of all sorts of diseases and ailments.”

“That might be so now, Vladimir, but back then Man was not troubled by diseases. Every one of his cells enjoyed a longer span of life, and if a cell became weary, that meant it was destined to die, but right away a new cell, full of energy, appeared in its place. Man’s body was able to live as many years as his spirit or soul wished.”

“And how come the Man of today can’t wish himself to live a little longer?”

“By his moment-by-moment actions he is cutting short his lifespan, and death is something thought up by Man.”

“What do you mean, ‘thought up’? Death comes all by itself. Against Man’s will.”

“When you smoke tobacco or drink alcohol, when you drive

into a city which pollutes the air with the stench of burning fumes, when you use lifeless food and let yourself be eaten away by bitterness, tell me, Vladimir, who, if not yourself, is hastening your death?"

"Well, that kind of life is pretty common for everyone today."

"But Man is free to choose. Everyone builds his own life for himself and determines his lifespan moment by moment."

"So, you're saying that back then, in paradise, there weren't any problems?"

"Problems, if they arose at all, were resolved not in a harmful direction, but in such a way as to confirm the perfection of life."

CHAPTER SIX



First encounter

“One day when he was a hundred and eighteen years old, Adam did not become excited with the Spring upon waking with the dawn. And he did not rise, as he usually did, to greet the Sun’s brightening rays.

“Above him astride a leafy branch the nightingale trilled his song. But his singing only made Adam turn over on his other side.

“Before his eyes Spring filled space with a quiet tremolo, the gurgling stream called out to Adam in his bed, while swallows made sport overhead. Fanciful clouds heralded each new unfolding scene. From grasses, flowers, bushes and trees the gentlest fragrance rushed to embrace the Man. Oh, how God wondered then what was taking place! Amidst Spring’s resplendent glory, under the deep-blue skies of his earthly creation, his son, the Man, had become sorrowful and despondent. His beloved child dwelt not in gladness but in sadness. Could any scene be more agonising for a loving father?

“One hundred and eighteen years on, long after creation, the dormant throng of Divine energies suddenly swarmed into motion. The whole Universe listened in shocked surprise. Such acceleration as had never been seen before glistered in the aura of the energy of Love, so intensely that all life caught the sense at once: a new creation had been thought of by God. But what could possibly be originated after creation had already reached the limit of inspiration? This was something that surpassed all comprehension. And still God’s thought kept growing in acceleration. And the Energy of Love whispered in muted tones:

“Once more You have set everything in inspired motion. Your universal energies are setting space on fire. How is it that You do not explode or consume yourself in such fervour and desire? Where are You heading? To what are You aspiring? I no longer shine with Your light. Look, O my God, I burn with Your essence, I turn planets into stars. Stop! You have already created all the best. Stop, and Your son’s grief will evanesce, it will disappear. Stop, O my God!”

“But God did not hear the plea of Love. And paid no attention to the jeers of the elements of the Universe. Like a young and enthusiastic sculptor, He continued accelerating all the diverse energies in motion. And all at once, a dawn of never before imaginable beauty burst forth, delineating itself through the vast unfathomable Universe, and all creation gasped, and God Himself whispered in exultation:

“Behold, O Universe, behold! Behold my daughter stands amidst the created creatures of the Earth! How perfect her features are, the finest by a thousandfold! She shall be worthy of My son. A creation more perfect than hers will never come. In her is the image and likeness of Me, each particle of yours in her will always be — so love her with a love so pure and free!

“She and he! My son and daughter shall bring extended joy to every living thing! And shall build on every plane of being resplendent universal worlds!”

“From the little hill, over dew-washed grass, on the festive day in the Sun’s morning ray the maiden to Adam came. With a pace full of grace and a form so slender, the bends of her body smooth and tender, in the hues of her skin there shined the light of the dawn Divine. Closer and closer she neared. And then she appeared! In front of Adam, reclining on the grass, the maiden arose.

“The breeze smoothed out her golden braids, her forehead to expose. The Universe held its breath, completely awed. O, how beauteous is her face — Thy creation, O God!

"Adam, reclining on the grass, glanced up at the maiden who had appeared beside him, gave a yawn, turned away and closed his eyes.

"All the elements in the Universe then heard — no, not words — they heard how listlessly Adam reacted in his thought to the new creation of God:

"‘Well, there it is, yet another creation of some kind has come to mind. It is nothing new, you see, just another entity that looks something like me. Horses have joints in their knees more supple and sturdy than these. The leopard has skin so much brighter and livelier to please. And what’s more, she arrived without invitation, on the very day I was going to offer the ants a new designation.’

"And Eve, standing a while beside Adam, went over to a pool in the stream, sat down on the bank by the bushes and caught a gleam of her reflection in the still, cool water.

"And the elements of the Universe began to intone their murmurings, and their thoughts merged into one: ‘Two perfections have not managed to achieve an appreciation of each other. There is no perfection in God’s creation.’

"And only the energy of Love, alone amidst the murmurings of the Universe, tried to protect the Creator with itself. God was enveloped in its radiance. Everybody knew: never had the energy of Love involved itself in rationalisation. Unseen and unheard, it was ever wandering apace through the unfathomed reaches of space. But why was it now, so totally and with no retention, encircling God again with its radiance? Paying no attention to the intonings of the Universe, here it was, warming and comforting through its radiance alone.

"‘You can rest, O Great Creator, and impart Your education into the heart of Your son. You will be able to adjust and correct any of Your illustrious creations.’

"In reply the Universe heard words, in which it recognised the wisdom and majesty of God:

“My son is the image and likeness of Me. He includes in himself particles of all the diverse energies of the Universe. He is Alpha and Omega. He is creation! He is the realisation of the future! Henceforth and for all time still to come neither I nor anyone else shall be able to change his destiny without his will. All that he wills for himself will be allowed to him. Whatever he conceives, provided it is not conceived in vanity, will turn into reality. My son did not bow before the sight of the maiden’s fleshly perfection. Much to the amazement of the whole Universe, he was not amazed by her. Still not consciously aware, My son has sensed all through his feelings. In the first place he sensed that in him something was amiss. And the new creation standing before him — the maiden — did not possess this. My son! My son, through his feelings, senses the whole Universe, he knows everything the Universe possesses.’

“A question filled the whole Universe:

“‘What can possibly be missing from one in whom all the diverse energies of ours and Yours exist?’

“And God answered them all:

“‘The energy of Love.’

“And the energy of Love flashed with flame:

“‘But I am alone, and I am Your very own. I shine by You alone.’

“‘Yes! You are alone, My love,’ the Divine words proclaimed in reply. ‘Your shining light both shines and caresses, My love. You are inspiration. You are able to give everything an acceleration, you accentuate sensations and you are the reconciliation of peace, My love. I beg of you, descend to the Earth in your totality, leaving nothing in its former place. Surround and enfold these My children in yourself, the energy of boundless grace.’

“This farewell dialogue of Love and God heralded the beginning of all earthly love.

“‘My God,’ Love called out to the Creator. ‘When I leave, You will be alone, unseen, for ever, dwelling on all the planes of being. You will be invisible.’

“‘May My son and My daughter henceforth shine through the Inner, the Outer and the Order.’”

“‘My God, around You will be empty space. There will never be a place where the life-giving warmth can penetrate to Your Soul. Without this warmth Your Soul will become cold.’

“‘Not for Me alone, but for all life may this warmth emanate from the Earth. My sons and daughters will multiply this radiated Love. And the whole Earth will glow with the warmth of Love shining throughout space. All will feel the light of grace emanating from the Earth, and all My diverse energies will be warmed by its might.’

“‘My God, a great variety of paths are exposed to Your son and daughter. In them remain the diverse energies of all the planes of being. And suppose just one of those energies decides to hold sway over the rest, and leads them astray, what can You do, seeing You have thought to give everything away, when You find the energy shining from the Earth start to weaken and fade to naught? You have given everything away, and yet You see how on the Earth the energies of annihilation hold sway over all. Your own illustrious creations are covered with a lifeless crust, and the grass is smothered with stones. What will You do then, what can be done, seeing You have given complete freedom to Your son?’

“‘As a green blade of grass I shall be able to break through among the stones anew, and unfold the petals of a flower in a

¹*the Inner, the Outer, the Order* — an approximation of the ancient Slavic terms *Nav*, *Yav* and *Prav*, respectively. *Nav* signifies *inner* spiritual reality, the invisible foundation of the *outer*, or visible, material reality (*Yav*), while *Prav* (from a Slavic root word signifying ‘right’ or ‘true’) refers to the *order* governing the *Nav* and *Yav* and the relationship between them.

small and untouched glade. My earthly daughters and sons will be able to realise their purpose.'

"My God, when I leave, You will not be by any eye perceivable. It is conceivable that elements of other energies will begin to speak through people in Your name. Some may try to proclaim themselves rulers over others, abusing Your essence for their own interests, saying: "I speak in God's place, I am His chosen one, everybody listen to me." What will You be able to do in such a case?"

"I shall come up as the dawn at the inception of the oncoming day. By caressing all creations on the Earth without exception, the rays of the Sun will help My daughters and sons understand that each one in their own soul can hold conversation with My Soul.'

"My God, many of them will there be, a great sum, and You are alone as one. And all the elements of the Universe will be eager to capture Man's soul. Just to use Man to establish their sway over all through the energy they possess. And Your errant son will suddenly start to pray to them.'

"There will still be a major obstacle to any attempt, no matter what its form, to lead people awry or lead them into empty space, and this will be a barrier to anything based on a lie. Within all My sons and daughters there is a striving for a conscious awareness of truth. A lie is invariably bound within limits, but truth is unlimited — it will be forever found in the conscious awareness of My sons' and daughters' soul!"

"O my God! no one and nothing is able to fight or even stand against the flight of Your thought and dreams! They are marvellous! I shall willingly follow them. I shall warm Your children with my radiance and shall perform this service for ever. The inspiration You have given them will help them undertake their own creations. I have only one request to make of You, my God. Allow me to leave just one spark of my love with You.

“‘When You are obliged to dwell in darkness, when You are surrounded by nothing but empty space, when oblivion weakens the light from the Earth, then may this spark of my love, even though it seem but a single spark, shine for You with its gleam.’

“O, Vladimir!” Anastasia exclaimed. “If only Man living to-day could look up to the skies and see what was way above the Earth back then, what a great vision would grace the scene before his eyes! The light of the Universe, the energy of Love, compressed into a comet, hastened toward the Earth, illuminating the still lifeless planets along its course and lighting up the stars above the Earth. Yes, it was indeed heading toward the Earth! Closer, ever closer, it came. And there it was. And all at once, it came to rest over the Earth itself, and the radiance of Love began to resonate. And far away, among the shining stars, one star, smaller than all the rest appeared to be moving. It was hastening to follow the radiance of love on its earthward path. And then Love realised that here was its last little spark from God, and even it was on its way to the Earth.

“‘My God!’ whispered the radiance of Love. ‘But why? I do not understand. But why? You have not left even a single spark for Yourself?’

“To the words of Love, out of the darkness of the Universe, God, already perceivable by no one, gave reply. His Divine words were heard across space:

“‘Anything I kept back for Myself would be lacking in My gift to them — My daughters and sons.’

“‘My God!’

“‘O how marvellous you are, Love, even as a single spark.’

“‘My God!’

“‘Hasten, My Love, hasten, do not stop for rational contemplation. Hasten with your last spark and warm all My future sons and daughters.’

“The people of the Earth were embraced by the universal energy of Love. All of it, down to the last spark. Everything was there within it where it belonged. Throughout the unfathomable Universe, Man, who lives on all planes of being simultaneously, of all the entities became the most strong.”

CHAPTER SEVEN



When Love...

“Adam lay on the grass, among the fragrant flowers. In the shade of a tree he dreamt, as his thoughts churned listlessly along. And all at once a reminiscence swept over him in an unexpected wave of warmth, somehow empowering a strong acceleration of his thoughts. Just recently this new creation stood before me — he reflected — something very much like me, only different, but what is the difference? Where does it lie? And where is this new creation now? Oh, how I wish I could see the new creation once more as I did before! I want to see it again, but why?

“Quickly Adam rose from the ground and looked around. A thought flickered by: What has happened all of a sudden? It is the same sky, the same birds, grass, trees and bushes. Everything is the same, and yet it is different. I am not looking at it the same way as before. The creatures of the Earth, the scents, the air and even the light — everything’s become brighter and more resplendent.

“And words were born in Adam’s mouth, and he cried out to all: ‘And I love in return!’

“And all at once a new wave of warmth came upon him from the direction of the stream, sweeping over his whole body. He turned in the direction the warmth was coming from and, lo and behold, there was the new creation, shining before him. All logic departed from his thought, his whole heart delighted in the vision, when Adam first caught sight of it: there quietly sitting beside a clear pool of water in the stream was the maiden, but after tossing back the braids of

her golden hair she was looking not at the clear water but at him. She caressed him with a smile, as though she had been waiting for him a long eternal while.

"He went over to her. As they were looking at each other, Adam thought there could be no one with eyes more resplendent than hers. Aloud he said:

"You are sitting by the water. The water is good. Would you like to bathe together?"

"I would."

"And then would you like me to show you around... creation?"

"I would."

"I have given everything its designation. I shall command them to serve you too. And would you like me to make a new creation?"

"I would."

"They bathed in the stream and ran through the meadow. Oh, how entrancing seemed the maiden's trills of laughter, when after mounting an elephant, Adam conceived a little dance for her and called the maiden's name Eve.

"The day was already drawing to a close as this woman and man stood with all the glory of the Earth around, delighting in its colours, scents and sounds. Quiet and meek, Eve watched the evening descend. The floral petals folded into their buds. The splendid creations of the day faded from sight into the night.

"Do not feel despondent," said Adam, by this time already confident in himself. "It is just that now the darkness of night is coming on. We need it to take our rest, but no matter how much night presses in or how black, the day always comes back."

"Will it be the same day, or a new day?" asked Eve.

"The day will return in whatever form you conceive."

"And who is it subject to — each day?"

“‘To me.’

“‘And who are you subject to?’

“‘To no one.’

“‘And you, where are you from?’

“‘I come from a dream.’

“‘And whence comes everything around that is so pleasing to see?’

“‘It also appeared from the dream, as a creation for me.’

“‘And where is he whose dream is so bright and resplendent?’

“‘He is often around, only He cannot be seen with ordinary sight. But all the same it is good to be with Him. *God* He calls Himself, my Father and my Friend. He never offends me, and He gives me everything. I also wish to give to Him, though what — I do not yet know.’

“‘That means I too am His creation. Like you, I also wish to show Him my appreciation. To call Him Father, God and Friend. Perhaps we can decide together what actions on our part the Father intends?’

“‘I have heard Him say what may bring joy to everyone’s heart.’

“‘To everyone’s? Including His?’

“‘Yes, that would mean His too.’

“‘Tell me what He desires.’

“‘Conjoint creation and joy from its contemplation.’

“‘And what may bring joy to everyone on the Earth?’

“‘Birth.’

“‘Birth? But everything is so beautifully born already.’

“‘I often think, before I go to sleep, about an extraordinary and marvellous creation. But with the dawn of the day the dream goes away, and I see that nothing new has come to thought — everything is so fraught with wonder and visible by the light of day.’

“‘Let us then think together.’

“I too wanted, before going to sleep, to be close to you, to hear your breathing, to feel your warmth, to think together about creation.’

“Before going to sleep, impelled by tender feelings for each other, the two embraced in dreams about a marvellous creation, their aspirations connected and merged into one. Their two material bodies reflected the thoughts that had jointly come.”

CHAPTER EIGHT



Birth

“The day returned, and night once more came on. One morning, as day was dawning, just as Adam was watching the tiger cubs and reflecting on life, Eve quietly approached him, sat down beside him, took his hand and placed it on her tummy.

“‘Feel here, inside me lives my creation — a new creation at the same time. Can you feel it, Adam? Is it pushing, this restless creation of mine?’

“‘Yes, I can feel it. It seems to be reaching out to me.’

“‘To you? Of course! It is mine, but it is yours too! I very much want to see our co-creation.’

“And Eve gave birth, not in painful labour but in great wonder.

“Forgetting everything around him, not conscious of himself, Adam watched and trembled in anticipation. And Eve bore a new and conjugal creation.

“A tiny wee lump, all wet, lay helplessly on the ground. Its legs were drawn up tight, its eyelids remained closed. Adam watched, his eyes fixed on the little one, as it moved its tiny hand, opened its tiny lips and took its first breath. Adam was afraid to blink lest he miss the tiniest movement. Unfamiliar feelings had begun filling the space within and around him. Unable to restrain himself to the spot, he suddenly leapt up and began to run.

“With no particular destination in mind, Adam rushed headlong along the bank of the stream in great exultation. He stopped. A wondrous, unfamiliar something kept growing and expanding in his chest. And everything around!... The

sound of the wind not only rang through the trees and rustled leaves — it sang, sifting through the rifts of bushes and setting astir the clusters of floral petals. The clouds not only swarmed through the sky — all the clouds performed a dance to entrance the observer as they passed by. The water sparkled with a smile as it rushed into the miles of stream before it. Oh, wow! The stream! Reflecting the clouds the stream made yet another bend as it gleamed before the eyes. And all along the birds kept twittering their joyful song in the skies! And among the herbs the cheerful chirping of crickets could be heard. And everything fused and blended together into a single resounding intonation of the tenderest sounds of music known through all God's grand creation!

“After taking a little more air into his lungs, Adam suddenly cried out as loud as he could. It was not an ordinary cry — not that of an animal, but one that overflowed with the most tender sounds. A long sublime hush slowly settled all around. And for the very first time the Universe heard a Man on the Earth joyfully burst into song. A Man was singing! And all the noises that had before sounded throughout the galaxies were now grounded. A Man was singing! And hearing this happy song, the whole world of the Universe concluded: not in any of the galaxies could there be found a single string capable of producing a better sound than that of the singing of the human soul.

“But the song of rejoicing could not hush Adam's newfound abundance of feelings. Catching sight of the lion, he rushed toward it and wrestled it to the ground as though it were but a pussycat. He laughingly began to run his fingers adeptly through its mane, then leapt up and, gesturing the creature to follow suit, ran off across the terrain. The lion barely managed to keep up with him, while the lioness and her cubs lagged way behind. Fastest of all ran Adam, his arms waving, summoning all the creatures to follow in his route.

His creation, he recalled, would be able to bring joy and elation to all.

"And once again he sees the tiny lump in front of him. His own creation! Such a wee little lump — alive! — lapped by the she-wolf and caressed by the warm breeze.

"The baby's eyes had not yet shown a peep — he was asleep. At the sight of him all creatures that had accompanied Adam on his run fell to the Earth in delight.

"Why yes, it is true!" Adam intoned with exultation. "Light like my own is emanating from my creation. Maybe it is even stronger than my light, if such an extraordinary thing is happening with me. All creatures have fallen down before it in delight. I desired! I carried through! I created! I created a creation resplendent and alive! All of you! All of you come look at him!"

"Adam cast his glance at all around, and suddenly stopped, his gaze fixed. His eyes were fixed on Eve.

"She was sitting on the grass all alone, caressing with her own lightly fixed gaze the suddenly still and silent Adam.

"And with new might love began shining within and around Adam in invisible delight. And then all at once... Oh, how love universal quivered and shivered to see Adam run up to the resplendent maiden-mother, fall on his knees before Eve, press his hands to her golden braids, her tender lips and her milk-filled breasts. And restraining his exclamation to a gentle purr, he tried to express his exultation in words:

"Eve! My Eve! My wife! You are able to make dreams come true in life!"

"Yes, I am woman, your wife. Let us turn into life everything you are able to think of!"

"Yes! Together! The two of us together! Now it is clear! Two together are we! We are as He! We are able to make dreams come true! Look at us! Our Father, do You hear us?"

“But for the first time Adam could hear no reply. Surprised, he leapt up and cried:

“Where are You, my Father? Look upon my creation. Perfect and fantastic are all Your earthly creatures. Resplendent are all the clouds, the grass, the bushes and the trees. But my new creation is even finer than the features of the flowers — look at it! I have seen how my own creation has brought me a joy far greater than anything You created through Your dream...

“You have nothing to say? You do not wish to look at it? But it is by far and away the best part of all! My creation, more than any other, is dear to my heart. But what about You? Do you not wish even to look at it?”

“Adam looked at his child. In the spot directly above the tiny sleeping body the air seemed bluer than usual, there was no breeze to ruffle even a hair, only someone was invisibly bending the slender stem of a flower over the baby’s lips. And three soft puffs of pollen tenderly touched his lips. The baby smacked his lips, sighed a deep and blissful sigh, moved one of his legs just a tiny bit and then went back to sleep. Adam guessed that while he had been celebrating, God had been cultivating, cherishing the little one, and so had not seen fit to speak.

“And Adam exclaimed:

“That means You Yourself were helping! That means You were with me all along, and You acknowledged the creation!”

“And he heard in reply the Father’s quiet voice:

“Not so loud, Adam, you’ll wake the child with your celebrations and rejoicings.’

“That means You, my Father, loved both me and my creation? Or did you love it more than me? If so, why? Explain to me! It is not Yours, after all.’

“Love, My son, has its continuation, and in your new creation will be found your continuation.’

“That means I am standing here and I am in my creation at the same time? And does that mean Eve is in it, too?”

“Yes, My son, your co-creation is in all respects like you, only not in the flesh. Within it your spirit and soul merge to give birth to a new creation. And your aspirations will continue and will intensify the joyous sensations multifold.”

“So, You are saying there will be many of us?”

“You shall fill the whole Earth. You shall know everything through your feelings, and then in other galaxies your dream will re-create the world anew to be even more resplendent.”

“Where is the edge of the Universe? What will I do when I come to it? When I myself fill everything, and have created everything I have conceived?”

“My son. The Universe itself is a thought, a thought from which was born a dream, which is partially visible as matter. When you approach the edge of all creation, your thought will reveal a new beginning and continuation. From obscurity will arise a new and resplendent birth of you, and it will reflect in itself your soul, your dreams, your whole aspirations. My son, you are infinite, you are eternal, within you are your dreams of creation.”

“Father, it is always so good when You speak. When You are with me, I want to embrace You. But You are invisible. Why?”

“My son, when My dreams about you were drinking in the diverse energies of the Universe, I did not have time to be thinking about Myself. My dreams and thoughts created only you, they did not make a visible image for Me. But there *are* visible creations of Mine — feel them, but do not try to analyse them. Nobody in the whole Universe will find that they can analyse them simply with their mind.”

“Father, it feels good to me when You speak. You are with me — everything is with me. If I should find myself at the other end of the Universe, if doubts or crude obscurities

should intrude upon my soul, tell me, how might I search You out? Where will You be at such a time?’

“I shall be in you and with you. Everything is in *you*, My son. You are the master of all the diverse energies of the Universe. I have counterbalanced all the opposite extremities of the Universe in you, thereby making *you* a new creature. Do not allow any of these extremities to hold sway within you. Then shall I be in you always.’

“In me?’

“In you and with you. You and Eve are in your creation. In you there is a particle of Me, and so I am in your creation, too.’

“I am Your son. What then will be the new creation in relation to You?’

“Again, it will be *you*.’

“Whom will You love more — me as I am now, or the me which will be born again and again as before?’

“Love is one and the same, but there is greater hope in each new embodiment and dream.’

“Father, how wise You are, I so very much want to embrace You!’

“Look around you. The visible creations you see are My materialised thoughts and dreams. On the material plane of being you will always be able to communicate with them.’

“I have loved them, just as I love You, Father. And I have loved Eve, and my new creation too. Love is all around, and I want to be in it eternally.’

“My son, you shall dwell eternally only in the Space of Love.’

“Years passed, as it were, but time, after all, is a relative concept. Years passed, but why make a list? — for a long time death in himself was something Man could not have even missed. Which means that death, back then, could not even exist.”

CHAPTER NINE



The unsatisfying apple

“But Anastasia,” I queried, “if everything was so good in the beginning, then what happened afterward? Why are there wars on the Earth today and why are people starving? We have thievery, bandits, suicides, prisons. Too many unhappy families, too many orphans. Where have all our loving Eves disappeared to? Where is God, who promised that we would all live eternally in love? And I just remembered what it says about this in the Bible. God expelled Man from Paradise for picking and tasting the fruit of the forbidden tree. And He even stationed a guard at the gates so as to stop the violators from getting back into Paradise.”

“Vladimir, God never expelled Man from Paradise.”

“Yes He did, I read about it. He even cursed the Man over this. He told Eve she was a sinner and would bring forth children in sorrow, and Adam would have to earn his living by the sweat of his brow. And that’s all come to pass with us today.”

“Vladimir, reason it out for yourself, perhaps that kind of logic, or absence of logic, has been devised for somebody’s interests, to suit a particular purpose.”

“What’s logic and somebody’s interests got to do with it?”

“Please believe me. Each one must learn to make sense of things, to determine what is true, with his own soul. Only after thinking it through for yourself can you realise that God did not expel Man from Paradise. God remains a loving Father right up to this very moment. He is a God of Love — you must have read about that, too.”

“I did indeed.”

“So where is the logic then? You will agree that a loving parent would never expel his child from his home. Loving parents, even if it means suffering deprivation themselves, will forgive their children any transgressions they have committed. And God is not indifferent to all the sufferings of people — the sufferings of His children.”

“Whether He is or not, I don’t know. But one thing everybody knows: He doesn’t do anything about them.”

“Oh what are you saying, Vladimir?! Of course He will tolerate this distress, too, from His son, Man. But how long can Man go on without a full appreciation of his Father? How long can he go on not seeing or feeling his Love?”

“What you are so concerned about all of a sudden? Be more specific. Where are these manifestations today of the Divine Love for us? Where do we look for them?”

“The next time you are in the city, take a close look around you. The living carpet of marvellous grass has been paved over with lifeless asphalt, all around are harmful masses of concrete called housing, cars scurry around in between them, emitting deadly fumes. But even amidst the stone masses, finding even the tiniest of islands, grass and flowers still sprout forth — God’s creations. And through the rustle of leaves and the song of the birds He is still calling out to His daughters and sons to reconsider everything that is happening and to return to Paradise.

“The glow of love emanating from the Earth keeps on getting smaller, and for a long time now the Sun’s reflection should have been decreasing, too. But He with His energy is constantly intensifying the life-giving power of even the Sun’s rays. Just as before, He loves His daughters and sons. He waits, trusting and dreaming that one day Man will wake at dawn and suddenly regain his conscious awareness, and that this conscious awareness will restore to the Earth its original, pristine blossoming.”

“But how did everything on the Earth come to go against God’s dreams and for some reason last all these thousands, maybe millions of years? How could He keep waiting and trusting for so long a time?”

“Time does not exist for God. As with any loving parent, He never loses faith. And it is thanks to that faith that all of us are living right now. And we ourselves arrange our lives as we see fit, using the freedom granted us by the Father. But people did not all of a sudden decide to follow the option of a path leading nowhere.”

“If not all of a sudden, then how, when? What does it mean, that phrase ‘Adam’s apple?’”

“Back then, just as now, the Universe was filled with a multitude of living energies. Everywhere there are living elements invisible, the vast majority of them resembling Man’s second self. They are almost like people, capable of comprehending all planes of being, but they are not afforded a material embodiment. That is Man’s great advantage over them. Furthermore, in the complexes of energies of the Universe’s elements one form of energy inevitably holds sway over the rest. And they themselves do not have the capability of changing the proportional relationship among their forms of energy.

“Also, among the elements of the Universe there are complexes of energies similar to God. Similar, yes, but they are not gods. They have momentarily equalised the multitude of energies within themselves, yet, in contrast to God, they are not capable of producing living creations in harmony.

“In the whole Universe nobody has managed to solve the puzzle — the sacred mystery of how or by what power the material plane of being was created, or where the threads tying it and the whole life of the Universe together may be found. Or how or on what basis this plane is capable of reproducing itself.

“When the Earth and everything upon it was created by God, the unparalleled speed of the generative process made it impossible for the elements to understand by what power God was bringing about this grand creation. After everything was already created and was visible, when they noticed that Man was the strongest of all, many were plunged by this resplendent vision first into astonishment, and then into excitement, and finally came the desire to repeat it. To create something similar, all on its own.

“This desire kept on growing. Even today it is still present in a multitude of the diverse energies. They tried to imitate earthly creations in other galaxies, on other worlds, even using the planets which God had created. Many managed to come up with a facsimile of earthly existence, but only a facsimile. The harmony of the Earth and the interrelationship among all things — that is something none have been able to achieve. Thus throughout the Universe, even today, there are planets with life, but this life is but a poor imitation of life on the Earth.

“When all these attempts — not only to produce a better creation but even to repeat the existing one — failed (and God did not reveal His secret), then many of these elements began turning to Man for help. It was clear to them that if Man was God’s creation, if Man was God’s beloved, then a loving parent could not possibly withhold anything from him. On the contrary, God must have offered great opportunities to Man, His son. And the elements of the Universe started to turn to Man; in fact, they strive to do so even today.

“You know, there are people today who claim that someone invisible is communicating with them from the Universe, calling itself mind and the power of good. Back then, too, right at the beginning, they appealed to Man with requests and exhortations, demanding to know (though hiding their true motives under various guises), by what power the Earth

was formed, along with everything existing upon it, and how Man was created to be so great, they wanted to know from what he was fashioned.

"But Man gave an answer to none of them. He did not know the answer to the question himself, nor does he know it today. But he became more and more interested in the question, and began demanding answers from God. Not only did God decline to answer — He tried to inculcate a better understanding in Man, asking him to erase the question from his thinking:

"I ask you, My son, to create. You have been given the power to create in the space on Earth as well as on other worlds. What you think up in your dream will be turned into reality, you need not doubt. Only one thing do I ask of you: do not try to figure out how, by what power, it all comes about."

"What I don't understand, Anastasia, is why God would not want to divulge the specifics of His creation even to Man, His son."

"I can only guess, no more," Anastasia replied. "In not responding to this question even to His son, God might have been trying to protect him from disaster, even deflecting a universal war."

"I don't see any connection between a refusal to respond and universal war."

"If ever the secret of creation were to be revealed, then on other planets in the Universe other forms of life might arise, equal in power to those on the Earth. Two powers might have the desire to test each other. It is possible that such a contest could take place peacefully. It is also possible it could turn out like the wars on the Earth. And that could touch off a war throughout the Universe."

"Indeed," I agreed, "it would be better for the specifics of God's creation to remain a secret. Only one of the elements might happen to figure it out on its own, without hints."

"I do not think any of them would ever figure it out."

"And why are you so confident of that?"

"The nature of the secret is such that it is clear on its own, and at the same time it is not even there, and yet at the same time it is not alone. The term *co-creation* gives me confidence, when I add a second word to it."

"What word?"

"The second word is *inspiration*."

"Well, what of it? What can these two words together signify?"

"They —"

"No, stop! Don't say it! I remember your telling me that thoughts — and that means words too — don't simply disappear into nowhere, they circle around us in space and anyone can catch them. Is that right?"

"Right it is."

"And can the elements catch them too?"

"True."

"Then don't say it. Why give them a hint?"

"Not to worry, Vladimir. Suppose I give them a slight hint as to the secret, I can thereby show them the fruitlessness and senselessness of their constant attempts. That way they can understand and stop bothering Man."

"Well, if that's the case, then tell me, what do *co-creation* and *inspiration* mean?"

"*Co-creation* signifies that in His creating, God used particles of all the diverse energies of the Universe, and His own energy too, and even if all the elements got together to produce a duplicate of the Earth, they would still be missing one particular form of energy — the one that is inherent in God as an idea of His own, the one born in the Divine dream alone. *Inspiration* signifies that the creations were produced through an impulse of inspiration. Who among the great earthly artists and sculptors, after creating their works in an impulse of

inspiration, will dare attempt to explain how they held their brush, what they were thinking or where they were standing — these were not the kinds of things they paid attention to, absorbed as they were so completely in their work. Again, there is the energy of Love, which God sent to the Earth. It is free, subject to no one and, preserving its loyalty to God, is in the service of Man alone.”

“How fascinating that all is, Anastasia! Do you think the elements will hear it and understand?”

“They shall certainly hear, and possibly understand as well.”

“And will they hear what I say, too?”

“True.”

“Then I shall sum it up for them. Hey there, elements, is it clear to you now, eh? Don’t you go bothering people any more. You’ll never guess the Creator’s design!... Well, Anastasia, what do you think, did I do a good job of telling it to them?”

“Your final words were quite accurate: ‘You will never guess the Creator’s design!’”

“Have they been trying to guess it for a long time?”

“Right from the moment they first beheld the Earth and its people, right up to the present day.”

“And what harm did their attempts cause Adam, or us for that matter?”

“In Adam and Eve they aroused feelings of pride and self-conceit. And they managed to persuade Adam through a false teaching, saying that to produce something more perfect, it was necessary to break the existing creation down and see what it consisted of, how it worked. They often instructed him to find out how everything was constructed, and then he would be supreme over all. They hoped that when Adam began analysing God’s creations to make sense of their construction and purpose, he would comprehend with his mind

the interrelationship among the creations of all different kinds. They would then be able to see the thoughts Adam produced and from that they could deduce how they could create like God.

“At first Adam paid no attention to their requests and suggestions. But then one day Eve decided on her own to give Adam some advice:

“I have heard voices stating things will be even easier and more splendid for us once you ascertain how everything works within. Why should we stubbornly refuse to follow this recommendation? Would it not be better for us to give it a try, at least once?”

“First, Adam broke off a branch of the tree with its marvelous fruit, and then... Then... now you can see for yourself, how Man’s creative thought came to a stop, a standstill. Even today he keeps examining things in detail and breaking them apart, trying to analyse the structure of everything and produce his own primitive creations with his thought instantaneously at a standstill.”

“Hold on, Anastasia. That’s not at all clear to me. Why do you say that human thought has come to a standstill? When people examine something in detail, on the contrary, we say they’re learning something new.”

“Vladimir, Man is made in such a way that there is nothing he needs to examine in detail. He includes... Oh, how can I make this clearer to you? The structure of everything is included in Man himself, in what you might call an encoded format. The code is deciphered when he tunes into his dream of inspired creativity.”

“But I still don’t see what harm can there be in taking something apart,¹ and how this can possibly bring thought

¹*taking something apart* — a play on words; the Russian term here (*razborka*) can also signify settling a score between rival gangs.

to a standstill. Maybe it'd be better if you showed me an example."

"Yes, you are right. I shall try an example. Imagine you are at the wheel of your car, driving to some destination. All at once you find yourself wondering how the motor works, and what makes the wheels turn. You stop the car and set about taking apart the motor, for instance."

"So, I'll take it apart, see how it works, and then I'll be able to repair it myself. What's wrong with that?"

"However, while you are taking it apart, your journey is being interrupted. You will not reach your destination on time."

"But I'll still learn more about my car. What's wrong with my acquiring new knowledge?"

"What do you need it for? Your purpose is not to repair, but to enjoy the drive and to create."

"You don't sound very convincing, Anastasia. Not a single driver will agree with you. Except maybe for a few with foreign cars, like Japanese models or Mercedes, which hardly ever break down."

"God's creations not only do not break down, but are capable of re-creating themselves. Hence why should one need to tear them apart to see how they work?"

"What d'you mean, *why*? Just out of curiosity, if for nothing else."

"Forgive me, Vladimir, if my example was unconvincing. If you will allow me, I shall attempt another."

"Go ahead."

"Suppose a beautiful woman is standing in front of you. You feel a burning attraction for her, she appeals to you. And she finds you interesting, too, and seeks to join together with you in creation. But a moment before the mutual impulse for coming together to create, all of a sudden you wonder what this woman is made of. How do her internal organs work?"

Her stomach, liver and kidneys? What does she eat and drink? How will all this function in a moment of intimacy?"

"Enough. Don't go on. You've come up with a jolly good example there. There will be no closeness, no creation. It won't work out if this cursed thought comes along. It happened once that way with me. There was one woman I fancied for a long time, but she never gave in to me. And the one time she agreed, I suddenly thought of how I could perform better, and for some reason I doubted my ability to perform. The upshot was that nothing happened. I felt such shame, and was even afraid I might have lost it for good.

"I later asked a friend about it, and he said the same thing had happened to him. The two of us even went to see a doctor. The doctor said there was some kind of psychological factor at work here. There was no use doubting our abilities or trying to figure out what to do and how. I think this psychological factor causes trouble for a lot of men. Now I get it: it's all because of those elements, because of Adam, because of Eve's advice. Yes, they acted pretty bad back then."

"Why are you only blaming Adam and Eve? Look around you today, Vladimir, is not all mankind continuing to stubbornly repeat the same mistake, violating God's guidelines? Adam and Eve were not fully aware of the consequences, but why does mankind stubbornly continue to tear everything apart? And to destroy living creations? Today?! When the consequences are so obvious and sad?"

"I don't know. Maybe everybody needs a good shake-up. Come on, are we so hung up on tearing apart one thing after another?² I just had a thought — maybe it was no use, God not handing Adam and Eve a decent punishment after all. He should have given Adam a right good hiding and knocked all

²*tearing apart* — again, the Russian term could refer to settling scores by violence.

that nonsense out of his head — that same nonsense that's causing mankind so much suffering today. And He could have taken a good whip to Eve's soft spot so she wouldn't have gone round getting people into trouble with that tongue of hers."

"Vladimir, God gave Man complete freedom, with no thought of punishment on His part. Besides, punishment will not alter acts committed in one's heart. Wrong actions will continue as long as the original thought is not changed. Tell me, for example, who invented lethal missiles and the nuclear warheads they carry?"

"In Russia it was Academician Korolev³ who first built rockets like that. But before him Tsiolkovsky⁴ theorised about them. American scientists also tried. In any case, a lot of human minds have been involved in rocket design. A lot of inventors in different countries have been working on it."

"Vladimir, there is in fact only one inventor of all rockets and all the lethal weapons attached to them."

"How can there be just one, when whole research centres have been working on rocket design in various countries, and keep their achievements secret from one another? That's what the whole arms race is about: who can produce a weapon best and fastest?"

"This lone inventor takes pleasure in giving out hints to all people that call themselves scientists or inventors, no matter what country they live in."

³*Sergei Pavlovich Korolev* (also spelt: *Sergey Korolyov*) (1907–1966) — the Soviet scientist responsible for the design of the first artificial earth satellite — known as *Sputnik* (lit. 'Fellow-traveller') — along with a number of rockets, including the spaceships *Vostok* and *Voskhod*, which carried the first cosmonauts into space.

⁴*Konstantin Eduardovich Tsiolkovsky* (1857–1935) — physicist and mathematician, held to be the father of Soviet space science. He is known, among other things, for his experiments in photosynthesis. He also envisioned human beings colonising other planets in various solar systems.

"And where, in what country, does he himself live and what's his name?"

"Destructive thinking. At first it got through to a single individual and took over his material body, producing spears and stone spearheads. Then it proceeded to come up with arrows and iron arrowheads."

"But if it knows everything, this destructive thought, why didn't it go for a missile straight off?"

"The material plane of earthly being does not embody everything thought of all at once. Slowness in matter was given by the Creator to allow people time to think things through. In terms of destructive thinking, the spear, our modern weapons, as well as those of the future, even more deadly, were produced a long time ago. To manifest something more than a spear on the material plane required the construction of a multitude of factories and laboratories that are today termed scientific. Under the guise of plausible excuses more and more people were gradually drawn into the business of turning such deadly thinking into reality."

"And what was the need of constantly trying to do that?"

"To establish itself. To destroy the whole material plane of the Earth. To show to everything in the Universe the superiority of the energies of its all-destructive element over everything else — and, in fact, over God. And it is through people that it acts."

"Sneaky little vermin! And how do we exterminate it from the Earth?"

CHAPTER TEN



Avoid intimate relations with her

“Do not allow it access to your thought or body. All women should avoid intimate relations with men who permit destructive thinking into their consciousness, so as not to reproduce it over and over again.”

“Wow! That’s quite a thought!” I exclaimed. “If all women gang up like that, all our scientific military minds will go out of their minds.”

“Vladimir, if women start acting that way, there will be no war on the Earth.”

“Right on, Anastasia! You’ve struck a blow against all war. Way to go — this idea of yours can wipe out all war! That’s quite a blast! It’s true — what man would want to go to war if not a single woman would sleep with him after that or bear him offspring — *who?* That would mean anyone starting a war would be killing himself, his offspring too.”

“If women were willing to do this, nobody would ever start a war. Eve’s fall from grace would be expiated by women living in today’s times, not to mention their own decline, in the face of themselves and God.”

“And what will then be occurring on the Earth?”

“The Earth will once again burst forth in its pristine flower.”

“You’re a powerfully stubborn girl, Anastasia, true to your dream, just as before. But you are also naïve. How can one believe in all the women on the Earth?”

“How can I *not* believe in all women, Vladimir, since I know that the Divine essence is present in every woman living on

the Earth today? So let it reveal itself in all its resplendent array! Goddesses! Women of the Divine Earth! Reveal in yourselves your own Divine essence. Show yourselves to the whole Universe in all the beauty of your original pristine presence. You are a perfect creation, you are created from the Divine dream. Each of you is capable of taming the diverse energies of the Universe — dear women, goddesses of all the Universe and the Earth!”

“Now how can you stand there, Anastasia, and state that all the women of the Earth are goddesses? I’m beginning to find your naïvety a trifle ridiculous. Imagine! All of them... goddesses?! Including those standing behind counters, I mean in stores and street kiosks? Cleaning ladies, dishwashers, waitresses? All the ones that cook, bake and wash dishes day after day in their kitchen at home — don’t tell me they’re goddesses, too?! Sounds like blasphemy to me, even. How can you call drug addicts and prostitutes goddesses?

“Well, now, in a church, okay, or a beautiful lady dancing at a ball — sure, people will say *she’s* a goddess. But all those plain types, dressed in everyday rags, nobody’s going to call them goddesses.”

“Vladimir, it is only a chain of circumstances that makes earthly goddesses spend time in a kitchen day after day. You have stated that I am like some kind of wild creature, that my life is primitive, and that only the world *you* inhabit is civilised. Then tell me why it is that women in your ‘civilisation’ spend a good part of their life in cramped kitchens? Made to wash floors and carry heavy groceries home from stores? You boast about your ‘civilisation’, but why is there so much dirt in it? And why do you transform the most beautiful goddesses of the Earth into cleaning ladies?”

“And just where have you seen a cleaning lady who’s a goddess? Any women worth their salt shine at beauty pageants and drench themselves to a fault in luxury — and every man wants

to marry them. But *they* will only marry men who are rich. As for the plain ones, well, even the poor don't need them."

"Every woman has her own beauty. It is only that not all of them are given the opportunity to reveal this treasure. This great beauty is not something you can measure, like a person's waist, for example. The length of one's leg, the size of one's breasts, the colour of one's eyes — all that is completely irrelevant here. This beauty is interior to the woman, and is found in both a young girl and a woman of senior years."

"Sure, in 'women of senior years'. You're going to tell me about old ladies next! You think they're beautiful goddesses, too?"

"They too are beautiful in their own way. And in spite of the endless humiliations they face in everyday life, the multitude of blows dealt them by fate, any woman labelled a 'senior' can still wake up in the morning with the Sun, walk across the dew, smile at the sunrise with a ray of conscious awareness, and then..."

"And what then?"

"And then suddenly make someone love her. She will be loved herself, and she will impart to him the warmth of her love."

"To what 'him'?"

"To the one, her only one, who sees in her the goddess within."

"It doesn't happen like that."

"It does. Go ask some seniors. You will be surprised at how many of them have passionate romances."

"And are you sure that women are capable of changing the world?"

"Capable they are! Capable beyond the shadow of a doubt, Vladimir. Once they change their priorities of love, they — God's perfect creation — will restore to the Earth its resplendent pristine worth, they will transform the whole Earth into the blossoming garden of the Divine dream. They are God's creation! The beautiful goddesses of the Divine Earth!"

CHAPTER ELEVEN



Three prayers

“There you go talking about God, Anastasia, but how do you pray? Or do you pray at all? Many people have requested in their letters that I ask you about this.”

“Vladimir, how do you understand the word *pray*?”

“What do you mean, how? Isn’t it obvious? *To pray*... that’s, well, to pray. Are you telling me you don’t understand the meaning of the word?”

“One and the same word can mean different things to different people, depending on how they perceive it. To be able to express myself more understandably, I asked you: What does prayer mean to you?”

“I never really thought about what it means, somehow. Anyway, there’s one principal prayer I learnt by heart and sometimes I say it — just, you know, to be on the safe side. Apparently there must be some meaning in it, if so many people say it.”

“What are you telling me? You memorised a prayer, and never wanted to find out its meaning?”

“It’s not that I didn’t want to, it’s just I never really thought about its meaning. I thought, well, everybody knows what it means, so why bother thinking? Prayer — well, that’s just like having a conversation with God.”

“But if this ‘principal prayer’ signifies a conversation with God, then tell me, how can you talk with God, your Father, without any meaning?”

“I don’t know how. What’s all the big fuss, anyway, about this *meaning*? No doubt the people who wrote the prayer knew what it meant.”

“But would you not like to talk with your Father on your own?”

“Of course. Everybody would like to talk with their Father on their own.”

“But how can you talk ‘on your own’ by repeating someone else’s words, especially without even thinking about what lies behind them?”

At first I felt a little irritated at Anastasia’s pickiness regarding the meaning of the prayer I had learnt, but then I got interested myself in determining what it meant. For the thought was coming to me all by itself: How did this happen? I had learnt a prayer which I repeated on a number of occasions, but never really thought about what was in the prayer. I thought how interesting it would be to find this out, since I had memorised it. And I said aloud to Anastasia:

“Well, okay, I’ll give thought to the meaning at some point.”

But she persisted:

“Why ‘at some point’? Could you not say your prayer right here and now?”

“Why not? Of course I can.”

“Then, Vladimir, say your prayer — the one you term, of all your prayers, the ‘principal’ one, the one through which you have tried to talk with the Father.”

“As a matter of fact, it’s the only one I know. And I only learnt *it* because it seems everybody else considers it the most important one.”

“All right. Say your prayer, and I shall keep track of your thought.”

“Okay. Listen.”

I said the Lord’s Prayer to Anastasia, which, you may remember, goes like this:

*Our Father which art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy name.*

*Thy kingdom come.
 Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.
 Give us this day our daily bread.
 And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.
 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil:
 For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory
 Of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit
 Always, now and for ever. Amen.*¹

I stopped speaking and looked at Anastasia. But she was sitting there, just as silently, her eyes lowered, not looking at me. She just sat there without a word, with a sad expression on her face, until I couldn't take it any longer and asked her:

"Why aren't you saying anything, Anastasia?"

Without raising her head, she enquired:

"What words are you expecting to hear from me, Vladimir?"

"What d'you mean, 'what words'? I said the prayer without even a single flaw. Did you like it? You could at least say so if you did or not, but you're not saying a word."

"When you were saying the prayer, Vladimir, I tried to follow your thought, your feelings, the meaning of your appeal to God. I understood the meaning of the words of the prayer, but *you* did not understand all the words in it. Your newly budding thought was disintegrating, getting away from you,

¹ Matth. 6: 9–13 (Authorised King James Version), plus two lines translated from an old Russian version of the Lord's Prayer. It should be noted that the Russian text of the prayer includes many obsolete Old Church Slavonic words and expressions that are barely understandable to modern-day Russians (see footnote 2 in Chapter 1 of the present volume: "All this exists right now"). Overall, the frequent use of Old Church Slavonic in the Orthodox Church means that many Russians today associate it with an 'unknown language' (a situation similar to the former predominance of Latin in the Catholic Church).

and there were absolutely no feelings. You were unable to grasp the meaning of many of the words, and you were not addressing yourself to anyone. You were simply muttering.”

“But I just said it the way everybody does. I was in church, and there they use even more incomprehensible words. I heard how other people say it. They rattle it off at top speed, and that’s it! But I said it to you slowly and distinctly, so you’d understand.”

“But before that you said it was a prayer addressed to God.”

“Yes, I did say that.”

“But God is our Father. He is a person. He is a living entity. The Father is capable of feeling and understanding, when normal communication is initiated. But you...”

“What about me? I’m telling you, that’s the way they all say it when they address God.”

“Imagine your daughter Polina is standing before you, and all at once she starts talking in a monotone and slips into her sentences words she does not even understand herself. Would you as a father be pleased by her talking to you in such a way?”

I could picture the situation quite clearly, and began to feel downright uncomfortable at the prospect. Here was my daughter standing in front of me, muttering something like a half-crazed person, not knowing what she wanted even.

So I came to a decision: No, I had to make conscious sense of my prayer. I can’t just rattle off meaningless words. Otherwise I would appear to God like some half-crazed idiot. If someone wants to mutter it, they can go ahead. As for me, I shall definitely make the effort to understand this whole prayer. I only have to find some place to look up the meaning of unfamiliar words. And why do they speak in some unknown language in church? Aloud I said to Anastasia:

“You know, it’s probably not a full and accurate translation. That’s why my thought got lost, as you say.”

“Vladimir, the meaning can be understood even from this translation. Of course it contains words that are not used any longer in everyday speech. But the sense is clear when you ponder it and decide what is the most important thing of all for you and what is the most pleasing for the Father. What is it you wish to say in uttering this prayerful message addressed to the Father?”

“Well, whatever the words say, that’s probably what I want to say, too. I want Him to give me bread to eat, to forgive my sins and debts, to not lead me into temptation and deliver me from evil. It’s all clearly set out there.”

“Vladimir, God provided food for His sons and daughters even before they were born. Look around you — everything has long ago been provided for you. A loving parent forgives everyone their sins without being asked, and does not even think of leading anyone into temptation. The Father has given each one the capacity to withstand the wiles of evil. Why offend the Father by not realising what He has already provided a long time ago? His eternal gifts are all around you. What more can this loving Parent give, who has already given all to His child?

“And what if there’s something missing?”

“God gives to the utmost. He has provided everything for His sons and daughters right from the beginning. Everything! Completely! As a parent who loves His child unconditionally, He can think of no greater good for Himself than the joy which comes from the joyful existence of His children. His own sons and daughters!

“Tell me, Vladimir: How might the Father feel, after giving His children everything right from the beginning and seeing them appear before Him, constantly pleading ‘More, more! Keep us, save us, we are all helpless, we are all as nothing’? Please, answer me. Would you as a parent, or any of your friends, wish to have children like that?”

"I can't give you an answer right off. I'll work it out on my own, when I have a quiet moment."

"Yes, yes, of course, fine, Vladimir. Only when you do find the time, think about what the Father would like to hear from you, apart from your requests."

"You mean, God might also want something of us? What?"

"What any parent would wish to hear from his children."

"Tell me, Anastasia, do you yourself ever turn to God in prayer?"

"Yes, I do," came her reply.

"Then tell me your prayer."

"I cannot say my prayer to *you*, Vladimir. My prayer is destined for God."

"All right, talk to God then. I can still hear it."

Anastasia rose, spread out her arms, turned her back to me and began uttering some words. Ordinary words one might hear in a prayer, but... something within me all at once began to tremble. The way she spoke these words was not the way we say prayers. She spoke them the way anyone might talk to a close friend, a loved one, a relative. Her speech contained all the intonations of a live conversation. Passion, joy, fervent ecstasy — as though the One Anastasia was talking to was right there beside her:

*My father, You are present everywhere!
For the light of life I gladly thank You,
For Your bright kingdom visible here and now,
And for Your loving will. Long live the good!*

*For daily bread and daily food with joy I thank You!
And for your loving patience,
And for Your giving of forgiveness of sins on Your Earth fair.
My Father, You are present everywhere!*

*I am Your daughter here midst Your creations.
Weakness and sin — I shall not let them in,
But prove myself worthy of Your consummations.*

*My Father, You are present everywhere!
I am Your daughter, Your joy I declare.
My entire self shall magnify Your glory,
In Your bright dream the coming ages all will live and share.
It shall be so! I wish it so! I am a daughter of Yours.
My Father, You are present everywhere.*

Anastasia ended her prayer. She continued to communicate with everything around her. It seemed as though she were surrounded by a radiant light. During the prayer, as long as she was near me, something invisible happened all around. And whatever it was touched me too. It wasn't an outward touch, but an inner one. It made me feel good, feel comforted. But as Anastasia drew away, this effect faded, and I called after her:

"You said the prayer as though Someone was standing beside you who could answer it."

Anastasia turned toward me, her face beaming. She spread out her arms, spun around, smiling, and then, giving me a serious look in the eye, said:

"Vladimir, God, our Father, also speaks to everyone with a request, and answers every prayer."

"Then why doesn't anyone understand His words?"

"Words? The peoples of the Earth have so many words with different meanings. There are so many diverse languages and dialects. And yet there is one language for all. One language for all Divine callings. It is woven together out of the rustlings of the leaves, the songs of the birds and the roar of the waves. The Divine language has fragrance and colour. Through this language God responds to each one's request and gives a prayerful response to prayer."

"Could you translate, or express in words, what He says to us?"

"I could give you an approximation."

"Why just an approximation?"

"Because our language is much too poor to be compatible with the language God speaks to us in."

"Never mind, just tell me any way you can."

Anastasia looked at me, stretched her arms out in front of her, and her voice — her voice came forth in chest tones:

My son! My own dear son!

How long I have been waiting. I am still waiting.

A minute holds a hundred years, a moment lasts millennia.

I am waiting.

I have given you all. The Earth is all yours.

You are free in everything. You shall choose your own path.

All that I ask, My son, My own dear son,

Is that you be happy.

You do not see Me.

You do not hear Me.

In your mind are doubts and sorrows.

You are turning away. Whereto?

You are yearning for something. What for?

And you are bowing to someone.

I stretch out my hands to you.

My son, My own dear son,

Be happy, I ask of you.

Again you are going away. But your road leads to nowhere.

On this road the Earth will explode.

You are free in everything, and the world is exploding

And tearing your destiny apart.

You are free in everything, but I shall stand My ground.

I shall restore you to life with the last blade of grass.

And once more the world will shine around.

Only be happy, I ask.

*On the faces of saints a deep sorrow swells.
 You are frightened by judgement and hell.
 They tell you that I shall send judges.
 But I only pray for that time, as before
 When you and I are together once more.
 I believe you will return.
 I know you will come.
 I shall embrace you once more.
 Not as a stepfather! Not as a stepfather! I am yours!
 I am your Abba, your Father,² the only One,
 And you are My very own son, My own dear son,
 We shall be happy together as one!*

After Anastasia stopped speaking, it took me a while to recover my composure. Even though it seemed that I was continuing to listen to all the sounds around me, perhaps I was really listening to how my blood was rushing through my veins at an extraordinary tempo. What had I understood? I cannot understand, even to this day.

Through this fervent interpretation, Anastasia had just set forth God's prayer to Man. Whether the words were true or not, who can say? And who can say why they arouse such strong emotions? And what am I doing at the moment? I am letting my pen run across the page in conscious excitement — or maybe not so conscious... Am I going out of my mind? Am I mixing up her words with those the bards now sing in her name? Anything's possible. Perhaps those that read this will understand. And I shall try to understand once I have finished writing. And I am writing again. But again, just as back there in the forest, as though penetrating a curtain, occasionally lines from those prayers I heard back in the

² *Abba, Father* — see Mark 14: 36: "And he [Jesus] said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee" (Authorised King James Version).

taiga will suddenly appear. And again the question arises — a difficult question, which continues to torment me to this day, through scenes from our lives and ponderings. A question I'm afraid to try to answer, even to myself. But it is not one I can keep back any longer just within myself. Perhaps someone will come up with a convincing answer?!

Prayer! That prayer of Anastasia's! Just words! The words of a taiga recluse, an uneducated recluse, with her own unique way of thinking and her own unique lifestyle. Just words. But for some reason every time I hear them, the veins on my writing hand puff up and the blood pulsates through them more quickly. It pulsates, counting off the seconds in which each of us must decide what is best for ourselves, and how to continue to live. Should we be asking a kind Father to save, give, provide? Or alternatively, confidently and from the heart, suddenly declare, just as she did:

*My Father, You are present everywhere!
Weakness and sin — I shall not let them in,
I am Your son, Your joy I declare.
My entire self shall magnify Your glory...*

Which prayer will have the most pleasant meaning for Him? What should I do, or what should we all together do? Which way should we go?

*My Father, You are present everywhere!
Weakness and sin — I shall not let them in...*

But where does one get the courage to speak like that? And to carry it out once the prayer's been said?

CHAPTER TWELVE



Anastasia's line

“Tell me, Anastasia, how did it happen that you and your ancestors lived for so long — millennia, even — in the remote forest, away from society? If, as you say, all mankind is a single body, and all have a single origin, then why is your ancestral line, in contrast to all the rest, a kind of outcast?”

“You are right, we all have One parent. And then there are parents whom we can see. But every human soul has the freedom to chose his own path, leading to a determined goal. Among other things, the choice depends on how one's feelings are nurtured.”

“And who then thus nurtured your distant forebears in such a way that your line is so distinctive even today? In your lifestyle, let's say, or the way you understand things?”

“It happened in times long ago. I know I said long ago, but it seems as though it happened only yesterday. Perhaps I can best put it this way: a time came when mankind aspired not to co-creation but to analysing God's creation, back when spears were already flying and hides of faithful creatures were already considered worthy features on people's bodies, when everyone's consciousness was being altered and being directed along the path leading to today, when human thought faltered, aspiring not to creation but to the accumulation of knowledge — all at once people began analysing the process by which men and women were able to experience tremendous satisfaction by merging their bodies together. Then for the first time men began possessing the women, and women submitted to the men not for the sake

of co-creation, but so that both of them could experience a satisfying sensation.

"It seemed to them, as it seems to people living today, that such a sensation comes afresh each time there is a merging of the male and female elements, their visible bodies, their flesh.

"In fact the satisfaction from the merging of mere fleshly bodies is fleeting and incomplete. In the intercourse of carnal desire there is no participation by the higher planes of the human self. Man aspired to feel a sense of fulness by changing bodies and methods of coming together, but even today he has not achieved anything fully.

"The sad consequence of these carnal pleasures has been their children. The children were deprived of conscious aspirations toward the goal of realisation of the Divine dream. And women began experiencing pain in childbirth. And the rising generation was doomed to live in torment, and the absence of the three planes of being meant they were afforded no opportunity of attaining happiness in any way. And so we have come down to the present day.

"One of the first women to experience pain in childbirth saw that her newborn baby girl had injured her little leg during the birth and was so frail that she wasn't even able to utter a cry. The woman also saw that the man who had enjoyed sexual pleasure with her remained indifferent to the birth, and was already seeking to pleasure himself with another woman. And so the woman who had chanced to become a mother became annoyed at God. She grabbed her newborn baby girl and ran with it with all her might far away from everyone else, right into the middle of the woods, an isolated place where no one lived. Stopping to catch her breath in her despair, wiping tears from her cheeks, she kept railing at God with words of frustrated anger:

"Why in Your resplendent world, as You describe it, is there pain, and evil, and repudiation? I do not experience any

satisfaction when I turn to look at the world of Your creation. I am in utter dejection and am burning up with anger. I have been rejected by everybody. And the one whom I made love to is now making love to another; he has forgotten about me. And You were the one who made them, see? He is Yours, the one who was untrue and betrayed me. After all, she, the one making love to him, was also made by You. These are your creations, true? And what about me? I just want to strangle them. I am burning up with annoyance at them. Your world has become forlorn and joyless for me. What kind of fate did you select for me? And why did I bear this deformed and half-dead child? I do not want anyone to see it. There is no joy for me in contemplating it.'

"The woman didn't just put the child down — she callously tossed the barely living lump, her own daughter, onto the ground. In her despair and anger she again cried out to God:

"Let no one ever lay eyes on my daughter! But You look and see. Look and see the torments taking place among Your creations. Her life is not to be. I shall not be able to feed the child that I have borne. My ill temper has burnt the milk in my breast. I am going away. But You look and see! Look and see how many imperfections there are in the world You have created. Let your 'birth' die in Your sight. Let it die among the creations of the Earth.'

"At that the mother ran from her own daughter, angry and forlorn. The newborn baby was left all alone, a barely breathing, helpless little lump, lying on the wooded ground. My distant foremother was in that baby girl, Vladimir.

"God could feel the anger and despair coming from the Earth. He felt distress and compassionate care for that tearful, depressed woman. But the invisible Father who loved her could not alter her destiny. The woman running in despair was wearing a crown of God-bestowed freedom. Every Man fashions the destiny of his own soul. The material plane of

being is subject to no one. It is under the complete control of Man himself.

“God is a person. He is the Father of all, but He does not exist in the flesh. Not in the flesh. But in Him there is a complex of all the diverse energies of the Universe, a whole complex of feelings belonging to Man. He can rejoice and He can feel distress, He can grieve over one of His sons or daughters who chooses a path leading to suffering. He glows with a fatherly tenderness to all and each day, for all without exception, He caresses the whole Earth with a sun-ray of love. Day after day He never loses hope that the daughters and sons of His conception will follow the Divine path. Not under orders, not through fear, they will use their freedom of choice to determine their own path to conjoint creation, regeneration and joy from its contemplation. Our Father has faith, and waits. And He sustains life with His Self. Our Father includes the whole complex of human feelings.

“Could anybody imagine how our Father, God, felt, when His newborn child lay quietly dying there alone in His forest wild, among His own creations?

“The baby girl did not cry, she did not even make a sound. The little heartbeat was slowing down. Just occasionally her tiny lips searched around for some life-giving nipple — she felt thirsty.

“God does not have hands of flesh. Even though He is all-seeing, he still could not clasp the baby girl to His breast. Having given everything to Man, what more could He possibly give? And so, He who is capable of filling the whole Universe with the energy of His dream, compressed Himself into a lump of energy over that forest. A wee, tiny lump, capable of dispersing all the vast worlds of the Universe at a single burst. He concentrated the energy of His love right over that forest — the love He expressed toward all His creations. Through them He embodied Himself in His acts upon the Earth. And they...

“And a little drop of rain touched the lips of the baby girl lying there on the ground — lips which were already turning blue — and at once a warm breeze blew. From the trees fell pollen dust, and the baby girl breathed it in. And the day went by, and the night came on, and the baby girl was still alive. All the beasts and creatures of the wild, embraced by a Divine delight, recognised this baby girl as their own child.

“Years passed, the little girl grew and became a young woman. I can call her Lilith.¹

“As she strode over the ground all bright in the Sun’s early rays, all other life around called out her name in gladness and praise. Lilith’s smile illuminated and caressed the world God had created around her. Lilith accepted everything around her as we would accept our mother or dad.

“As she grew up, she would venture more and more often toward the edge of the forest. Quietly concealing herself amidst the tall grasses and bushes, she watched as people so similar in appearance to her went about their daily life — but what a strange life it was! They were distancing themselves more and more from God’s creations, building houses to live in, cutting down everything around, and for some reason

¹*Lilith* — in Jewish folklore, a female demon of the night associated with owls; in a more recent Hebrew legend, the first wife of Adam in the Genesis story, who refused to subordinate to him and was expelled from Eden to become a malevolent wanderer. However, both the name *Lilith* and her image can be traced back to pre-Jewish traditions. In Sumerian culture the goddess or demoness *Lila* was depicted as a winged woman surrounded by owls. In Sanskrit the term *lila* signifies ‘Divine play’ and conveys the idea of Creator’s enjoyment at the sight of His unfolding creation. In Ancient Gaelic *lili* is a snow-white lily, and the Gaelic feminine name *Lili* to the present day is associated with purity, chastity and innocence. The name of the ancient Slavic goddess of Love — the female aspect of God the Creator — is *Lelia* or *Lila*, and in ancient Slavic myths a winged goddess in the form of an owl (*Mater’ Sva*) is mother of god Svarog, Creator of the Universe. The old Russian verb *lilit’* (in modern form: *leleiat’*) means ‘cherish’ or ‘love’.

clothing themselves in animal hides. And they took great pride in killing God's creatures, and boasting about who could most quickly kill their prize. And they kept on producing something out of dead matter. Back then Lilith did not yet realise that people who created dead things out of living things considered themselves thereby to be very wise.

"She aspired to tell these people about things that could bring joy to everyone. She very much desired a conjoint creation and the joy that comes from its contemplation. She felt an ever-growing need within her to bring about the birth of a new, living, Divine creation.

"More and more frequently her gaze rested upon one man in particular. He was rather a plain sort in comparison to his fellows. He did not distinguish himself at spear-throwing, and considered himself a less than successful hunter. He was pensive and often sang quietly to himself. He would often go off on his own and dream about something all alone.

"One day Lilith went out to meet these people. She had collected living gifts from the forest and carried them in a withy basket out to a crowd of people — men standing around a baby elephant they had slain and arguing arcanelly about something. And he was there among them, her chosen one. At the sight of her all voices suddenly became mute.

"Now Lilith was a woman of exceptional beauty. She had not taken steps to veil her exposed slender figure, unaware of the hold carnal desires had already secured for themselves over male human beings. They crassly thrust themselves at her en masse. Putting her gifts down on the ground, she noticed the fire of fleshly lust and desire burning in their eyes. And he, her chosen one, ran after all the rest.

"Even from a distance Lilith still felt how forcefully the wave of aggression touched the delicate strings of her soul. Taking a step back, she suddenly turned and ran from the whole approaching horde of warriors.

"Seething with lust, they kept up their chase for a long time. She ran without any difficulty in breathing and did not tire out, while those in pursuit were dripping with sweat. But they were not to lay a hand on Lilith. Those who thirsted to capture this beauty were unaware of the truth that to know beauty, one must include such beauty within one's self.

"And the warriors tired of the chase. Losing sight of Lilith, they started wandering back the way they came and went astray. Eventually they found their way.

"All but one. Weary from running, he sat down on a fallen tree and began to sing. Lilith quietly concealed herself and recognised the singer as the one her heart felt a yen for, who had also given chase after her with the other men in the crowd. Nevertheless she still allowed him to catch sight of her, at a distance, to show him the right way back to his camp. And he followed, but did not run after her.

"Upon arriving at the edge of the forest and seeing his camp and the campfire burning there, he forgot everything and started running toward it. And Lilith watched as her chosen one ran off. Her heart would beat in an unfamiliar way, or all at once stop, as Lilith repeated to herself:

"Be happy among the others, my beloved, be happy. Oh, how I would love to hear not a sad tune but your gladsome croon here in my forest dear!"

"All at once the runner stopped, and turned back toward the forest, as though pausing in reflection. He looked at the camp and again in the direction of the forest. Suddenly he threw away his spear and confidently took a step forward. He strode over to where Lilith was standing concealed. Lilith kept watching as he walked past her hiding-place, her eyes fixed on him. Perhaps it was her gaze of love that stopped him in his tracks. He turned and walked back in her direction. She did not flee at his approach. She placed her still timid hand onto his outstretched palm. And together they

started walking hand in hand, though not a word had yet passed between them. There they were, walking toward the glade where Lilith had grown up — my father the poet, and my foremother.

“Years passed, and the line continued. And in each generation of my forebears, one person at least was inspired by the desire to go visit those other people, so similar in appearance but with quite a different destiny. They would go under various guises. They might mix in with the warriors, or the priests, or pass themselves off as scholars. As poets, they shone with their poetry. They tried to let people know that there was another path to Man’s happiness, that the One who created all was right with them, only they need not hide themselves from Him and pursue their vain mercenary interests, or cherish other entities in place of the Father.

“They tried to tell others, and perished. But even when a man or a woman was left alone, through their love they would find a friend among those who lived a different lifestyle, and so our line continued, and with our thinking and our way of life true to our pristine origins, remained unchanged in the end.”

CHAPTER THIRTEEN



To feel the deeds of all mankind

“Wait, Anastasia,” I cried out, after a thought hit me like an electric shock, “you say they all perished. And that that’s the way it’s been for millennia. And that all the attempts were unsuccessful and all mankind is going its own way?”

“Yes, all the attempts made by my foremothers and forefathers were unsuccessful.”

“That means they all perished?”

“All the ones perished that went out among the people and tried to talk to them.”

“So that means just one thing — you will perish, too, just like all the rest. You too have started speaking out. And to hope for anything here is just silly. If nobody’s ever succeeded in changing the world, or society’s way of life, then what makes you think you —”

“Why talk prematurely about death, Vladimir? See, I am still living. And you are here along with me, and our son is growing up.”

“But what makes you so confident? What makes you believe that you’ll win out where all your forebears failed? All you do is talk, just like they did.”

“I just *talk* — is that what you think? At some point you should pay closer attention to the sentences I use. They are not for the intellect. They contain no information which has not been set forth before, but people read them and many experience an emotional stirring within. That is all on account of the way they are constructed so that people can grasp a great deal ‘between the lines’. The poetry of their own soul

fills in the gaps — whatever is not explicit in the actual text. And now it is not me that is telling them about the Divine truth — the readers are discovering it for themselves. Their numbers are multiplying at an ever-increasing rate, and now there is no diverting them from the path of the dream which belongs only to God. My mission is not yet accomplished, but already the Creator's desire has come true in many hearts. And that is the most important part.

"When the heart aspires to something in a dream, invariably — invariably, believe me, it must all come true in life."

"Then tell me, why wasn't everything set forth in such sentences before this?"

"I do not know. Perhaps the Creator has shone forth with some kind of new energy! An energy that tells us anew about something we see around us every day, something we see but do not pay sufficient heed to or reflect upon. And my feelings do not deceive me — I have the clear feeling that He is accelerating all His diverse energies once more. A new dawn is coming for all the Earth. His earthly daughters and sons will experience life as it was created by the energy of the Divine dream. And both you and I will play our part.

"But most important! Most important are those who have become the first ones to feel those thoughts between the lines, the thoughts that the energy of the Creator has implanted in people, like the music of the soul. It has all happened! It has all come to pass! People are already aspiring to create a new world in their thoughts!"

"You're talking in very general terms, Anastasia. Tell me specifically, what should people do, what kind of world should they build and how, so that everyone in this world can live happily ever after?"

"I cannot tell you more specifically at the moment, Vladimir. Treatises of all kinds are not hard to find in the life of mankind. Many of them have been such that people have

fallen down and worshipped them. But none of them makes any sense. Treatises have no power to change the world, and just one point will serve as a confirmation of that.”

“What point? I don’t understand.”

“That point in the Universe designated as a universal limit. The point where all mankind is standing at the moment. And everything depends on the direction in which it takes the next step. All this shows that there is absolutely no sense in tracts. Ever since the beginning of creation the whole of mankind is attracted by feelings alone.”

“Hold on a moment, hold on. What about me? Do you mean to say that I have not done everything in my life by virtue of my mind?”

“Vladimir, you, like everyone else, have changed with that mind of yours the interrelationship of material things around you. You have been trying through material means to experience sensations which every Man knows intuitively. Sensations which everyone is seeking but cannot find.”

“What kind of sensations? Sensations *everyone* is seeking? What are you getting at?”

“At what people felt back then, in their pristine origins, when they were still living in Paradise.”

“So, are you trying to say I’ve worked to achieve so many things through the power of my mind just so I could discern these feelings of Paradise?”

“But think for yourself, Vladimir, *why* you did all the things you did.”

“What d’you mean, *why*? Just like everybody else, I’ve been making a living for myself and my family. In order to feel that I’m no worse than anyone else.”

“In order *to feel* — you said.”

“Yes, that’s what I said.”

“Now try to get this through your mind: ‘In order to feel’... the deeds of all mankind.”

"What d'you mean, *all*? Even the deeds of drug addicts — are they too part of a search for such sensations?"

"Of course. Just like everyone else, they are aspiring to find these sensations, only they are going about it their own way — subjecting their bodies to torture, taking poison in the belief it can help them, just for a moment, experience even an approximation of a great sensation.

"And the drunkard, oblivious to everything, winces and drinks his bitter poison only because the search for a beautiful sensation lives in him too.

"And the scientist harnesses his mind and comes up with some fanciful invention, thinking that this will help him find satisfaction, along with everyone else. But to no avail.

"Over the whole course of its history, Vladimir, human thought has gone and invented a tremendous number of senseless things. Just think of the multitude of objects surrounding you right where you live. And each of those objects is considered to be the achievement of scientific thought. Think of the labours of the multitude of people behind its production. Only please tell me, Vladimir, which of these objects has made you happy and satisfied with life?"

"Which?... Which?... Well, maybe, not a single one, if you look at them individually. But taken all together these objects do a lot toward making life easier.

"Take the motor-car, for example. You get behind the wheel and you can go where you like. It can be cold and raining on the street, but in the car you can turn on the heat. It can be hot and sweaty outside, but inside all you have to do is turn on the air conditioner and you have a nice, cool ride. And in your home, in the kitchen, for example, there's lots of appliances to help women. There are even dishwashing machines to spare the housewife that particular care. And vacuums to clean the rooms through and through and save a lot of time,

too. Everyone knows that there's a lot more objects out there like these that can make our lives a lot easier."

"Alas, Vladimir, 'ease-makers' such as these are quite illusory. Man is obliged to pay for them day after day through sufferings and a shortened lifespan. In order to afford these soulless objects, people are obliged to spend their whole life slaving over joyless tasks. The more these soulless objects appear all around us, the more clearly they show the degree of Man's misunderstanding of what constitutes the universal essence of being.

"You are a Man! Take a careful look around you. In order to produce yet another mechanical object, whole factories are built, spewing out deadly pollution, killing the water, and then, you... You, a Man, are obliged to spend your whole life in joyless work for their sake. They do not serve you, but you them, inventing, repairing and bowing down to the things you make. In the meantime, Vladimir, tell me: who among your great scientific minds invented *this* particular mechanism for serving Man, and at what factory was it produced?"

"Which one?"

"The little squirrel with the nut, the one just below my hand."

I looked at Anastasia's hand. She was holding it outstretched, palm face down, about a half metre above the ground. And on the grass, just below her hand, a little red squirrel was standing on its hind paws. In its front paws the squirrel was holding a cedar cone. Its head was first tilted down toward the cone, then perked up high, with its sparkling round eyes fixed on Anastasia's face.

Anastasia smiled, looking down at the little creature. Without a stir she held her hand balanced in the same position as before. And all at once the squirrel put the cone down on the ground, started working on it in some way, using the claws on its front paws to take off the scales and pull a tiny

nut out of it. And once more the little creature stood up on its hind paws, raised its head and seemed to be holding the nut out for Anastasia, as though asking her to receive it from its paws. But Anastasia continued to sit on the grass as before, without a stir.

"Then the squirrel lowered its head and quickly bit into the nutshell and, after peeling off the shell, placed the kernel of the nut on a broad leaf. Then it began pulling more and more nuts out of the cedar cone, each time biting into the shell and laying the kernels on the leaf. Anastasia then put her hand down on the grass, palm upturned. Whereupon the squirrel hastily transferred all the shelled kernels from the leaf onto her hand. With her other hand Anastasia gently stroked the furry little creature, which had become stock still. Then it came even closer to Anastasia and stood, apparently trembling with joy before her, and looked her in the eye.

"Thank you!" Anastasia said aloud to the squirrel. "Today, my beauty, you are better than ever before. Go on, go about your business, my busy little one. Find your chosen one, my beauty, one who is worthy." And she motioned with her hand toward a nearby cedar tree with huge, spreading boughs. Whereupon the squirrel began skipping about, twice executing a circle around Anastasia before bounding off in the direction indicated by her arm. With a flying leap onto the trunk, she finally disappeared into the cedar's leafy branches. In the meantime, on Anastasia's hand, now stretched out toward me, lay the neatly shelled cedar nut kernels.

Well now, that's quite a mechanism, I thought to myself. It collects the product, delivers it, even separates it from the shell. This little creature doesn't require any maintenance or repair, and doesn't consume any electrical energy.

After trying the nuts, I asked:

"What about the great military leaders — Alexander the Great, Julius Cæsar, the ones who started wars, Hitler too —

don't tell me they were searching for a feeling of their pristine origins?"

"Of course they were. They wanted to feel that they were rulers of the whole Earth. Subconsciously they felt that this kind of sensation was related to the one everybody is intuitively searching for. But they were mistaken."

"Mistaken, you say. What makes you think that? After all, nobody has yet been able to take control of the world."

"But they took control of cities and whole countries. They would fight and win battles over cities, but the satisfaction they derived from their victory was fleeting indeed. And they kept on warring, aspiring to even greater conquests. Their invasion of a country, almost inevitably more than one, would bring them no relief but only more grief. And the fear of losing everything. And once again they tried seeking satisfaction through military deeds. Their minds were so immersed in vanity that they could no longer count on them to bring them to the dream of the great Divine sensations. All the military leaders of the Earth met with a sad end. And the whole history of the world, insofar as we know it today, bears this out. Unfortunately, however, the vanity, the ramblings and the parade of mercenary dogmas do not allow people living today to discern where exactly the Divine sensation awaits them along the way."

CHAPTER FOURTEEN



Dining in the taiga

Each time I visited Anastasia in the taiga, I would invariably take along things to eat. I would take preserves, hermetically sealed biscuits in a plastic wrap and sliced fish fillet in a vacuum pack. And each time when I got ready for the trip back, I would find my reserve supplies unused. And each time she would slip some treats into my backpack. These generally consisted of nuts, fresh berries wrapped in leaves, and dried mushrooms.

Russians are accustomed to eating mushrooms — well boiled, fried, marinated or salted. Anastasia eats them in their dried, natural state, without any processing. At first I was afraid to even try them — then I tried them, and they were okay. Once a piece of mushroom is softened from the saliva in the mouth, you can suck on it like candy or swallow it. Later I even got so I liked it.

One time I was travelling from Moscow to Gelendzhik by car for a readers' conference. The whole trip I lived on mushrooms Anastasia had given me. Alexander Solntsev,¹ the director of the Moscow Anastasia Centre, was at the wheel and he ate some of the mushrooms, too. And during my talk at the conference I invited the audience to try them, and people didn't shy away. They kept taking one piece each until my supply ran out, and ate it on the spot, and nothing bad happened to any of them.

¹ *Alexander Solntsev* — see footnote 4 in Book 2, Chapter 25: "The Space of Love".

In fact, I don't remember any occasion during my visits with Anastasia where we actually sat down for the specific purpose of eating. Whatever Anastasia offered me, I would just try on the spot, and I never felt any real sensation of hunger. But this once...

At the time I was probably too engrossed in pondering the meaning of Anastasia's prayer to notice how she managed to spread such a huge table, if, indeed, one can call it that.

There on the grass, on a variety of leaves both large and small, lay a host of delicacies. They filled an area larger than a square metre in size. And everything was beautifully laid out with tasteful decor — cranberries, huckleberries, cloudberries, raspberries, black and red currants, dried strawberries, dried mushrooms, some kind of yellowish paste, three small cucumbers and two medium-sized red tomatoes. These lay among a multitude of clumps of herbs, decorated with floral petals. Some sort of white liquid, looking not unlike milk, stood in a little hollowed-out wooden bowl. I couldn't tell what the scones were made of. There was honey in the comb, too, strewn with multicoloured grains of pollen dust.

"Seat yourself down, Vladimir, try this God-given daily bread," Anastasia invited, with that sly smile of hers.

"Wow!" I couldn't restrain myself from exclaiming. "That's really something! And you've laid it all out so beautifully! Just like a good mistress of a feast."

Anastasia bubbled with child-like joy at my praise. Then she burst out in laughter, her eyes still fixed on the 'table' she had laid out. All at once she threw up her hands in the air and exclaimed:

"Oh-oh! You see, here I am supposed to be a good feast-mistress and yet I have gone and forgotten my spices. You like a lot of hot spices, do you not? You like them, yes?"

"I do."

"And here this 'good feast-mistress' has gone and forgotten them. Give me just a moment. I shall correct my mistake."

She took a look around her, ran off a little ways and tore off part of a herb, then did the same in another place. Then she reached into the bushes and tore off something else, and presently laid her find down amongst the cucumbers and tomatoes — a little bouquet-like clump of various herbs. Then she explained:

"These are spices. They are hot. Try them if you like. Now we have everything. Take a taste of everything, Vladimir."

I picked up a cucumber, surveyed the variety of taiga foods spread out before me and said:

"Pity there's no bread."

"Bread there is," Anastasia responded. "Look here." And she handed me some kind of tuber. "This is a burdock root. I prepared it specially so you would find it a replacement for tasty bread and potatoes and carrots."

"I never heard of burdock being used for food."

"Try it. Not to worry — in times past people used it to make a great many tasty and healthful dishes. Try just a small bite first. I have been keeping it in milk, to soften it."

I was about to ask where she got the milk, but once I took a bite of the cucumber... I couldn't say another word until I had finished it off — and without bread yet. I took the bread-replacement tuber from Anastasia, but I could only hold it in my hand without trying it until I had finished eating the cucumber.

You see, this ordinary-looking cucumber was utterly different in taste from any I had ever eaten before. This taiga cucumber had a pleasant unique fragrance. You're no doubt aware that cucumbers grown in hothouses taste quite different from those raised in garden beds in the open air. The ones growing in the open have a significantly superior taste and fragrance. But Anastasia's cucumber surpassed all the

open-air cucumbers I had tasted before, and possibly by an even greater margin of difference.

I quickly picked up a tomato, tried it and polished it off on the spot. Its taste, too, was extraordinarily delicious. Like the cucumber, it was far tastier than any other tomato I had ever eaten. Neither of them required any salt, sour cream or salad oil. They were delicious in and of themselves. Just like a raspberry, or an apple or an orange. Nobody would ever think of either sweetening or salting an apple or a pear.

“Where did you get these vegetables, Anastasia? Did you run down to the village? What kind are they?”

“I grew them myself. You liked them, did you not?” she asked.

“Like them?!! I’ve never had any like these before! That means you’ve got a garden plot, or a hothouse? What kind of tools do you use to dig your beds? Where do you get fertiliser — at the village?”

“The only thing I got at the village was some seeds from a woman I know there. I prepared a spot to plant them among the herbs, and they grew. The tomatoes I planted in the autumn, then hid them under the snow, and come springtime they began growing. The cucumbers I planted in the spring, and they — those little ones — managed to ripen.”

“But what makes them so delicious? Is it some new variety?”

“Just an ordinary variety. They are different from those grown in a typical garden plot only because they were provided with everything they needed during their growth period. In garden-plot conditions, when people try to isolate their plants from contact with other species and accelerate their growth by using fertiliser, the plants are unable to take in everything they need to become self-sufficient and please Man.”

“And where do you get your milk? How do you make your scones? I thought you didn’t use any kind of food from animals, and yet here you’ve got milk...”

"That milk is not from animals, Vladimir. The milk you see before you is from a cedar."

"How d'you mean, from a cedar? Can a tree actually give milk?"

"It can. Only not all trees, by any means. But cedars, for example, can. Try it — there is so much included in this drink. The cedar milk before you can nourish more than just your body. Do not drink it all at once — try one or two sips, otherwise it will fill you up so much that you will not want anything else."

I took three sips. The milk was thick, with a pleasant, slightly sweet taste to it. I also felt a warmth from it, but not the same as from warmed cow's milk. This tender, inexplicable warmth ran through my whole insides and, I think, changed my mood at the same time.

"This cedar milk is delicious, Anastasia. Delicious indeed! But how does one 'milk' a cedar, to get this liquid?"

"There is no 'milking' involved. You must keep grinding the milk kernels of the nut with a special stick in a wooden mortar — calmly, thoughtfully, with a good attitude. And you keep adding water — little by little — living spring water... and you end up with the milk."

"Are you saying people have never known about this before?"

"Many people knew about it in times past, though even today people in the little taiga villages sometimes drink cedar milk. People in cities prefer a different kind of diet altogether — one less healthful but more suitable for the purposes of conserving, transporting and cooking."

"What you say is quite correct. When you live in a city you have to do everything quickly. But this milk... Wow! What kind of tree is this cedar?! The cedar all by itself can give us nuts and oil, and flour for scones... and milk!"

"And there are lot of other unusual things that the cedar can supply."

“What unusual things, for example?”

“You can make superb perfume from its ether oil. Self-sufficient, healthful perfume. Nothing artificial can come even close to its fragrance. The ethers of the cedar represent the spirit of the Universe. They can cure the body — the ethers of the cedar can protect Man from harmful influences.”

“Can you tell me how to extract perfume like that from the cedar?”

“I can, of course, but now you, Vladimir, should have a little more to eat.”

I reached out my hand to take another tomato, but Anastasia stopped me.

“Wait, Vladimir, not that.”

“How d’you mean?”

“I prepared a variety of things for you, so that you could first take a taste of everything, so that it might cure you.”

“What might cure me?”

“Your own body. Once you try a bit of everything, the body itself selects what it needs. You will feel like eating more of what you have chosen. Your body itself will determine what it needs.”

Wow! — I thought — for the first time she’s gone against her own principles.

What happened was that twice before Anastasia had cured me of some internal ailments. What kind of ailments, exactly, I don’t know, but I used to get bad pains in my stomach, or my liver, or my kidneys. Or maybe all of them at once. The pains were bad, and painkillers didn’t always help. But I knew that when I came to see Anastasia, she would cure me — something she does very quickly.

But on the third occasion she refused to treat me. She didn’t even completely remove the pain with her gaze, saying that if I wasn’t going to change my lifestyle or eliminate what was causing me to be ill, there was no point in treating me,

since in that case the treatment would only harm me. I got really angry at her and never asked her for treatment again.

After returning home, I did find myself cutting back a little on the amount of smoking and drinking I indulged in. I even fasted for several days, and felt better. And then the thought came: we don't have to go to a doctor or some other healer every time we feel ill — we can take hold of our own selves when we feel pain pressing down upon us. Of course it would be best for it to not press down at all. I wasn't able to cure myself completely, but I decided not to ask Anastasia for help. However, she agreed to treat me, all on her own.

"But you did say you wouldn't give me any more treatment or even take away the pain."

"I shall not take away your pain any longer. Pain is a conversation between God and Man. But, I can now... since I am just offering you food — that does not go against Nature, although it does go against *them*."

"Who's *them*?"

"The ones who thought up the régime that is so harmful to Man."

"What harmful régime? What are you getting at?"

"At the fact that you, Vladimir, like the majority of people, feed yourself according to an established dietary régime. A very harmful régime."

"I guess some people follow a kind of régime. There are lots of diets out there — for losing weight, or for gaining weight. But I eat what I want. I never read up on *any* régime. I go into a store and I pick out what I like."

"That is right: you go into a store and choose, but your choice is restricted to what is offered by the store."

"Well, yes. In stores today everything's neatly pre-packaged. Because of the tremendous competition, all the producers nowadays try to please the consumer, and do everything for the consumer's convenience."

"Do you think it is all done for the consumer's convenience?"

"Sure — for who else?"

"All systems under a technocratic way of living invariably work only for themselves, Vladimir. Do you consider it 'convenient' to get those lifeless frozen or tinned foods, or water that is half-dead? Was it your body that determined the selection of foodstuffs available in grocery stores and supermarkets?"

"The technocratic world's system has taken upon itself the role of supplying you with the necessities of life. You have agreed to this, you have complete faith in it, to the point that you have even ceased to wonder whether you *have* been supplied with all the necessities."

"But we're still alive — we aren't dying from using these stores!"

"Of course you are still alive. But the pain! Where do you think your pain comes from? Think about where pain comes from with the majority of people. Disease and pain are not natural for Man, they are the effect of choosing the wrong path in life. Now you will be persuaded of that for yourself. Here before you lies just a small sampling of what the Divine Nature has created for Man. Just try a little bit of each thing, and then take what you like with you. Three days is sufficient for these little herbs — which you yourself will select — to overcome your pains."

I began trying a little of everything while Anastasia was still speaking. Some of the clumps of herbs were tasteless, while others I felt like eating more of. Before my departure Anastasia put the things I had taken a liking to into my backpack. I ate them over a three-day period. And the pain completely disappeared.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN



They're capable of changing the world?

"Why is it, Anastasia, that every time you speak of your forebears, you always talk about mothers, about women? As for men, your forefathers, I hardly hear anything. It's as though the fathers in your line were all insignificant. Or maybe your genetic code, or your Ray, doesn't allow you to feel your male ancestors? Isn't that a bit insulting toward your forefathers?"

"I can feel and see the deeds of my forefathers, just as I can my foremothers, when I want to. But I am far from being able to *understand* all their deeds, or to determine their significance for the present day — for me and everyone else."

"Tell me at least about one of your forefathers whose deeds you don't fully comprehend. As a woman, you find it harder to understand men. It'll be easier for me, seeing I'm a man. If I understand, then I can help you understand, too."

"Yes, yes, of course, I shall tell you about my forefather who was able not only to discern but also to produce living substances of a power greater than all the weapons known, either today or in the future. Nothing manufactured could ever withstand them — they are capable of changing the earthly world, of destroying galaxies or even creating whole new worlds."

"You must be joking! And where is this gadget today?"

"Any Man living on the Earth today is capable of producing it provided he can understand, and can feel... My forefather revealed part of the mystery to the Egyptian priests. Even today, earthly rulers in their political states

govern according to the system and mechanism established by those priests. But now there is less and less understanding of the meaning and the mechanism of government. This mechanism was not perfected, and has become degraded over the centuries.”

“Hold on, hold on a minute, there. You’re saying that today’s presidents rule their countries according to a system or directions worked out by the priests of ancient Egypt?”

“Since that time, Vladimir, nobody has ever contributed anything significant of their own to the system of government. And today’s earthly states have no conscious awareness of how the government of human society works.”

“Now that’s simply too hard to believe. Can you try taking me through the whole thing step by step?”

“I shall try taking you through it all step by step, and you try to understand.

“Tens of thousands of years ago, before the world witnessed the grandeur of Egypt, when no state like that yet existed, human society was divided into a multitude of tribes. My forefather and foremother’s family lived apart from human society, they lived according to their own laws. They were surrounded in their glade by everything as it was back in their pristine origins, as in Paradise. My foremother, a beauty herself, had two Suns — one of them was the orb of day, which, as it rose into the sky, awakened everything to life. The other was her chosen one.

“She was always up first. She bathed in the stream and warmed herself in the rising Sun. The light of joy was something she always shared with everything around, and she waited. She waited for *him* to awaken, her loved one. As he awoke, she caught his first glance. When their glances met, it was as though everything around them fell into a trance. Love and trembling, comfort and ecstasy were excitedly taken in by the Space around them.

"The day passed by in joyful duties. And each time the Sun began sinking toward sunset, my forefather always watched thoughtfully, and then he sang.

"My foremother listened to his singing with hidden ecstasy in her heart. Back then she did not yet understand how the words interwoven into the song were forming a new image, an extraordinary image. More and more often she felt like hearing about it, and as though feeling my foremother's desire, my forefather sang about it again and again, and each time he sang he outlined the unusual features more and more distinctly. The invisible image came to dwell among them.

"One morning upon awakening my forefather did not encounter the glance of love that he usually did. He was not surprised. He quietly rose and headed into the forest. In a secluded spot he caught sight of my foremother, enfolded in silence.

"She was standing there all by herself, leaning against a cedar tree. Enfolded in silence, she felt my forefather put his hands on her shoulders. She kept her moist eyes lowered, instead of raising them to look at him. He lightly touched a tear running down her cheek, and said tenderly to her:

"I know. You are thinking about *it*, my beloved. You are thinking about it, and you are not to blame for that. The image I created is invisible. It is invisible, but you love it more than you love me. You are not to blame for that, my beloved. I am going away. I am going now, out among the people. I have been able to discern how splendid images are created. I shall tell the people about that. What I know, others can know, too. And the splendid images will lead people into the pristine garden. There is nothing more powerful in the Universe than the substance of living images. The image I created has proved itself even stronger than your love for me. Now I shall be able to create grand images. And these images will serve people.'

"My foremother's shoulders trembled, and a trembling voice whispered:

"But why? You, my beloved, have created an image which I love. It is invisible. But you who are visible are going to be leaving me. Our child is already stirring within me. What shall I tell him about his father?"

"The splendid images will create a splendid world. Our son will picture to himself, as he grows, the image of his father. If I am able to become worthy of the image pictured by my son, then my son will recognise me. If I am not worthy of his conception, I shall stay on the sidelines, so as not to interfere with his aspiration to the dream, the splendid dream.'

"Incomprehensibly to my foremother, my forefather went away. He came to the people. He came with a grand discovery enthralled. He came for the sake of his future sons and daughters, in an aspiration to create a splendid world for all."

CHAPTER SIXTEEN



An extraordinary power

“It transpired in those days that the tribes of people living on the Earth engaged in frequent frays. And every tribe planned to raise as many warriors as it could. And among the warriors any that aspired to the culture of the land or the culture of poetry were looked down upon. And each tribe had its priests, who essayed to make the people afraid. But none of them had any clear goal; they simply found solace in others’ fear. And each one flattered his own pride by telling himself he was receiving from God more of something than his fellows.

“My forefather managed to assemble a group of poets and priests from a number of different tribes. There were nineteen in all: eleven poet-singers, seven priests and my forefather. They got together in a deserted, isolated spot.

“The singers sat with meek faces to one side, while the priests took their places with a show of pride. My forefather addressed them as follows:

““The tribes can be made to cease their enmity and war. And all the peoples will then come to live in a single state. They will have a single just ruler, and every family will be saved from the horrors of war. People will start to offer each other help. And the brotherhood of people will find their way to the garden of their pristine origins.”

“At first the priests simply laughed at my forefather, telling him he was daft:

““Who will voluntarily surrender his power and authority to another? If all tribes are to come together, one of them must become the strongest and overcome the others, and

here you conceive of there being no more war. Your words are too naïve to ponder. Why have you gathered us together, you slow-witted wanderer?!" And the priests began to leave. But my forefather stopped them by saying:

"You are wise men, and your wisdom is needed to make laws for human society. I can give each one of you such power that no weapon made by human hand can withstand it. If you cherish it and use it for a good trust, it will help everyone reach their goal, come to the truth, to a bright sunrise that is blissful and grand. But if its possessor lusts in his soul to fight others with an evil intent, he himself will perish."

"This reference to extraordinary power arrested those priests in their tracks. Whereupon the high priest proposed to my forefather:

"If you know of such an extraordinary power, tell us about it. And if this power actually works, and is capable of creating whole states, you will stay and live with us in that state. Together we shall create laws for human society."

"This was precisely why I came to see you: to tell you about this extraordinary power," my forefather replied to all. "But first I would ask you to nominate a ruler from among all those known to you. A ruler who is kind, whose mind is free from greed, who lives with his family in love and, as to war, has not a single thought thereof."

"The high priest mentioned to my forefather in reply that there was indeed a ruler who studiously avoided all contentions. But his tribe was small in terms of numbers, and since there was no tendency to glorify its warriors, this was something few among them aspired to become. And so to avoid conflicts, they were often required to change their base and move on, abandon a place that was more suitable for living and settle in a less favourable space. This ruler's name was Egypt."

"Then Egypt shall this state be called!" my forefather said. "I shall now sing you three songs. You, my dear poet-singers,

shall sing these songs to people in all the different tribes. And you, my dear priests, shall settle yourselves among the people of Egypt. Families from all over will be drawn to you, and you shall greet them with good laws.'

"Whereupon my forefather sang three songs to those gathered. In the first song he formed the image of a just ruler, calling him Egypt. The second song conveyed the image of a happy people living together in harmony. In the third song was the image of a loving family with happy children, fathers and mothers, residing in this extraordinary state.

"The songs were made up of ordinary words already familiar to everyone. But the words were combined in such a way as to cause their listeners to hang on each new combination with bated breath. And then there was the captivating melody in the resonant voice of my forefather. It beckoned and called, fascinated and created living images.

"At that time there was still no outward Egyptian state, its temples had not yet been built, but my forefather could tell that it would all come about as a result of the calling of Man's thought and dream, melding into one. And my forefather was enthralling in his song, inspired by the extraordinary power with which our grand Creator has endued us all. He sang as one who possessed this power — a power that distinguishes Man from everything else, that gives Man dominion over all, that allows Man to be recognised not only as the son of God but as a creator too.

"Now fervent with inspiration of their own, the poet-singers sang these three songs amongst the various tribes. The people were fascinated by the splendid images created, and came from all over to dwell with the tribe of Egypt.

"Just five years later, out of this very small tribe, the state of Egypt was born. All the other tribes which had earlier vaunted themselves above their neighbours simply fell apart. And there was nothing the war-inclined rulers could do to stop it.

Their authority weakened, and disappeared completely. They were defeated by something, but there was no war.

“Accustomed to material conflicts, they had no idea of the power the images held over all — images that delighted people’s souls and fascinated their hearts.

“In the face of but a single image, provided it is genuine and untainted by mercenary interests, all the armed troops of the Earth are useless, whether they carry spears or any other deadly weapons. Before this image all warriors fall to the ground, powerless.

“The Egyptian state grew and increased in strength. Its ruler was dubbed *pharaoh* by the priests. Ensconced in their temples away from the everyday bustle of mankind, they made laws, which even the ruling pharaoh was obliged to follow. And every ordinary citizen was only too glad to carry them out. And each one aspired to live his life in conformity with the image.

“My forefather lived among the high priests in the main temple. And for nineteen years the priests paid heed to him. They aspired to study the supreme science of all sciences, to learn how to create grand images. My forefather was inspired with the best of intentions and sincerely endeavoured to explain everything to them. Whether they understood it fully or only in part is no longer clear, and it does not really matter all that much.

“Then one day after nineteen years, the high priest called a meeting of his inner circle of priests. They filed into the main temple with solemn dignity — a temple which even the pharaoh was not allowed to enter.

“The high priest took his place on the throne, while all the rest sat at his feet. My father smiled as he sat there among those priests. He was immersed deeply in thought, composing yet another song, either creating a new image, or perhaps rejuvenating an old one.

"The high priest addressed the gathering as follows:

"We have learnt a grand science indeed — one that allows us to rule all the world, but in order to perpetuate our reign, we must ensure that not one grain of it goes beyond these walls. Now we must create our own tongue and communicate exclusively in it amongst ourselves, lest any of us let something slip, even by chance.

"Over the ages we shall circulate among the people a multitude of treatises, at which everyone may marvel, and think that it has all been set forth. And we shall set forth a multitude of marvellous sciences and various discoveries in such a way that both the rulers and the common people will move further and further away from what is important. And so that wise men in the centuries to come may amaze others with their sagacious treatises and sciences. Moving further and further away from what is important themselves, they will lead others in the same direction.'

"So be it!' they all agreed with the high priest. With the exception of my forefather, who alone remained silent.

"And the high priest continued:

"There is one question requiring our urgent attention. Over the past nineteen years we have learnt how images are created. Any one of us is now capable of creating an image that can change the world, destroy or strengthen a state — and yet the secret of the power itself has never been revealed. Can any of you tell me why the images each of us creates vary in power? And, in terms of time, why does it take us so long?'

"The priests were silent. None of them knew the answer. The high priest went on, ever so slightly raising his voice, and his sceptre trembled ever so slightly in his hand as he told those assembled:

"In the meantime there is in our midst one who is capable of creating images very rapidly, and the power of these images remains unsurpassed. For nineteen years now he has

been teaching us, but there remains much that he has yet to tell. Now we must realise that we are not all equal among ourselves. It matters not who holds what rank among us. But everyone should know that there is one among us who holds the power to control in concealment, unseen, in his sway. With power of the images he is capable of creating, he can elevate or slay. One among us is capable of deciding the fate of nation-states. I as high priest am empowered to alter the balance of power. The doors of the temple wherein we sit are closed. A loyal guard stands outside the door and will open it to no one except on my command.'

"The high priest rose from his throne and with heavy steps, striking his sceptre against the stone slabs of the floor, headed toward my forefather. In the middle of the hall he suddenly halted and addressed my forefather:

"Now you shall choose one of two paths. Here is the first. You shall now reveal before us all what you have concealed: the secret behind the power of your images. You shall tell us how and by what means they are created, and then you shall be proclaimed a priest second only to me, and upon my departure you shall become first. All living people will bow before you.

"But if you do not reveal your secret to us, a second path will be yours. It leads only to that door.'

"Whereupon the high priest pointed to the door leading out of the temple hall into the tower, in which there were no windows nor supplementary exterior doors. This high tower with smooth walls did have an exterior platform up above, from where on an appointed day once a year my forefather or some other priest would sing to an assembled crowd.

"Still pointing to the tower door, the high priest added:

"You shall go in through that door and never come out of it. I shall command the door to be walled up, leaving only a small opening through which you will receive a daily minimum

of food. When the time comes for people to gather by the tower, you shall go out to greet them from the platform up above. You shall go out, only you shall not sing nor create any images. You shall go out so that the crowd will see you and not become concerned or spread rumours surrounding your disappearance. You shall be allowed to greet the people with words only. If you should dare sing a song to create images, even a single song, you shall be deprived of food and water three days long. For two songs you shall not receive food or water six days long, which means you will be decreeing your own death. Now decide and tell us clearly which of these two paths you have chosen.'

"My forefather now calmly rose from his place. His face betrayed neither fear nor rebuke, only a sense of sorrow lay gently on his furrowed brow. As he made his way past the priests sitting in his row, he looked each one of them in the eye. And in each pair of eyes he beheld the thirst for knowledge. But not only the thirst for knowledge: greed itself glared at him from each pair of eyes. Then my forefather went up close to the high priest and stared him in the eye. The grey-haired high priest in turn did not take his eyes off my forefather — eyes which likewise burned with greed. Striking his sceptre against the stone floor, he sternly repeated to my forefather's face, saliva foaming in his mouth:

"Hurry up and decide, which of the two paths is your choice.'

"My forefather's voice betrayed no fear as he calmly replied:

"Perhaps it is the will of fate, but I choose a path and a half.'

"How can you choose a path and a half?' exclaimed the high priest. 'Do you aim to make fun of me, and of all those who are currently in the Great Temple?'

"My forefather went over to the tower door, then turned and replied to all:

“Believe me, I would not even think of making fun of you or offending you. At your will I shall enter into the tower for good. But before I go I shall reveal to you the secret as best I can, and I know that it is not my reply that will bring me the second path. That is how it turns out that my choice is a path and a half.’

“So tell us! Do not halt or waste time!’ The voices of the priests leaping up from their seats rang even stronger through the vaulted arches of the Great Hall. ‘Where is the answer to the secret? Keep it from us no longer!’ they begged.

“It is in an egg,” my father calmly replied.

“In an egg?!! What egg? What are you talking about? Out with it!’ The assembled priests kept plying my forefather with questions, and he responded:

“A hen’s egg will bring forth a hen’s chicken. A duck’s egg will give birth to a duckling. An eagle’s egg will bring an eagle into the world. Whatever you feel yourselves to be, that is what you will bring forth.’

“I feel! I am a creator!’ the high priest all at once professed. ‘Tell us how to create the image that is stronger than all the rest.’

“That is not the truth,’ my forefather replied. ‘You yourself do not believe what you are saying.’

“How can you know what power of faith I have?’

“One who creates will never bring himself to entreat. One who creates is capable of giving of himself. You, on the other hand, are one who entreats, which means you are already well within the shell of unbelief.’

“My forefather went through the door, which at once shut behind him. Later, following the high priest’s order, the entrance was walled up. Once a day my forefather was handed food through a small opening. The rations were meagre, and he was not always given enough water.

“As the day approached when the throngs of people were to gather before the tower to hear new tales and songs, for three days my forefather was allowed no food, only water. That was on the order of the high priest — a change from his original decree. He gave this new order so that my forefather would become weak and not be able to sing any new creative songs to the crowd.

“When the multitude of people gathered in front of the tower, my forefather went out to greet them from the platform up above. He gave the waiting throng a cheerful look. As to what had happened to him he breathed not a word. He simply sang. His voice rang forth in a song of rejoicing, and an extraordinary image was born. The people who had gathered to hear him paid close attention. Directly he finished his song he began a new one.

“The singer stood and sang from his high platform the whole day long. As the day drew to a close, he announced to the whole throng: ‘With the new dawn you will hear new songs.’ And on the following day he sang again. The people were unaware that the singer, imprisoned as he was in the tower, was no longer being given even water by the priests.”

Listening to Anastasia’s account of her distant forefather, I wanted to hear at least one of the songs he sang, and I asked:

“Anastasia, if you can reproduce in such detail like that all the scenes from the life of your forebears, couldn’t you sing a song too? The song your forefather sang to the people from the tower.”

“I can hear all these songs myself, but a full and accurate translation of them is impossible. Many of the words simply do not exist in today’s language. And many of the words used back then have a different meaning now. Not only that, but it is difficult to reproduce the poetic rhythms of that time in the word-combinations we have today.”

"Pity. I very much wanted to hear those songs."

"You shall hear them, Vladimir. They will rise again."

"What d'you mean, they'll *rise again*? You just said a translation is impossible."

"A full and accurate translation, yes, is impossible. But it is possible to create new songs in the same spirit and with the same meaning. Bards are creating them right now, using words familiar to everyone today. The final song my forefather sang back then you have already heard."

"Heard? Where did I hear it? When?"

"A bard from Yegorevsk¹ sent it to you."

"He sent me a lot of songs."

"Yes, he did, but one of them is very similar to my forefather's final song."

"But how could that have happened?"

"Times have their own continuity, Vladimir."

"So what kind of a song is it, what words does it contain?"

"You will understand in just a moment. I shall explain everything in order."

¹*Yegorevsk* (pron. *yi-GOR-yivsk*) — an industrial town about 100 kilometres south-east of Moscow, founded by decree of Empress Catherine the Great in 1778. The site of the new city had previously been known as *Vysokoe* (lit. 'High'), dating back to 1328; on a number of occasions through the centuries *Vysokoe* had won special favour from the reigning Tsar and his family.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN



When fathers will understand...

“On the third day my forefather once more climbed up to the platform with the dawn. He stood there smiling, looking at the throng of people. He was looking for someone specific in the crowd. Itinerant singers waved at him in greeting and raised their instruments, and their strings vibrated under the singers’ inspired hands. My forefather kept smiling at them while at the same time he scanned the crowd even more carefully. My forefather wanted to see his son. To see the son born to his loved one nineteen years earlier in the forest. Suddenly out of the crowd he heard a resounding young voice:

“‘Tell me, O great poet and master of the song. You are standing up there, high above everyone. I am down here, but why do you seem so close to me, as though you were my father?’

“And their dialogue was heard by all around.

“‘Why young man, do you not know your own father?’ enquired the singer from the platform up above.

“‘I am nineteen years old, and I have not seen my father even once. I live with my mother alone in the forest. My father left us before I was born.’

“‘First tell me, young man, how do you see the world around you?’

“‘The world is splendid with its rosy dawn and the setting Sun drawing the day to a close. Marvellous and multifaceted it is. But people are crassly perverting the beauty of the Earth, and causing each other to suffer.’

“From the high tower came the voice in reply:

"Perhaps your father left you because he was ashamed before you, ashamed of the world into which he brought you. Your father left, aiming to make the world a more splendid place for you.'

"And so, did my father believe that he would be able to make over the world all by himself?"

"The day will come when all fathers will understand that they are the ones given the responsibility for the world in which their children live. The day will come when every father will face the fact that before bringing his beloved child into the world, he must act to make the world a happier place. And you as well must give thought to the world in which your own offspring will live. Tell me, young man, how soon is your chosen girl to give birth to the one which she has conceived?"

"In the forest where I live I have no chosen girl. The world there is splendid, I have a host of friends. But I still have not yet met a girl who is willing to go with me into my world — a world I cannot leave.'

"Well, then, even if you have not yet seen your chosen girl so fine, you still have a space of time to make the world into at least a little more joyful place for your future girl or boy.'

"I shall devote myself to that, just like my father.'

"You are no longer a growing lad. You have flowing within you the blood of a fine young man, a future poet and master of the song. Sing to the throng about your splendid world. Come, you and I together shall join in song. We shall sing along together of the splendid world of the future.'

"Who can sing when your own voice is so resounding, O poet and master of the song?"

"I tell you, young man, you shall be able to sing that way as well. I shall sing the first line, the second is your verse. Only sing out boldly, as I have told you, my poet.'

“My forefather sang from the high tower. Over the heads of the assembled throng the voice soared forth with rejoicing, and out came the line:

I arise, and the dawn smiles, befriending...

“And from the throng standing below, all at once a pure and resonant voice, not yet self-confident, carried on:

I walk miles, and the birds sing above...

“And after each line of the father’s came that of the son, and sometimes their voices blended as one, and a resonant song of joy resounded all around:

*And this day will have never an ending,
Because ever more deeply I love.*

“At that point the young man found his confidence and with rank ecstasy sang on:

*Along the Sun’s road with light footsteps a-stealing,
I enter my Father’s own ground,
My eyes see the path, but my feet have no feeling,
My happiness now knows no bounds.
I remember my seeing this all once beforetime:
The flowers, the trees and the sky.
Back then I could see only pain and misfortune,
But now, You are everywhere nigh.
It’s all still the same — the bright stars and the birdies,
But I look at them differently now.
I have no more sorrow, I feel no more hurtings,
I love all you people — oh, wow!*

"The voice from the tower grew fainter and fainter, and before long it could not be heard at all. The singer in the tower momentarily lost his balance, but quickly regained it, and smiled at the people once more. And right up to the end he noticed how his son's voice was ever stronger than before. The voice of his son, now master of the song, standing below in the throng.

"When the song was ended, my forefather, from his position on the tower platform, waved farewell to the throng. To conceal himself from human eyes, he descended five steps on the staircase inside the tower from the platform doorway. He was becoming weaker and losing consciousness, but he perked up his hearing to the limit. From the wind he could just catch the words fervently whispered to the young singer by a young and beautiful girl:

"Allow me, young man, allow me... I shall follow you, I shall go with you into your splendid world..."

"There on the stone steps of the walled-up tower my forefather was fast losing consciousness. He had a smile on his face as he awaited death. With his last breath his lips whispered:

"The line will continue. You will find bliss in a circle of happy children, my beloved."

"My foremother heard him in her heart. Over the thousands of years to come poet after poet would repeat the words of the song of my two forefathers. And the words and phrases of that song were reborn all by themselves among poets of various times and lands. They have sounded forth in many tongues. These simple words conveyed truth, and they broke through artifice and dogma. And now once again they are heard today. Whoever deciphers their lines — not with the mind but with the heart — will learn great wisdom."

"And was there some sort of special meaning in the other songs your forefather sang from the tower?" I asked. "Why would he give his life just for some songs?"

“My forefather, Vladimir, created many images in his songs. They later built a state and maintained it for a long time. It was these songs that helped the priests — the descendants of those first priests — to create a multitude of religions, and take power in different lands. But there was just one thing the priests did not know, when they decided to use their power for selfish ends. The priests did not know how to make the images work for them in perpetuity. The images lost their power when the priests tried to subject them to their own selfish pride. The ones —”

“Hold on, hold on there, Anastasia. There’s something I fail to understand about the images.”

“Forgive me, Vladimir, for my lack of clarity. Now I shall try to let go, pull myself together, and tell you, all in its proper order, about the most important of all sciences. The *science of imagery*, it is called. All our ancient and modern sciences are derived from it. The priests split it up into parts so as to conceal the most important thing, in an effort to maintain their power over everything on the Earth in perpetuity, passing on their knowledge of it to their descendants in underground temples by word of mouth. And they tried to preserve the secret with such zeal that their modern-day priest descendants have been afforded only a tiny fraction of that science. But back then, when it all began, things were going considerably better for the priesthood.”

“And just how did it all begin? Tell me everything right from the start.”

“Yes! Yes, of course. I somehow got excited once more. I must tell you everything in order. The conscious awareness of this powerful science began with the songs resounding forth from the tower.”

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN



He celebrated the joy of life

“When my forefather sang from the high tower, images were born from his songs. The throng standing below included singers and musicians. And all the priests of the time took their places with solemn dignity amidst the multitude. The priests feared most of all that some image exposing and incriminating them might be born in those songs, that my forefather might recall how the priests imprisoned him in the tower. But from his position on the platform high on the walled-up tower the singer sang only songs of joy. He painted a picture of a righteous ruler, with whom the people could live happily ever after. And he offered an image of wise priests. And he depicted the country and the people living in it as fruitful and prosperous. No one was exposed or incriminated, but in his songs the joy of life was celebrated.

“The priests, who for the past nineteen years had been studying the science of imagery, probably realised more than the rest what the singer was doing. They kept watching people’s faces and saw how their eyes lit up with inspiration. They watched how the poets’ lips moved and the musicians quietly fingered the strings of their instruments in time with the singer.

“My forefather had been singing from the high tower for two whole days. The priests calculated in their minds for how many thousand years this one person, standing there in front of everyone, was creating the future. At dawn on the third day the words of the final song rang out, which my forefather sang with his son, and when he made his final exit, the throng

of people listening to them broke up and began heading for their homes.

"The high priest remained at his place for a long time. As he thoughtfully sat there, the priests standing silently about him noticed how his hair and even his eyebrows were turning white right before their very eyes. Then he arose and ordered the entrance to the tower to be re-opened. And the entrance to the tower was opened once more.

"There on the stone floor was the poet's body lying lifeless. Only two metres or so separated his weakened hand from a piece of bread. Between his hand and that piece of bread a wee little mouse ran back and forth, squeaking. The wee little mouse kept begging and waiting for the poet to take his bread and share it with the creature, but the mouse itself would not touch the bread. It was waiting and hoping for the singer to revive. Upon catching sight of the people coming in, the wee little mouse jumped back toward the wall, but then ran over to the feet of the people silently standing around. The wee little mouse's two little beady eyes tried to look these people in the eye. The priests standing on the grey stone slabs of the floor took no notice of it. Then it hastily ran over to the piece of bread once more. The wee little grey mouse squeaked desperately, and even dragged the piece of bread over to the lifeless body of the singer, poet and philosopher, trying to push it into his hand.

"The priests buried my forefather's body with high honours in an underground temple. But they made it so nobody would take notice of his grave under the stone slab floor. And bending his grey head over my forefather's grave, the high priest said:

"None of us will ever say of himself that he understood how he could create great images as you did. But you are not dead. We have but buried your body. The images you created will live on for thousands of years around and above

the Earth, and you are in them. Our descendants will make contact with them in their souls. Perhaps someone in some future age will be capable of learning the essence of creation, of learning what people need to become. And we must create a great and splendid doctrine, and keep it for thousands of years out of sight, until one or the other of us or our descendants discovers to what Man should consecrate his great and splendid might.”

CHAPTER NINETEEN



A secret science

“The priests created a secret science. Their doctrine was known as the science of imagery, and from it all other sciences have been derived. To keep the secret, the high priests divided up the whole science of imagery, and caused the other priests to think in differing directions. Hence astronomy, and mathematics, and physics came along quite a bit later, as well as a multitude of other sciences, including the occult sciences. They were all developed for the simple purpose of drawing people’s attention to individual sectors, thereby ensuring that nobody would ever be able to break through to the core of the teaching.”

“But what kind of core are you talking about? What kind of science is it, and what does it consist of — this ‘science of imagery’ that you speak of?”

“It is a science that allows Man to accelerate his thought and think in terms of images, to grasp the whole of the Universe at once and penetrate a microcosm, to create invisible yet still living substance-images and use them to control a large community of people. Through the help of this science a multitude of religions came about. One who had even the slightest knowledge of it possessed incredible power, and was able to conquer countries, and topple kings from their thrones.”

“And does that mean that a single individual could take over a country?”

“Yes, that is right. And the procedure involved is very simple.”

"Is even one fact like this known to today's historians?"

"It is."

"Tell me about it. I don't remember anything like that myself."

"Why waste time in telling about it? If you go back and read about Rama, or Krishna, or Moses, you will see their creations — the creations of priests who had learnt a part of the secret science of imagery."

"Well all right then, I shall read about their deeds, but how shall I arrive at the essence of this science? Try telling me yourself about its essence — what did they learn about it and how?"

"They learnt to think in terms of images, as I told you."

"Yes, you told me, only it's still not clear to me what connection mathematics, say, or physics, has with this science."

"One who masters this science does not need to write out formulas, or outline or create a variety of models. He is able to penetrate matter mentally, right down to the nucleus, and split an atom. But this is just a simple exercise to learn how to control people's destinies and those of the populations of various countries."

"Wow! I've never read anything like that."

"But what about the Bible? There is an example in the Old Testament when the priests were competing amongst themselves to see who could create the strongest images. Moses the priest against the pharaoh's high priests. Moses cast his rod down in the sight of everyone and turned it into a serpent. And the priests of the pharaoh's court did the same thing. Then the serpent created by Moses swallowed up the other serpents."¹

"You mean to say all that actually happened?!"

"Yes."

¹See Exodus 7: 8–12.

"I thought somebody just made it up, or it was a kind of metaphor..."

"Nothing made up, Vladimir. It all happened just the way the competition is described in the Old Testament."

"But what made them compete in front of each other that way?"

"It was to show who could create the strongest images, capable of conquering other images. And Moses proved to everyone that he was the strongest. After that it was senseless to fight against him. Instead of fighting they were obliged to carry out his requests. But the pharaoh did not listen, he tried to stop the Israelites from following Moses' leadership and the image he created. But the warriors were not strong enough to stop the people of Israel — a people in which a more powerful image resided.

"Then you can read about how the people of Israel many times conquered other tribes, and took their cities. About how the people created their own religion and nation-state. The glory of the pharaohs lost its shine. But at the time when the priests of Egypt still excelled in their creation of grand images, when they were able to determine what consequences an image they created would provoke among the people, Egypt flourished under the control of the priests. Of all the known states formed after the last global disaster, Egypt flourished the longest."

"No, wait a moment, Anastasia. Everybody knows that Egypt was ruled by the pharaohs. Their pyramid tombs have lasted right to the present day."

"Outwardly, the executive power in the country *did* rest with the pharaohs. But their chief task was to exemplify the image of a wise ruler. The important decisions were not taken by the pharaoh. Whenever the pharaohs tried to seize full power for themselves, the state would start deteriorating at once. Each pharaoh was, first and foremost, appointed to the

throne by the priests. The pharaoh himself studied with the priests from very early childhood, and endeavoured to master the science of images. Only by learning its fundamentals could he hope to be appointed a pharaoh.

“The power structure prevalent at that time in Egypt can today be described as follows. At the very top were the secret priests, then the priests who looked after educational and judicial matters. Control of the state formally rested in the hands of a council of representatives of all the priestly ranks, while the pharaoh ruled according to their laws and did as he was told by them. The community leaders had a good deal of executive power — they were considered more or less independent.

“In fact, things were pretty much the same as they are today. Many nation-states have a president and government as their executive authority. Parliament, like the priests of old, makes the laws. The only difference is that today there is no provision in any country for the president to be instructed as the pharaoh was instructed by the priests. The same applies to those who hold public office today on councils, Dumas² or congresses. It does not really matter by what term today’s legislator-priests are called; what matters is that they too have nowhere to turn to learn how to become lawmakers before they actually take on the job. How can our lawmakers learn wisdom when the science of imagery is kept secret? That is why we have chaos in many nation-states.”

“What are you trying to say, Anastasia? If we modelled our governments on the power structure that was in place in ancient Egypt, everything would have turned out for the better?”

“The actual power structure can bring about very little in the way of change. It is much more important what stands behind it. And when it comes to the Egyptian power structure,

²*Duma* — the name of the Russian parliament.

Egypt was not ruled by it, nor by the pharaohs, nor even by the priests.”

“Then by whom?”

“In ancient Egypt everything was ruled by images. Both the priests and the pharaoh subjected themselves to them. From the ancient science of imagery a secret council composed of just a few priests took the image of the pharaoh as a just ruler. They took the image just as it appeared at that time. This secret council spent a good deal of time discussing the proper conduct for a pharaoh, his outward trappings and lifestyle. Then they taught one of the selected priests how to exemplify this image.

“They tried first to select a candidate from the ranks of royalty. But if no one of royal blood was found suitable in appearance or character, they could choose any priest and pass him off as pharaoh. The priest selected as pharaoh was always obliged to conform to the conceived image, especially during public appearances. And then each member of the public felt the invisible image hanging over him and acted according to his understanding of it. When people believe in an image and the majority find it to their liking, each one is only too happy to follow it, and the state has no need to set up a huge official surveillance apparatus. Such a state can only grow stronger and flourish.”

“But if that were so, then no state today could get by without images. And yet they do get by, they are alive and flourishing. Just look at America, or Germany. And our own Soviet Union, before *perestroika*,³ was a tremendous state.”

“Without an image, Vladimir, no state can get by even today. Today it is only the state in which the governing image is

³*perestroika* — the policy of restructuring the economic and political system of the Soviet Union, which led to the collapse of the Communist Party's hold on power and to the break-up of the USSR.

the most acceptable to the majority of people that flourishes, compared to other states.”

“Then who is creating this image today? After all, there are no priests around any more — at least not the kind ancient Egypt had.”

“There are still such priests today, only they are called by another name, and have within them less and less of the science of imagery. Today’s priests are not able to make impartial and long-term calculations. Not able to set a goal and create a worthy image capable of drawing the whole country to that goal.”

“What are you talking about, Anastasia — what kind of priests, or images, were there in our Soviet Union? Everything back then was controlled by the Bolsheviks.⁴ First Lenin, then Stalin was in charge. Then came other First Secretaries.⁵ They had the Politburo.⁶ Religion was pretty much eliminated back then, they even destroyed the temples — and here you go carrying on about priests!”

“Vladimir, take a closer look. What was there before the state which came to be known as the Soviet Union emerged?”

“What d’you mean, what was there? Everybody knows. It was the tsarist régime. Then along came the revolution, and we went down the path of socialism, at the same time trying to build communism.”⁷

“But before the revolution actually took place, the image of a new and just system of governance with a bright outlook

⁴*Bolsheviks* — the majority party at the time of the Russian Revolution in 1917. The term is derived from the Russian word signifying ‘majority’.

⁵*First Secretaries* — Under the Soviet system, the First Secretary of the Communist Party was the *de facto* leader of the country.

⁶*Politburo* (a term derived from the Russian words signifying ‘political bureau’) — the chief policy-making committee of the Communist Party, responsible to the First Secretary.

was already circulating among the people, and the old system was being exposed. After all, initially it was the image of a new state that was being formed, along with the image of a new ruler who would be most benevolent to everyone. And the image of everyone leading a happy life. It was images such as these that led people on and motivated them to fight against those who were still loyal to the old images. And both the revolution and the civil war⁸ which followed it — a war which involved multitudes of people — were in fact a conflict between two competing images.”

“Of course there might well be something in what you say,” I admitted. “Only Lenin and Stalin weren’t images. Everybody knows they were merely human beings who happened to be leaders of their country.”

“You bring up these names, thinking that behind them stood simply people in the flesh. In fact... Perhaps if you think about it, you will see that it was very far from being that way, Vladimir.”

“How could it not be that way? I’m telling you: everybody knows that Stalin was a Man.”

“Then tell me, Vladimir, what sort of Man was Stalin?”

“What sort? The sort... Well, in the beginning, everybody thought him to be kind and just. Someone who loved children. There were photos and portraits of him holding a little girl in his arms. Thousands of soldiers went into battle crying ‘For the Motherland! For Stalin!’ Everyone wept when he

⁷*socialism/communism* — In official Communist Party pronouncements, the political status quo in the Soviet Union was designated ‘socialism’, while the country was in the process of ‘building communism’ — i.e., working toward the goal of becoming a truly communist state.

⁸civil war (*grazhdanskaya voina*) — In Russia this lasted from the 1917 Revolution up to 1922, when the Bolsheviks (or ‘Reds’) finally consolidated their power, defeating the ‘White’ forces loyal to the Tsar.

died. My mother used to tell me that when he died practically the whole country wept. And they placed him in the Mausoleum⁹ next to Lenin.”

“So, that means that a great many people loved him and triumphed in deadly conflicts with their enemies in his name? They dedicated poems to him, but what do they say about him today?”

“Today they say he was a bloodthirsty tyrant and a murderer. He let multitudes of people rot in prisons. They unceremoniously removed his body from the Mausoleum and buried it in the ground, and destroyed all the monuments to him, along with the books he once wrote...”

“Now do you understand? You see before you two different images. Two images, but the same Man.”

“The same.”

“So what kind of Man was he — can you tell me now?”

“I guess I can’t... Can you tell me anything yourself?”

“Stalin as a Man corresponded to neither of these two images — before or after — and therein lay the tragedy for the nation. There has always been tragedy in states where a significant discrepancy has come up between the ruler and his image. That is where all national troubles have begun. And in these times of trouble people have fought for the images with the gun. It is only recently that people were still attracted to the image of communism, but the image of communism has deteriorated, and now what are you and everybody else in the nation attracted to?”

“Now we are building... well, capitalism, maybe, or maybe something else, but just so that we can live the way they do in the developed countries — like America, or Germany, for

⁹*Mausoleum* — a large marble structure on Red Square just outside the walls of the Kremlin, where visitors can still see the embalmed body of Lenin.

instance. Anyway, so that we can have democracy, like they have over there, and an abundance of everything.”

“Now you are identifying the image of your country and a just ruler with the image of those other countries you name.”

“Okay, let’s say it’s the image of those countries.”

“But is that not admitting that the knowledge of the priests in your own country has completely diminished? There is no knowledge left? They have no more power to create a worthy image capable of leading people in its path? As a rule, any state in such a situation has been a dying state, as thousands of years of history attest.”

“But what’s wrong with our starting to live the way they do, say, in America, or Germany?”

“Take a closer look at how many problems there are in the countries you name. Ask yourself why they need such huge police forces and great numbers of hospitals. And why are there more and more suicides there? And where do people from the rich big cities go for their holidays? And they constantly require increasingly greater numbers of officials to watch over the public. All this means that their images are deteriorating, too.”

“And what is the result — that we are attracted to their deteriorating images?”

“Yes, the result is that we are thereby prolonging their life, but not by much. When they destroyed the leading images in your country, they did not create any new image in its place. And everyone was allured by an image that was prevalent in a foreign country. If they all keep bowing down to it, then your country will cease to exist — it is a country which is losing its own image.”

“But who is able to create such an image today? We don’t have any Egyptian-style priests.”

“There are people even today who are wholly involved in creating images and determining the ability of images to

attract a nation's people, and their calculations are frequently quite accurate."

"For some reason I've never heard of such people. Or is it all top secret?"

"You, like a great many people, come into contact with what they do on a daily basis."

"Oh, where? When?"

"Vladimir, remember, when the time comes to elect new deputies to the Duma,¹⁰ or to select a single ruler out of several candidates — he's called a *president* today — how their image is presented to the people. And those images are put together by people who have chosen image-making as their profession. Each candidate has several such people working for him. And the winner is the one whose image is the most favourable to the majority of voters."

"What d'you mean, 'image'? These are all real live people. They get up on the hustings in front of voters and even go on TV themselves."

"Of course, they appear themselves, only they always get advised as to where they should go, how they should behave, what they should say, so as to fit the image most favourable to the people. And, more often than not, the candidates heed this advice. In addition, a variety of advertisements are made up for them, attempting to associate their image with a better life for all."

"Yes, they do advertise. All the same, I don't really know what's more important — the Man himself who wants to become a deputy or president, or the image you keep talking about."

"Of course the Man is always more important, but when you vote for him, after all, you probably have not had the

¹⁰ *deputies* — Members of the *Duma*, or Russian parliament, are known as 'deputies' (*deputaty*).

opportunity to meet with him, you do not know in detail what he is actually like — you are voting for the image which has been served up to you.”

“But each candidate still has a platform, and people vote for the platform.”

“How often are those platforms carried out once the candidate is elected?”

“Well, not all pre-election platforms are carried out by any means, and maybe none of them ever gets fully carried out, because other people with their platforms of their own get in the way.”

“So each time it turns out that a multitude of images is created, but there is no complete unity among them. There is no single image capable of attracting everyone and leading them to a goal. If there is no image, then there is no inspiration, and no clear path. Life becomes *ad hoc* and chaotic.”

“Then who is capable of creating such an image? Priests of wisdom, we’ve seen — there simply aren’t any today. And as for the science of imagery which your forefather taught the priests of old, well, I’m learning about that for the first time from you.”

“There is not much longer to wait — the country *shall* have a strong image. It will end all wars, and people’s dreams in splendid clarity will start coming into birth — first in your country, and then all over the Earth.”

CHAPTER TWENTY



Our genetic code

Anastasia spoke with absorbed interest. Sometimes joyfully, sometimes dejectedly, she spoke about what happened on the Earth at one time. Some things were believable, others not so much. And when I got home I wanted to find out about people's ability to hold in their memory information about events going back not just to their own birth but to the birth of their ancestors, and even further back, to the creation of the first Man. Scientists and specialists on this subject got together on a number of occasions, and here I should like to offer a few pertinent excerpts from the round tables we had.

"...To many people it will seem strange to claim that everyday objects can contain information about a Man. But if you show an audiocassette to someone who's never seen a tape recorder or even heard about its possibilities, and tell him that your voice, your speech, is recorded on the tape and he can listen to it whenever he likes — a year or even ten years later, that person will not believe you. He'll think you're some kind of trickster. Yet for us the fact of recording and reproduction of sound is a common occurrence. And by the same token something that seems quite extraordinary to us might be extremely simple and natural to someone else."

"If we start from the fact that Man has still not invented anything more substantial or perfect than what has been invented by Nature, then Anastasia's ray, which helps her

see things at a distance, can be confirmed by the existence of the radiotelephone and television. Further, I would say that those phenomena of Nature which she uses sound like a more perfect application than what we have invented artificially, like our modern television and radiotelephone."

"One person's memory may have a hard time keeping track of things that occurred even half a year ago. Another person may remember events that happened in his childhood and be able to talk about them. But I don't see that as coming anywhere close to the limits of the human memory's possibilities."

"I don't think many scientists will deny that Man's genetic code has been storing primordial information for millions of years. It is also possible to collect supplementary, so-called 'incidental' information over one's lifetime and pass it on to succeeding generations. Expressions we are all familiar with — like "it's inherited" or "transmitted by inheritance" — bear witness to this. Anastasia's abilities to reproduce scenes that happened to mankind millions or billions of years ago are theoretically possible and explainable. Not only that, but they can be at their most accurate the further they are removed from our reality. I believe Anastasia's memory is not that different from many other people's. Or to put it more accurately, the information recorded in her genetic code is no greater than for any other individual. The only difference is that she has the ability to 'retrieve' and reproduce it fully, while we can do so only in part."

These and other things the specialists said have convinced me that Anastasia is able to tell the truth about the past. I was especially struck by the example of the tape recorder.

But there was one phenomenon which the scientists invited to the round table couldn't explain — namely, how it is that Anastasia can get information not only about earthly civilisations but also about those on other worlds and in other galaxies. Besides, she can not only talk about them, but it seems she can also influence them. I shall try to set forth everything in order. Perhaps someone will be able to explain these abilities of hers, at least theoretically, and to figure out whether or not they are inherent in other people as well. Anastasia herself tried to explain how she happens to know about them, only her explanations were difficult to understand.

In any case, I shall try to describe the following situation in its proper order.

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE



Where do we go in sleep?

On several occasions Anastasia's description of earthly civilisations contained references to the existence of life on other planets and in other galaxies of the Universe. And I got so interested in this that while I was listening to her tale about mankind's past, I could only think about how life evolved out there, on other planets.

Anastasia, no doubt, saw my interest in her story waning, and stopped talking. I was quiet, too, thinking about how I could get her to tell in more specific detail about life in extraterrestrial civilisations. I could have asked her directly, of course, but she tends to get somehow distracted whenever she can't explain why she knows something others don't. And it seems to me that her desire not to stand out from other people on account of her abilities discourages her from talking about everything. I've begun noticing, for example, that she's rather shy about her inability to explain how certain phenomena work. This is in fact what happened when I asked her directly:

"Tell me, Anastasia, are you able to teleport yourself in space? I mean: moving your body from one place to another?"

"Why are you asking me about that, Vladimir?"

"First tell me specifically: yes or no?"

"Vladimir, everybody has that kind of ability. But I am not sure I can explain to you just how natural this process is. You will only withdraw yourself from me again, saying I'm a witch. You will feel uncomfortable with me."

"So that means you can?"

"I can," she answered hesitantly, her head bowed.

"Then give me a demonstration. Show me how it happens."

"Perhaps I should try to explain first..."

"No, Anastasia, first show me. It's always more interesting to watch something than to listen. And then you can explain."

Anastasia had an estranged look about her as she rose to her feet. She closed her eyes, tensed up a little, and then disappeared before my eyes. Dumbstruck, I looked all around. I even felt with my hands the spot where she had just been standing, but all that was there was some trampled grass, while Anastasia was nowhere to be seen. Then I caught sight of her standing on the far side of the lake. I looked at her, speechless. Then she called out:

"Shall I swim to you? Or shall I once more..."

"Once more!" I replied and, taking care not to blink in case I missed anything, I began watching the figure of Anastasia standing on the other side of the small lake. All at once she vanished. Simply dissolved into thin air. Not even a trace of smoke was left at the place where I had just seen her. I continued to stand there unblinkingly.

"I am here, Vladimir." Anastasia's voice sounded right beside me. Once again she was standing no more than a metre away. I found myself stepping back a little, then I sat down on the ground, trying not to show any sense of surprise or excitement. For some reason the thought came that suddenly she might take it into her head to dissolve *my* body and then not assemble it afterward.

Anastasia spoke first. "Only the owner of a body can fully dissolve it or split it into atoms. This is an ability available only to Man, Vladimir."

I realised she was going to first try to prove to me that she was Man, and so as not to have her waste any time, I said:

"I realise that it's only given to Man. But surely not to every Man."

"Not to everyone. One must —"

"I know what you're going to say: *One must have pure thoughts.*"

"Yes. Pure thoughts, and besides that, the ability to think quickly and in images, to visualise in specific detail one's self, one's body and desire, a strong will, and faith in one's self..."

"Don't explain, Anastasia. Don't waste your time trying. Tell me rather, can you move your body to any place at all?"

"*Any place*, yes, though I rarely do that. *Any place* can be very dangerous... Besides, there is no need to. Why move one's body? There are other ways..."

"Why dangerous?"

"It is essential to get an accurate picture of the place you wish to move your body to."

"And if you don't get an accurate picture, what can happen?"

"Your body might be lost."

"How?"

"For example, suppose you wanted to transport your body to the floor of the ocean, and the water pressure crushes it. Or you suffocate. Or you might wind up on a city street in front of an oncoming car, and the car hits your body and injures it."

"And can Man also transport his body to another planet?"

"Distance plays absolutely no role here. It will move itself to whatever place your thought dictates. After all, your thought goes to the destination first. It is also what assembles and puts together again the body that was earlier dissolved in space."

"If I wanted to dissolve my body, what should I be thinking about?"

"You have to visualise all of its matter, right down to the tiniest atom, right to the nucleus, and see how the particles

create an outwardly chaotic movement in the nucleus, and then mentally dissolve them in space. Then assemble them in their former sequence, in their outwardly chaotic movement in the nucleus, reproducing it accurately. It is all very simple. Just the way children play with blocks.”

“But mightn’t it turn out that on another planet there wouldn’t be a suitable atmosphere to breathe?”

“That is what I am saying — it is dangerous to transport one’s body without thinking it through carefully. There are a lot of things to take into account ahead of time.”

“So that means it won’t work out to go to another planet?”

“It can. It is possible to take some of the surrounding atmosphere along, too, and the body will live in that for a time. But generally it is better not to transport one’s body without a particular need for it. In most cases it is sufficient to watch from a distance with one’s ray, or transport only one’s second, non-material self.”

“Incredible! It’s hard to believe that every Man was once capable of doing something like that!”

“Why do you say *once*? One’s second human self is capable even now of moving about freely, and it does move. Only people do not assign it any specific tasks. They do not set it any goal.”

“Who... — what kind of people does this happen with?”

“Right now it basically happens when a person sleeps. It is possible to do the same when one is awake, but on account of the general bustle as well as all sorts of dogmas and various contrived problems, people are losing more and more the ability to control their own selves. They are losing the capacity for imaginative thinking.”¹

¹*imaginative thinking* (Russian: *obraznoe myshlenie*) — the Russian term refers to the specific ability to visualise in one’s mind a vivid and detailed image, not just a fantasy.

"Maybe because it's not that interesting to travel without one's body?"

"Why would you think that? In terms of what you feel, the final result can often be the same."

"Well, if the result were the same, people wouldn't go dragging their bodies around, travelling to different countries. Right now the tourist business is pretty profitable in our world. And there's something I don't quite understand about that mysterious second self of Man's. If one's body hasn't been somewhere, that means the Man wasn't there either. It's just as simple and clear as that."

"Do not try to jump to hasty conclusions, Vladimir. I shall now present you with three different scenarios. And you try to tell me in which case this hypothetical person actually took a trip."

"Okay, go ahead."

"Here is the first... Imagine yourself or some other person sound asleep. He is placed on a stretcher. While still asleep, he is put on an aeroplane and taken to another country — from Moscow to Jerusalem, for example. Still sleeping, he is driven up and down the main street, taken into the main temple, and still asleep, brought back the same way and put back where he started. What do you think — was the traveller from Moscow really in Jerusalem?"

"Tell me the other two scenarios first."

"Fine. The second traveller went to Jerusalem all on his own, walked along the main street, spent a little time in the temple and then went home."

"And the third?"

"He left his body behind. But he had the ability to visualise everything at a distance. He walked around the city as though in a dream. He visited the temple, dropped in somewhere else, and then mentally returned to his previous activities... Now, who of the three was actually in Jerusalem, do you think?"

"In the fullest sense, only one of the three was there. That was the one who consciously decided to make the journey and see everything for himself."

"Let us say that is so, but in the final analysis, what did each of them get out of the visit?"

"The first traveller didn't get anything out of it. The second was able to tell about everything he saw. As for the third... The third person would probably also be able to talk about it, only he might make mistakes, since he saw everything in a dream, and a dream can be quite different from reality."

"But the dream as a phenomenon is also a reality."

"Well, yes, the dream exists as a phenomenon. Maybe it's a reality too, but what are you getting at?"

"At the fact, which you will probably not deny, that Man is always able to connect or make contact between two existing realities."

"I know what you've been driving at here. You want to say that it's possible to control a dream and direct it where you want."

"Yes."

"But what exactly helps that come about?"

"It comes about with the help of the energy of thought, and its ability to free any reality for penetration into images."

"And what then, does it register an impression of everything that goes on in some other country, like a TV camera?"

"Excellent! The TV camera can serve as a primitive confirmation. So, Vladimir, you have reached the conclusion that it is not always necessary to transport material bodies to feel what is happening in a faraway land?"

"Perhaps not always. But why did you start telling me about this? Are you trying to prove something?"

"I realised that when you began talking about other worlds that you would demand or ask that I show them to you. I want to carry out your request without putting your body at risk."

"You guessed everything right, Anastasia. I really was going to ask you about that. So, there's life on other planets after all? Gosh, it'd be jolly interesting to see them!"

"Which planet would you like to visit?"

"What — are there a lot of them — inhabited, I mean?"

"There are a great many, though none more interesting than the Earth."

"But still, what kind of life is there on the others? And how did it originate?"

"When the Earth appeared as a Divine co-creation, many of the elements of the Universe were eager to repeat this marvellous creation. They wanted to create their own on other worlds, using planets which in their opinion were suitable. They began creating them, but nobody could create life in a harmony anything like that of the Earth.

"There is in the Universe, for example, a planet where ants predominate over everything. There are a great number of ants on it. The ants devour other life-forms. When there is nothing left for them to eat, they turn to eating each other and die. And the element that created this kind of life is trying to re-create it anew, but it certainly is not turning out any better. Nobody has been able to bring all the elements together in harmony.

"There are also planets where the elements have tried, and are still trying, to create a vegetative world similar to the Earth. And they are creating it. Those planets are growing trees, grass and bushes. But each time their creations reach full maturity they die. None of the elements of the Universe has been able to guess the secret of reproduction. They are like Man today. After all, Man today has created a lot of artificial things all on its own. But not one of his creations can reproduce itself. They break down, rot away, decay and demand constant maintenance. The majority of people on the Earth have been turned into slaves of their own creations. Only the

creations of God are capable of reproducing themselves and living in harmony in all their great diversity.”

“But are there planets in the Universe, Anastasia, where beings are involved in technology the way Man is?”

“Yes, there are, Vladimir. There is a planet that has six times the Earth’s volume and has beings outwardly similar to Man. Their technology is artificial, and has been perfected far beyond the technology of our Earth. Life on this planet was created by an element of the Universe which believes itself to be on a par with God, and is striving for predominance over God’s creations.”

“Tell me, are they the ones who have come to the Earth in their space ships — the ‘flying saucers’ we see?”

“Yes. They have tried to make contact with Earth people on a number of occasions. But for the Earth their contacts —”

“No, wait. Is there any way you can take me, or my second self, to that planet for a visit?”

“Yes, I can.”

“Then take me there.”

After that Anastasia asked me to lie down on the ground and relax. Telling me to spread out my arms to the sides, she placed one of her hands in mine and in a short time I began to doze off into something similar to sleep. I say *something similar*, as this dozing off was most unusual. First my body felt more and more relaxed. I couldn’t feel my body any more, though I could see and hear everything around me perfectly well — the singing of the birds, the rustling of the leaves. Then I closed my eyes and sank into a sleep, or ‘divided myself’ (as Anastasia would put it). But to this day I am not in a position to say what happened to me next or how. If it is to be assumed that with Anastasia’s help I fell asleep and had a dream, the fulness of my sensations and the clarity of my awareness of everything I saw can in no way be compared with any human dream.

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO



Other worlds

I saw another world, another planet. I was able to remember everything that went on there in clear detail, yet to this day I still have the lingering feeling in my consciousness that beholding anything like that is an impossibility. Think about it — my mind and consciousness tell me it's impossible, and yet they — the visions, the pictures — remain with me to this day. And now I shall try and describe them to you.

I stood on ground similar to what we have on the Earth. There was absolutely no vegetation around me. I say *stood*. But whether I can actually say that it's hard to tell. I didn't have any legs or arms, I didn't even have a body, and yet at the same time it seemed I could feel my steps, I could feel the rocky, uneven surface through the soles of my feet.

All around, as far as the eye could see, above the soil rose metallic machines, both egg-shaped ones and square, or cube-like machines. I use the word *machines* because the one closest to me gave off a kind of soft whirring sound.

From each of these machines a plethora of hoses of different diameters went down into the ground. Some of these hoses were slightly quivering, as though something was being sucked up through them from the ground, while others were in a motionless state. No living beings were in sight.

All at once I saw a panel on the side of one of these strange devices open, and out floated — rather slowly — a kind of disc, similar in shape to a discus thrown by athletes, only much larger, about forty-five metres in diameter. It hovered in the air, and then started to rotate. After a brief descent

it took off and flew completely noiselessly overhead. Other devices a little further away did the same, and several more discs flew after the first one, one after the other, right over my head. And then once again there was just still and empty space, except for the whirring and crackling of the strange devices. The whole picture aroused my interest, but even more, its indescribable lifelessness was frightening.

"Do not be afraid of anything, Vladimir." All at once I caught the sound of Anastasia's voice, which comforted me no end.

"Where are you, Anastasia?" I enquired.

"Right here beside you. We are invisible, Vladimir. Present here are our feelings, sensations, mind and all our other invisible forms of energy. We are here without our material bodies. Nobody can do anything to us. The only thing we need be wary of is ourselves, and the consequences of our own sensations."

"What kind of consequences might there be?"

"Psychological consequences. Like temporarily going out of one's mind."

"Going out of one's mind?"

"Yes, but only temporarily. For a month or two, it can happen: the vision of other planets may stir up Man's mind and consciousness. But you need not be afraid, you are not threatened by this. You will pull through. And there is nothing to be afraid of — believe me, Vladimir, you are indeed here, but not as far as they are concerned. At the moment we are invisible and can go and see whatever we wish to."

"I'm not afraid. Only you'd better tell me, Anastasia, what are those whirring machines all around us? What are they for?"

"Each of those egg-shaped machines is a factory. They are the ones that produce the 'flying saucers' that are of such interest to you."

"And who maintains, or controls these factories?"

"No one. They are programmed in advance to make a particular product. Through those pipes going down into the ground they suck up the raw material they need in the required amounts. The forging and pressing, and then the assembly, all take place in small compartments inside, and then the fully formed product comes out. This factory is much more efficient than any on the Earth. There is practically no waste from this process. There is no need to transport raw material from distant places. There is no need to ship individual component parts to the assembly point. The whole manufacturing process is concentrated in one place."

"Amazing! We should have a gizmo like that! And who controls the new 'flying saucers'? I noticed they were all flying in the same direction."

"Nobody controls them, they fly all by themselves to a storage depot."

"Incredible! Just like a living being!"

"But this by itself represents nothing incredible, even in terms of earthly technology. After all, the Earth also has pilotless planes and rockets."

"Just the same, they are controlled by people on the Earth."

"But the Earth for a long time has also had rockets which are preprogrammed for a specific target. All one has to do is push the launch button and the rocket fires itself and heads for a predetermined target."

"Maybe so. And really, what was there here that was so surprising?"

"If you really think about it, there is not that much to be surprised at. Only, by comparison with the technology we have on the Earth, this is far more advanced. These factories, Vladimir, are multifunctional. They can manufacture a great deal, from food products to powerful weapons."

"And what are their food products made of? Nothing grows here, after all."

"Everything comes from deep in the ground. The machines take in all the juices they need through the pipes and press them into granules. These granules will contain all the substances needed to sustain bodily life."

"What does this gizmo itself feed on? Who supplies it with electrical power? I don't see any wires."

"It produces the energy it needs all on its own, using everything from the environment."

"Well, just look how smart it is! Smarter than Man."

"It is by no means smarter than Man, Vladimir. It is simply a machine. It is subject to its assigned programme, and is very easy to reprogram. Would you like me to show you how it is done?"

"Go ahead."

"Let us move a little closer to it."

We stood at about a metre's distance from the huge device, which was the size of a nine-storey building. The crackling sound became more distinct. An army of flexible tentacle-like pipes reached into the ground, shaking. The surface of the device's covering wasn't entirely smooth. I caught sight of a circular area approximately a metre in diameter, densely covered with small wires sticking out like hairs. They were quivering, each one individually.

"This is the antenna for the scanning apparatus. It picks up the brain's energy impulses which it uses to compile a programme capable of carrying out an assigned task. If your brain can visualise a particular object, the machine should be able to manufacture it."

"Any object?"

"Any that you can picture in detail. As though constructing it with your thoughts."

"And any kind of car?"

"Of course."

"And can I try it right now?"

"Yes. Move closer to the receiver and start by mentally instructing its antenna to turn all its receptor wires toward you. Directly that happens, begin picturing what you desire."

I stood close to the wiry antenna. Burning with curiosity, I mentally desired, as Anastasia had said, to have all its wires pay heed to me. At first they turned in my direction, then all of them, with a slight trembling, directed their tips to my invisible head and stayed still.

Now I had to visualise a particular object. For some reason I began picturing a Model 7 Zhiguli¹ — the car I had in Novosibirsk. I tried picturing everything in as much detail as I could — the window-glass and the bonnet, the bumper, the colour and even the licence plate. I took a long time with the visualisation. When I got tired of it, I moved away from the antenna. The huge machine started whirring more briskly."

"We must wait," explained Anastasia. "Now it is disassembling the unfinished product it was working on and compiling a programme for carrying out your design."

"Will we have long to wait?"

"I do not think so."

We went over to look at some of the other machines. Presently, as I was examining the multicoloured rocks underfoot, I heard Anastasia's voice announcing:

"I think the manufacture of the object you pictured in your mind is complete. Let us take a look and see how it coped with the task."

¹*Zhiguli* — a car first produced in the late 1960s at the Volga Automobile Factory at Toliatti, on the Volga River, by an agreement with the Italian Fiat corporation. The cars outwardly resemble a Fiat of about the same era, and are still being produced to this date.

We went back to the first machine and began waiting. After a little while its panel opened and out came a Zhiguli. It rolled down a smooth ramp to the ground. But this freak standing in front of me had nothing on the beautiful automobile I knew back on the Earth.

First, it had only one door — one on the driver's side. In place of the back seats there were only some coils of wire and pieces of rubber. I walked — or rather moved — around the object. It was definitely not something you could call a motor car.

Two wheels were missing from the passenger side. Nor was there any bumper or licence plate at the front. The bonnet did not look as though it would open — it seemed to be made of a single piece with the chassis. In sum, this unique factory had produced not a car, but some kind of narwhal of indeterminate function.

And I said:

“Gawd! Is that the best this alien factory can come up with? If this had happened on Earth, they'd have sacked all the designers and engineers!”

Anastasia burst out laughing in response, and I heard her voice say:

“Of course they might have been let go. But in this case the chief designer is you, Vladimir, and what you see is the product of your designing.”

“I wanted a standard modern automobile, but what has this machine spit out?”

“Wanting is not enough. You have to picture everything down to the minutest detail. You did not even include any passenger doors in your visualisation. You only thought of the one door for yourself. And you pictured wheels only on your side of the car — you neglected to put in wheels on the other side. And I think you completely forgot about the motor.”

“Completely forgot.”

"Which means there is no motor in your design. So why blame the manufacturer when you yourself gave it an incomplete programme to work with?"

All at once I saw, or sensed, the approach of three flying machines heading in our direction. *Gotta get outa here* — the thought flashed across my mind, but then I heard Anastasia's calming voice:

"They will not notice us or sense us in any way, Vladimir. They have received word about a disruption in the work of one of their factories, and now they are probably coming to investigate. We shall have the opportunity to quietly observe some of the living inhabitants of this planet."

Out of the three small flying machines stepped five aliens. They were very similar in appearance to earthlings. Not just similar, but everything about them suggested earthlings. They were well built. No slouching shoulders — their athletic bodies held their handsome heads straight and proud. And they even had hair on their heads and eyebrows on their faces, and one of them sported a neatly trimmed moustache. They were dressed in thin multicoloured one-piece outfits that tightly covered their whole body.

The aliens walked over to the car produced by their factory, or, more accurately, to the semblance of an earthly car. They stood silently beside it, observing, without emotion. *They are no doubt having one hell of a time trying to figure this one out*, I thought.

The alien who appeared to be the youngest, with light-brown hair, detached himself from the others. He went up to the door of the car and tried to open it, but the door refused to budge. The lock was probably jammed. The rest of his actions seemed very earthly, which gave me no small comfort. The brown-haired alien banged his hand on the door in the area of the lock, then tried pulling it harder this time, and the door opened. He sat down in the driver's seat, put his

hands on the steering-wheel and began to carefully examine the dashboard instruments.

Good lad, I thought. *A clever fellow*. And in confirmation of my appraisal I heard Anastasia say:

"This is a very top-ranked scientist, by their standards, Vladimir. His thought works quickly and logically in a technical orientation. Besides, he is studying how beings live on several other planets, including the Earth. He even has an Earth-like name — Arkaan."

"But why does his face show no surprise at finding that one of their factories made something anomalous?"

"The inhabitants of this planet have almost no feelings or emotions. Their minds work evenly and logically, with no giving in to emotional outbursts or departures from set goals."

The young alien climbed out of the car, uttering sounds reminiscent of Morse code. An older alien stepped forward and stood by the wiry antenna where I had positioned myself earlier. Then they all climbed back into their flying machines and took off.

The factory which had manufactured the car according to my design began whirring again. Its tentacle pipes began pulling themselves up from the ground and redirecting themselves toward a nearby automated factory of the same type, from which tentacle pipes also extended. When all the tentacles joined together, Anastasia said:

"You see, they have reprogrammed it to self-destruct. All the components of the factory where the disruption occurred will now be remoulded by the other factory and used in production."

And I began feeling a trifle sorry for the robot factory which had helped me create, albeit unsuccessfully, an Earth-car. But there was absolutely nothing I could do about it.

"Vladimir, would you like to take a look at the everyday life of the planet's inhabitants?" Anastasia offered.

"Yes, of course."

We found ourselves overlooking one of the cities or settlements of the huge planet. Our aerial view afforded us the following picture:

As far as the eye could see, the whole populated area consisted of a great many cylindrical installations, something like our modern skyscrapers, set in a large number of circles. In the centre of each circle were low-rise structures somewhat reminiscent of trees on the Earth — even their sensor-leaves were green. And Anastasia confirmed that these artificial structures draw up from the ground all the components of substances needed for sustenance, which are then despatched through special pipes into the homes of every inhabitant of this particular world. Not only that but they maintain the requisite atmosphere for the planet.

When Anastasia suggested paying a visit to one of the apartments, I asked:

“Can we visit the flat of that brown-haired alien who sat in my car?”

“Yes,” she replied. “At this moment he will be just getting home from work.”

We found ourselves almost at the very top of one of the cylindrical skyscrapers. There were absolutely no windows in this alien apartment block. The circular walls were marked off into dull-coloured squares. Near the bottom of each square was a raisable door — the kind you might find on our modern garages. Now and then one of the doors would open and out would come a small flying machine similar to the ones we had seen near the automated factory, and fly off on its own. It turned out that there was a small garage for one of these machines located below each apartment in the high-rise.

There were no lifts or doors in the building. Each flat had its own entrance directly from the garage. And, as it turned out, every inhabitant of the planet acquired an apartment like this once he reached a certain age.

At first I didn't particularly take to the flat itself. Upon finding ourselves in the brown-haired man's flat just after he arrived home, my initial impression was one of surprise at its simplicity and apparent lack of amenities. The room, approximately thirty square metres in area, was completely barren. It wasn't just that there were no windows or partitions — there wasn't even the barest modicum of furniture. The smooth, pale walls bore not a single painting or shelf by way of decoration.

"Maybe he's just got this flat recently?" I asked Anastasia.

"Arkaan has been living here for twenty years now. His apartment has everything necessary for relaxation, entertainment and work. All the necessary components are built into the walls. You shall presently see for yourself."

Indeed, no sooner had the brown-haired alien come up from his garage below, than the ceiling and walls of the room began to glow with a soft light. Arkaan turned to face the wall next to the entrance, placed the palm of his hand on the surface and uttered a sound. A panel on the wall lit up.

Anastasia gave a running commentary on everything that was taking place in the apartment:

"Right now the computer is identifying the apartment's owner by the lines of his hand and his eye-scan. Now it is greeting him and letting him know how long he has been gone, as well as the need to check his physical condition... You see, Vladimir, Arkaan has put his other hand up to the console and is letting out a deep sigh so that the computer can check his physical condition... Now the check-up is complete, and a message has appeared on the screen telling him he needs to take a nutrient mixture. It is asking him what he intends to do over the next three hours.

"This is important for the computer to know in order to prepare an appropriate mixture. Now Arkaan is asking for a

mixture optimised to boost his mental activity for the next three hours, after which he intends to go to sleep.

"The computer is suggesting that he not engage in any strenuous mental activity over a three hour period; instead, it is recommending he take a solution calculated to sustain work activity for a period of two hours and sixteen minutes. Arkaan has agreed to the computer's recommendation."

At that point a small niche opened in the wall, from which Arkaan seized hold of a flexible pipe. Putting the end of the hose to his mouth he took a drink (or a bite to eat) from the hose and then went over to the opposite wall. The niche holding the pipe closed up, the screen panel dimmed, and the wall where the alien had just been standing once more became smooth and monochrome.

Wow! I thought, with this technology you can do away with a kitchen and all its equipment, and dishes, and furniture — especially you can do away with clean-up. And even with a wife who knows how to make a good meal. No need to go to the store. Besides, at one fell swoop the computer can check your health, prepare the food you require and make all sorts of recommendations. I wonder how much a computer would cost back on the Earth? And immediately I heard Anastasia say:

"As for expenditures, it is less expensive to equip each apartment with such a device than to load kitchens down with furniture and a whole lot of appliances for food preparation. They are much more rational than earthlings, all told. But in fact there is much more rationality on the Earth than here."

I didn't pay much attention to Anastasia's last remark. I was too absorbed in watching Arkaan's actions. He went on giving voice commands, and the following events ensued in the room.

From a section of the wall all at once an armchair began to inflate. Then beside the chair another little niche opened,

from which a small table emerged, along with some kind of semi-transparent container resembling a laboratory flask. On the opposite wall of the room a large screen lit up, about one-and-a-half to two metres in diagonal. The screen showed a beautiful woman in a sleek body-suit seated in a comfortable chair. The woman was holding a container in her hands similar to the one on the table beside Arkaan. The image of the woman on the screen was three-dimensional, and much sharper than on our TV sets. It seemed as though she were not on a screen, but sitting right there in the room.

Anastasia explained that Arkaan and the woman sitting opposite him were forming a child together.

"The inhabitants of this planet do not have sufficient strength of feeling to enter into sexual relations like people on the Earth. Outwardly their bodies are no different. But the absence of feelings does not allow them to produce offspring the way people do on the Earth. It is their own cells and hormones that are contained in the test-tubes you see. Men and women visualise what they would like their future child to look like. They mentally instil in him the information they themselves contain, and discuss his future activity. This process lasts approximately three years in Earth time. Once they determine that the process of the child's formation is complete, they join the contents of the two containers together in a special laboratory, the child is produced and raised in a special nursery school until he comes of age. Then as a mature member of the community he is offered an apartment and assigned to the personnel roster of one of the work groups."

Arkaan alternated his gaze between the woman on the screen and the liquid in the little sealed container. All at once the wall screen dimmed, but the alien remained seated in his chair, his eyes fixed on the container on the table in front of him holding a particle of his future child. Now the opposite

wall was flashing with red squares. The alien turned sideways, his hands shielding his eyes from the flashing lights, and inclined his head even closer to his container. New illuminated squares and triangles began flashing alarmingly from the ceiling.

"The wake-time allotted Arkaan by the computer has expired. Now the computer is insistently reminding him of the need for sleep," Anastasia explained.

But the alien bent his head down even closer to his flask, clasping it in his hands.

The lights on the walls and the ceiling stopped flashing. The room began filling with some kind of steam-like gas. Anastasia's voice remarked:

"Now the computer is using gas to put Arkaan to sleep."

The alien's head began slowly drooping toward the table and soon it was resting on it, his eyes closed. The armchair began emerging even further out of the wall and transforming itself into a bed. Then the bed-chair began rocking from side to side, and the body of the already sleeping alien fell back into a comfortable cradle.

Arkaan slept clasping the little container in his hands to his chest.

There is so much more to tell about the advanced technological features not only of the apartment, but on the huge planet as a whole. According to Anastasia, the community of people inhabiting it have no fear of any invasion from the outside. Not only that, but with the help of their technical achievements they are capable of destroying life on any other planet in the Universe. Any except the Earth.

"Why?" I asked. "Does that mean our rockets and weapons are capable of repelling an attack?" And Anastasia replied:

"Earth rockets pose no threat to them, Vladimir. The civilisation on this planet has long been acquainted with all the

derivatives of explosion. They also are familiar with implosion.”

“What does that mean, *implosion*?”

“Scientists on the Earth know that when two or more substances which have come together in an instantaneous reaction expand, an explosion occurs. But there is a different reaction from contact between two substances. Take a gaseous substance, about a cubic kilometre or more in size, capable of instantaneously compressing itself to the size of a speck, thereby becoming a super-hard material. Imagine a grenade or a rocket exploding in such a cloud, but another force simultaneously acting against the explosion — an implosion — will take place at the same time. And all you will hear then is a clapping sound. And everything that was in that cloud will be transformed into a stone the size of a speck. All the rockets on Earth will not overcome the pall of gaseous clouds.

“In the history of the Earth there have been two comings, or invasions, on their part. Now they are preparing for a third. They think a favourable moment for that is once more approaching.”

“That means nothing can stop them, if there are no weapons on Earth stronger than theirs.”

“Man does have a weapon. It is known as *Man's thought*. Even I alone could turn about half of their weapons into dust and scatter them through the Universe. And if I could find some helpers, then together we would be able to liquidate all their weapons. The only thing is, the majority of people on the Earth and almost all the governments on the Earth would consider their invasion a blessing.”

“But how could it happen that everyone took an invasion, an attack, for a blessing?”

“You will see in a moment. Here, take a look at the centre which is preparing an invasion force to take over the continents of the Earth.”

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE



The invasion centre

Of course I was eager to see their interplanetary super-technology that was capable of conquering a whole planet. But what my eyes actually saw... I think our Russian, American and other military strategists have absolutely no idea of the kind of weapons that could so easily be used to take over the territories they are supposedly protecting.

And you, dear readers, before you read on, try to imagine how an alien centre preparing for an invasion of the Earth might be equipped. And then look and see what it looks like in reality. I shall now attempt to describe its outward appearance.

A huge square room. Along each of the four walls there is a life-size replica of the interiors of our own native parliaments on the Earth. Along one wall is the State Duma,¹ along with the office of our President in the Kremlin. On the opposite wall I could see the interiors of the American Congress and the office of the American president in the White House. Along the other two walls were the offices of various State political institutions — in some of the Asian countries, judging by their appearance.

In the parliamentary seats were sitting our earthling deputies,² congressmen and presidents. First of all I began examining our own Russian deputies. They were an exact copy of

¹*Duma* — the Russian Parliament (derived from the Russian word meaning 'to think').

²*deputies* — members of the *Duma* are known as *deputaty* (deputies).

the familiar faces I had seen on TV. Only here they were sitting motionless, like mummies. It is difficult to say what they were made of. Maybe they were dolls, holograms or robots, or maybe even something else.

In the middle of the huge hall was a raised platform, on which were sitting approximately fifty aliens. They were dressed not in their usual bodysuits, but in our earthly clothing, and were listening to a speaker standing in front of them. Probably their chief instructor or some other official.

Anastasia explained that we were observing one of the landing parties, currently engaged in a routine class session on preparing for interaction with earthly governments. They have been studying the most common Earth languages and the way people behave in various situations. They are paying special attention to the preparation for contact with governments and legislative bodies, through which they hope to influence the whole population of the Earth.

They have mastered conversational speech without too much difficulty, but in the absence of certain feelings capable of provoking outward emotions, they are finding it rather hard to mimic Earth people's gestures. And with their rationalistic way of thinking they cannot see any logic in earthly governmental systems. Despite their drawing upon the best minds and the most modern technology of their civilisation, they have still been unable to guess, for example, the secret of why, in spite of the computer technology already available on the Earth and the multitude of special scientific institutions, our national legislative bodies are still not provided with information about the consequences of the decisions they take. They are convinced that were there a specific analysis centre — a 'think tank', in other words — for which everything requisite is already available on the Earth, it would be possible to visualise almost perfectly the social consequences of all parliamentary decisions. Instead, every legislator, every

member of an earthly government, is obliged to make decisions independently. Not having sufficient information at their fingertips, each member of a government is obliged to fulfil the function of a powerful analysis centre and calculate the consequences not only of his own actions but also those of his colleagues, enemies and friends.

Another very mysterious question which the aliens have not been able to guess the answer to is why earthlings do not define any goal to be attained. They aspire to something, but to what — that remains a deep secret. Nevertheless, on the basis of the current requirements of earthly societies the aliens have prepared a plan to invade Earth's continents. They will begin by making proposals to earthlings through the governments of various countries. And their proposals will be accepted with great enthusiasm.

When I asked Anastasia why she was so confident in governmental acceptance of the proposals, she replied as follows:

"This is what their analysis centre has determined. The conclusions of the centre are correct. Given the level of conscious awareness of most earthlings today, they will take the aliens' proposal as a supreme manifestation of the humanity of the Mind of the Universe."

"And what kind of proposals are they?"

"They are monstrous, Vladimir. It is difficult for me even to talk about them."

"Tell me at least the main points. It would be interesting, after all, to know just what these monstrous proposals are that would be enthusiastically welcomed on the Earth — the Earth I live on, and you too."

"The aliens first plan to land a small party, three of their flying machines, on Russian territory. They will tell the military personnel which surround them of their desire to meet with government circles to talk about mutual co-operation. They will present themselves to the soldiers as representatives of

the Supreme Mind of the Universe and give them a demonstration of their superior technology.

“After military, scientific and government circles have held internal consultations, approximately fourteen days later the aliens will be invited to concretise their proposals, but first they will have to undergo a medical examination to make sure it is safe to communicate with them.

“The aliens will agree to the medical examination and then put their proposals in writing, as well as on video. The text will be laid out in a form very similar to our modern official documents, and will be characterised by extreme simplicity.

“The text will read something like this:

We the representatives of an extraterrestrial civilisation, having achieved the ultimate level of technological development by comparison with other intelligent inhabitants of the Universe, do hereby consider Earth people our brothers in reason.

We are prepared to share our knowledge with societies on the Earth in various branches of science and social structure and offer them our technology.

We ask you to consider our proposals and select the ones most suitable for improving the life of every member of your society.

“Then will follow a whole series of concrete proposals, the substance of which amounts to this:

“The visitors offer to share their technology in providing each citizen of the country with nutrient mixture and rapid construction of housing for everyone who has reached the age of maturity. This is the same kind of housing you have already seen, Vladimir, only with not quite so many functions. As an example, they will introduce their mini-factories into the country. They will integrate their alien factories with existing Earth factories, but in five years all Earth technologies will be discarded and replaced by technologically more advanced

counterparts. A job will be guaranteed for all who wish to have one. Not only that, but every single inhabitant of the Earth will be required to contribute a certain minimum amount of work toward maintaining the technological devices.

"A nation that signs a treaty with the visitors will be completely protected from military invasion by any other nation. In a society which embraces the new social order and its technologically supported lifestyle there will be no crime. In the apartments provided you, everything you need will react only to your voice commands, identified by tones inherent only in your voice. Every day before you take in food, the computers in your apartments will scan your eyes, breath and other parameters to determine your physical health and prescribe the corresponding food mixture composition.

"Each computer installed in an individual apartment will be linked with the main computer, which will thereby be able to pinpoint the exact geographic location of every individual, along with his state of physical and mental health. Any criminal offence will be easily uncovered with the help of a special programme in the main computer. Besides, the social conditions which now foster crime will be absent.

"In return, the visitors plan to ask the government's permission to settle representatives of their civilisation in sparsely inhabited areas — mainly in forests — as well as the right of people to exchange their individual garden plots for technologically equipped apartments and provision of lifetime care if they choose to do so.

"The governments will agree, under the impression that they will still be in full control. A number of religious denominations will start preaching that the alien visitors are God's emissaries, since the aliens will not deny any of the religions existing on the Earth. Religious leaders who do not believe in the aliens' Divine perfection will find it impossible to stand up against the visitors since they will be accepted by the majority

of the citizens in each country that signs the treaty. All other countries will start seeking similar treaties of co-operation with the visitors.

"Nine years after the first landing on the Earth a new way of life will have been speedily inculcated into all countries on all the continents of the Earth. All information media will broadcast the ever advancing achievements in technology and social order. The majority of the population will glorify the 'emissaries of the Mind of the Universe' as intellectually superior brethren, as deities in themselves."

"And not without justification," I remarked to Anastasia. "There's nothing wrong in having no wars and crime on the Earth. Everyone will be provided with an apartment, food and employment."

"Vladimir, do you not realise that once mankind accepts the terms of the aliens, they at the same time renounce their non-material, Divine self? In fact, it will self-destruct. All that is left will be material bodies. And every Man, Vladimir, will come to more and more resemble a biological robot. And all the children of the Earth will henceforth be born biological robots."

"But why?"

"All people on the Earth will be compelled to render daily service to those devices which outwardly serve them. All mankind will fall into a trap, surrendering their own freedom and that of their children for the sake of an artificial technological perfection. Before long many Earth people will intuitively recognise their mistake and start ending their lives by suicide."

"Strange. What would they be lacking?"

"Freedom, creativity and the feelings that only co-creation with the Divine creation can bring."

"And if the parliaments and governments of various countries are unwilling to sign treaties with the aliens, what then? Will they start destroying mankind?"

"Then the alien minds will look for other ways to lead everybody into a trap. There is no sense in their annihilating mankind. After all, their goal is to understand the inter-relationship among all earthly creations, and by what power reproduction is brought about. Nothing like that can exist without Man. It is Man who is the chief link in the chain of harmony of earthly creation. And the Sun's rays are part of the energy and feelings that many people reproduce. With their present level of consciousness today's Earth people pose no resistance to the visitors. And many earthlings today are even trying to render them assistance."

"How so? Who among us is trying to help them? Does that mean there are traitors in our midst? Working for them?"

"They are working for them, but these people are not traitors. Their acquiescence in this comes about involuntarily — it is without malice or premeditation. The main reason is their own lack of faith in themselves and in the perfection of God's creations."

"What's the connection here?"

"It is simple. When Man admits the thought that he is not a perfect creation, when he all at once begins to imagine that there are beings on other planets of superior intellect, he himself feeds them by his own thought. Man himself thereby belittles his own God-given power and attributes power to creations other than the Divine. They have already learnt to gather the energy human thoughts and feelings can produce into a unified complex and are proud of that achievement."

"Look, and you will see in front of that group of aliens there is a container of glowing liquid, which is being transformed back and forth between gaseous, liquid and solid states. They have no weapon stronger than what is concentrated in that small container. Later they will distribute its whole content into a whole lot of small, shallow containers. One of the sides of the container will act as a special reflector. Each one of

them will wear a similar device around his neck in the form of a medallion. All the aliens you see sitting in front of you are wearing such devices right now. When a ray from this medallion is directed at a Man, it may provoke in him feelings of fear, reverence or excitement. And it can paralyse not only a person's will, but also his consciousness and his body. This ray contains thoughts of a multitude of people. People's thoughts that there is someone in the Universe stronger than Man. *Stronger than Man, God's creation.* And these thoughts, when concentrated, can be turned against people themselves."

"So, it turns out we ourselves give them power when we consider them mentally superior to ourselves?"

"Yes, that is right. Mentally superior to ourselves means mentally superior to God."

"What's God got to do with it?"

"We are His creations. When we believe that there are other more perfect worlds in the Universe, that means we are accepting ourselves as imperfect — imperfect creations of God."

"Wow! And have they already accumulated a lot of such energy on the alien world?"

"In the container standing in front of you there is enough energy to overcome approximately three quarters of all the minds on the Earth and to take over people's feelings. *That* they consider way more than enough. Then the whole earthly civilisation will begin to pay them obeisance. And their power will increase."

"So, is it impossible at this stage to do anything about it?"

"It is possible, if we take a risk and do something they are not expecting. After all, a full complex of human feelings, even just one, is always stronger. And it is possible to accelerate thought to a speed unknown to those who have no feelings. And all the energy amassed in that container can be neutralised by the energy of another thought which is brighter, more confident and more perfect."

"And you, Anastasia, would you yourself be able to neutralise all the energy in that container?"

"I could try, but I would have to bring my whole body here for that."

"Why?"

"My complex of feelings will not be complete without my body. Matter is one of the planes of Man's being. With it Man is stronger than the elements of the Universe."

"So, go ahead — we need to break the container."

And all at once in front of me I saw Anastasia in the flesh. She was dressed just as she had been in the forest, in a cardigan and skirt. She stood there barefoot on the floor, and then all at once started walking unhurriedly over to the aliens sitting in front of the container with the glowing liquid. They caught sight of her. No emotions showed themselves on the faces of these unfeeling beings — only for a brief moment they remained motionless in their seats. A second later everyone was astir. Suddenly, as if on command, they all rose and grasped hold of the medallions around their necks. All the medallions flashed with rays of light, all directed at the approaching figure of Anastasia.

She stopped, lost her balance momentarily, took a small step backward, then stopped again. Giving a little stamp with her bare foot, she slowly and confidently moved forward again.

The rays coming from the aliens' medallions got brighter and brighter as they joined together, concentrating on Anastasia. It looked as though it would take but a moment for them to reduce all the clothing on her to ashes. But Anastasia continued moving forward. All at once she stretched her hands out in front of her. Some of the rays reflected off the palms of her hands and were extinguished. Then the others started to go out.

The aliens stood there stock still, as before. Anastasia went over to the container, put her hands around it, stroked it with

her palms and whispered something to it. All at once the liquid in the container became turbulent, then its glow began to gradually fade, and before long there remained a practically colourless liquid with only a slight bluish tinge, much like ordinary water on the Earth.

Anastasia went over to a machine standing by the wall that looked something like a refrigerator. She pressed her hand against it, whispered something to it, and out came a shower of some kind of small coloured square tablets, which she caught in the upturned hem of her cardigan.

Anastasia went over to the aliens, who were still standing dumbstruck as before, and held out one of the tablets to the one at the end. He stirred, as though about to hold out his hand, but stopped at once and began staring in the direction of the man who was standing in front of them all — probably their leader. And so there was Anastasia standing before him for about half a minute, her hand outstretched.

Then she went over and stood directly in front of the leader and held out a tablet for *him*. After a brief pause the leader took the tablet and put it in his mouth. Anastasia then went around to each one in turn, and this time everyone calmly took a tablet from her and ate or swallowed it.

Then she turned from them and came over toward me. She had got half way to me when all at once she stopped and, turning toward the group of seated aliens, waved her hand at them. And several of the aliens got up from their seats and waved their hand back at her in response. When she reached my position, she said with a tired voice:

“We need to go back. They have now taken the thought-accelerating tablets. Let them try to make sense of what has happened here.”

And then it was all over. I found myself lying on the grass as before, as though awakening from sleep. It seemed just a short time had passed, but my body felt rested, as after a

deep, healthy sleep. But my head... Inside me everything felt as though it were boiling over. As though my thoughts were running in all directions at once. All the images I had seen on that other planet completely stayed with me.

What was it? A dream? Hypnosis? Or everything at once — it still wasn't clear. To see what is actually happening on a planet other than the Earth — this was something I found impossible to believe, and I asked Anastasia who was sitting beside me:

"What was it? A dream? Hypnosis? I seem to have remembered everything and now my head feels absolutely chaotic."

And she replied:

"Vladimir, as for the power by which this vision of another planet appeared to you, take it any way you like. If you find the question disturbing, you can simply tell yourself you had a dream. Besides, all that is not what is really important. What *is* important is the essence, the conclusions and the sensations of this vision you saw. Think about that while I leave you for a while."

"Yes, go on. I'll be thinking about it here on my own."

Left alone, I began to ponder what I had seen. Naturally I concluded that I had had some kind of hypnotic dream.

After taking just a few steps, however, Anastasia suddenly turned and headed back in my direction. She took something out of the pocket of her cardigan, and held out her open hand to me. And there I saw it, lying on her hand... a strange-looking tablet, the same kind I had seen on the other planet.

"Take it, Vladimir. You need not be afraid to swallow it. On the planet you and I visited they make these out of herbs from here on the Earth. For about fifteen minutes it will help accelerate your thought, and you will be able to make sense of everything all the more quickly."

I took the little tablet from her outstretched hand, and when Anastasia left, I ate it.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR



Take back your Motherland, people!

At first I found my dialogue with Anastasia about what constitutes the *Motherland*¹ rather unintelligible. Her arguments didn't even seem normal to me, at least initially. But later...

Even today I can't help thinking of them. I distinctly recall her response to my questions about what to do to prevent war — either earthly or interplanetary — from happening to us, to eliminate bandits altogether and bear happy and healthy children. It went this way:

“We need to tell everyone, Vladimir: *Take back your Motherland, people!*”

“Take back your Motherland?” — are you sure you're not mistaken, Anastasia? Everyone has a Motherland, or a native

¹*Motherland* — The Russian term here is *rodina*, also translatable as *native land*. *Rodina* conveys a deep reverence to one's ancestors, responsibility for descendants and an intimate connection to the land one's family lives on. As explained in footnote 2 in Book 2, Chapter 27: “The anomaly”, the term *Rodina* is derived from two Russian roots connected by *i* (= ‘and’): (a) *Rod* — the name of God the Creator in the ancient Slavic tradition, also signifying ‘origin’, ‘derivation’, ‘birth’, ‘kin’ and, by extension, ‘Father’, and (b) *Na* — a root signifying ‘Mother’, and quite possibly the same root as the *na* in the Latin participle *natus* (‘born’), from which our English words *native* and *nature* are derived. Subsequently *Rod i Na* (‘Father and Mother’) took on the broader significance of one's family (or ‘kin’), and by association came to refer to the particular geographical location occupied by succeeding generations of the same family. Readers should be aware that it is the ‘native’ or ‘family’ aspect, more than the ‘land’ component, that is significant in understanding the term *Motherland* (i.e., *Rodina*) in this and subsequent chapters.

land, only not everybody lives in the country where they were born. Maybe you didn't mean 'take back your Motherland', but 'you need to *come back* to your Motherland' — is that what you were trying to say?"

"I was not mistaken, Vladimir. Most people living on this planet today have no Motherland at all."

"What d'you mean they haven't a Motherland? For Russians, Russia is their Motherland, the English have England. After all, everybody was born somewhere, and so people will use the term *Motherland* or *native land* to refer to the land where they were born."

"Do you consider that one's Motherland must be measured by someone's arbitrarily determined border?"

"What else? That's the way things are. All states have borders."

"But if there were no borders, how could you determine your Motherland then?"

"By the place I was born — the town or village — or maybe the whole Earth would then be a Motherland for everyone?"

"The whole Earth *could* be a Motherland for each one of its inhabitants, and Man could be caressed by everything in the Universe, but for that to happen, he would need to join together all planes of being into a single point, call it his *Motherland*, and create with his own self a Space of Love therein. Then all the best things of the Universe would come into contact with it first hand — come into contact with the space of your Motherland. You in yourself will feel the whole vast Universe through this point, and possess power unsurpassed. They will know about this on other worlds. Everything will serve you, as God, our Creator, wanted it."

"You've really got to speak in simpler terms, Anastasia. I didn't get anything about those 'planes of being', or how to join together their strands. Or about the 'point' I can call my Motherland."

"Then we need to begin our discussion with what constitutes birth."

"Well, okay, with birth then. Only don't just say words, but use words that make sense for us on the Earth today. Tell me, for example, how you see, how you picture the generation of the family — the birth and raising of children — in today's prevailing conditions. And how all the children of Man can be born happy. Can you construct a plan or draw me a picture?"

"I can."

"Then tell me about it. Only not about life in the forest or about the incomprehensible *science of imagery*. Nobody knows anything about that, only you..."

I couldn't finish the sentence. My head was buzzing with not just one but a whole lot of questions. Especially: Why was I even interested in knowing what this taiga recluse would tell me about our lives? How does she happen to know not only the outward details of our lives but many people's inner feelings too? What were the possibilities of this incomprehensible science of imagery?

I couldn't stay seated. I got up and began to pace to and fro. Trying to calm down and to make sense of — to understand — these incredible phenomena, I began to reason like this:

Here's this young woman calmly sitting under a cedar tree — ruffling her hand slowly through the grass, or watching some bug crawl up her arm, or immersing herself briefly in thought. Here she sits in the taiga, far removed from the bustling day-to-day life of cities and nations, far removed from wars and all the troubles of the civilised world. But what if she actually knows this science of imagery to perfection? What if she can use it to influence people and society, and in a more powerful way than all our governments, parliaments and religious denominations? Incredible! A fantasy! But...

There are actual concrete facts which confirm this. Incredible facts, indeed! But they really do exist.

In a very short time she taught me to write books. She needed only three days to do this. She was the one pouring forth over and over again an unending stream of information. Incredible, but fact. Without so much as an advertising campaign, her books have easily spread across municipal and national boundaries. Her image is in these books. By some unknown means this image influences people and arouses creative impulses in them. Thousands of lines of poetry and hundreds of bards' songs are dedicated to her image.

And this is something she has known about all along! Right there in the first book I outlined what she said on this subject. Back then there was nothing as yet. At the time her words seemed like incredible nonsense, like a fantasy. But everything came about exactly as she had said. And now, even as I am writing these lines, incredible things have been happening.

In 1999 the Prof-Press publishing house put out a 500-page anthology of readers' letters and poems.² The anthology was published in July, considered a 'dead season' for booksellers. But an incredible thing happened: the whole print-run of 15,000 copies sold out within a single month.

Another 15,000 copies have been printed, but these books instantly sold out, too. Such an event may not be so spectacular for a sensationalism-ridden press. In fact, it goes far beyond the conceptual bounds of sensationalism by virtue of the uniqueness of the conclusions stemming from it — conclusions that defy credulity. It is indeed hard to believe that

²This readers' anthology, entitled *V luche Anastasii zvuchit dusha Rossii* (The soul of Russia sings in Anastasia's ray), was first released in 1999 by Prof-Press in the city of Rostov-on-Don, and was subsequently re-published by Dilya Publishers of St. Petersburg.

Anastasia's image is actually changing the consciousness of society.

Readers feel the need of taking action. People both in Russia and abroad are independently organising readers' clubs and centres, calling them after her.

A Novosibirsk medical factory is producing the cedar oil she talked about. And in a small village in the Novosibirsk Region local residents are repairing their old equipment and endeavouring to produce healing oil according to the technology she recommended, and they are getting help from the city.

It was she herself who said that Siberian villages would be regenerated, and that children would start coming back to their parents.

She has been redirecting the flood of pilgrims from foreign temples to our native sacred sites. In the past two years alone the dolmens she spoke about on the outskirts of Gelendzhik³ have been visited by over fifty thousand of her readers. Around these previously neglected sacred sites people are now planting flowers and gardens. And in a number of cities they are planting cedars and other growing things according to her method.

By decree of the head of the Tomsk Region administration an enterprise has been set up under the name of *Sibirskie dikorosz* (Siberian Flora). It has now sent four thousand cedar saplings to Moscow.

Scientists are talking about Anastasia. Her image as a living, self-sufficient substance is already soaring across Russia. But only Russia? Women in Kazakhstan are collecting money to make a film about Anastasia. Wow! Here are Kazakh women wanting to make a film about a Siberian recluse?!

³*dolmens, Gelendzhik* — see footnotes 1 and 2 in Book 1, Chapter 30: "Author's message to readers".

This image of hers is beginning to lead people somewhere. But where? By what power? Who is helping her? It is possible she herself possesses some kind of incredible power hitherto unknown. But why is she staying in her glade as before, still messing about with bugs?

While intellectuals are arguing over whether or not she exists at all, she is simply taking action. The results of her actions can be seen, touched and tasted. What is this science of imagery?

Back in the taiga, I found such thoughts a trifle confusing. I wanted to have them either disproved or confirmed on the spot, but she was the only one around, the only one I could ask.

So I'm going to ask her. She is incapable of lying. I'm going to ask her.

"Tell me, Anastasia... Tell me, do you have a perfect knowledge of the science of imagery? Do you possess the knowledge of those ancient priests?"

I was greatly excited as I awaited her reply, but a calm voice responded without the least hint of excitement:

"I know what my forefather taught those priests. And also what the priests did not give him the opportunity to say. And I have endeavoured to find out and feel new things on my own."

"Now I get it! Just as I thought! You are more of an expert than anyone else on the science of imagery. And you have created your own image and placed it before people. For many you are a goddess, a messiah, a forest sprite. That is how readers write about you in their letters. You have told me I should write down everything — as though pride and self-conceit were a great sin. And I have presented myself before the public as a bumbler, while *you* have come out exalted over everyone, and what's more, you knew it was going to turn out this way in advance."

"Vladimir, I have not concealed anything from you."

Anastasia rose from the ground and stood in front of me, her arms down by her sides. She looked me straight in the eye and went on:

"Only my image is not yet clear to everyone. But that other image which will be out there before the people, will also be mine. My image will resemble that of a cleaning lady who is simply dusting the cobwebs off the most important thing."

"What's this about cobwebs? Speak more clearly, Anastasia. What is it you want to 'create' this time?"

"I want to animate, bring alive, the image of God to people. I want to make His grand dream clear to everyone, so that every living person may feel His aspiration of love. Man can become happy here and now, in this life. The children of people on the Earth today will live in His Paradise. I am not alone. You are not alone. And Paradise will appear as a conjoint co-creation."

"Hold on, hold on there. I realise now that your words will cause many teachings to fall apart. Their instigators and their followers will start not only lambasting you but bombarding me too. Who needs problems like that? I refuse to write down everything you say about God."

"Vladimir, here you are afraid just of the thought of struggling with someone you do not know."

"No, it's all quite clear to me. I'll get descended upon by all the religious leaders. They'll poison their fanatical followers against me."

"It is not *them* — you are afraid of *yourself*, Vladimir. You are ashamed to present yourself before God. You do not believe in your new way of life. You think you cannot change."

"What's this got to do with me? I'm telling you about the clerics. So many of them are already reacting to your sayings."

"And what are they saying to you?" Anastasia enquired.

"Different things. Some react negatively, while others — just the opposite. One Orthodox priest from Ukraine came to me along with his parishioners in support of your sayings. But he's just a country priest."

"And what do you mean when you say a 'country' priest came to see you?"

"I mean there are others, higher-ups. Everybody's subject to them. Everything depends on them."

"But still, even those 'higher-ups', as you call them, also once served in the smaller churches."

"That makes no difference. All the same I'm not going to write until at least somebody in charge of some major temple... Anyway, what am I saying? You can predict everything that's going to happen ahead of time. So tell me, who will be against you, and who will help you? Will there be anyone, in fact, who comes to your assistance?"

"What clerical rank could convince you to be bolder, Vladimir?"

"Nothing less than a Father Superior or a bishop. Can you name any?"

She thought just for a split-second, as though gazing into both time and space at once.

And then came this incredible answer:

"Assistance has already come, Vladimir, from someone who has uttered new statements about God — namely Pope John Paul II," Anastasia replied. "The images of Christ and Mohammed will unite their energies in space, and other images will merge together with them. There will also be an Orthodox patriarch,⁴ whose words will be revered for centuries. But, most importantly, there will be impulses of inspiration among all ordinary people. It may be their earthly status that

⁴*patriarch* — the titular head of the Russian Orthodox Church.

is important to you, but, after all, *truth* is more important than anything on Earth.”

At this point Anastasia ceased talking and lowered her eyes, as though she had been suddenly offended by something. It appeared as though a lump in her throat had welled up, but she swallowed it and sighed. Then she added:

“Forgive me — I fear I am not making myself clear to your heart. Things are not working out at the moment on my part, but I shall try to be clearer, only let the people hear...”

“About what?”

“About what others have tried for a thousand years to hide from them. About how it takes hardly a moment for any one of them to enter the Creator’s pristine garden and there bring about splendid conjoint creations with Him.”

I could feel a sense of agitation building inside her. And I myself, for some reason, began feeling agitated, and said:

“Don’t be concerned. Tell me, Anastasia, and perhaps I *shall* be able to understand and write about it.”

And what she went on to say she said in an extremely concrete and simple way. It was only later, after analysing and pondering her words, that I began to understand, and could feel some sense — a significant sense at that — in her words “Take back your Motherland, people!” But back there, in the forest, I asked her once more:

“I see how it’s all going to come about. I see that if you can so easily bring out images of life of thousands of years ago, that means you must know all religious teachings and treatises, and that you will reveal them to people?”

“I know the teachings that called forth reverence among people.”

“All of them?”

“Yes, all of them.”

“And the Vedic scriptures you can translate in their entirety?”

"I can. Only why waste time on that?"

"But look, don't you want mankind to know about those ancient teachings? Tell me about them, and I shall write about them in my next book."

"And what then? What do you think will be the net benefit to mankind?"

"What d'you mean? They'll become wiser."

"Vladimir, the whole nature of the dark forces' trap is that with their multitude of teachings they try to conceal the most important thing from Man. By presenting a portion of truth — only for the mind — in their treatises, they deliberately lead people away from the most important thing."

"Then why do people call the ones that present such teachings *wise men*?"

"Vladimir, if you will allow me, I shall tell you a parable. It is a parable that a thousand years ago was whispered by wise men to each other in some secluded spot. For many centuries now no one has heard this parable."

"Then go ahead and tell it to me, if you think that the parable may be helpful in explaining something."

CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE



Two brothers (*A parable*)

Once upon a time lived a couple that for many years had no children. When they were well on in age, the wife bore twin boys — two brothers. The labour was difficult, and shortly after childbirth their mother passed on to the next world.

Their father hired wet-nurses, and tried to bring up his children as best he could. And he managed indeed, for nigh on fourteen years. But as his boys approached their fifteenth birthday, the father himself passed on.

After burying their father, the two brothers sat mourning in their room. Two twin brothers. Three minutes separated their emergings into the world, and so between the two of them one was considered the elder, his brother the younger. After a period of mournful silence the elder brother spoke:

“Our father on his deathbed told us of his sorrow that he had not been able to impart to us the wisdom of life. How shall you and I live without wisdom, my dear younger brother? Without wisdom our family line will go on in misery. People who have managed to gain wisdom from their fathers might laugh at us.”

“Do not be sad,” said the younger to his elder brother. “You spend a good deal of time in reverie. Perchance time will afford you the opportunity in your reverie to learn wisdom too. I shall do everything you say. I myself can live without reverie, yet I still find living a pleasing experience. I am happy when the day dawns and when it draws to a close. I shall simply live, take care of the household, while you are learning wisdom.”

"Agreed," replied the elder to the younger. "Only there is no opportunity to seek out wisdom by staying here at home. There is no wisdom here, no one has left it here and no one will bring it to us of their own accord. But I as the elder brother have decided I must, for both our sakes, and for the sake of our line which will extend through time, find everything that is wise in this world. I must find it and bring it home, and bestow it upon our descendants as well as our own selves. I shall take with me everything of value our father left us, and travel throughout the world and meet all the wise people of different lands. I shall learn all their teachings and then return to my native home."

"Your course will be a long one," said the younger brother sympathetically. "We have a horse. Take the horse, and the cart as well, and on your departure take along as much goods as you can carry, so that you will find your journey the less hard. I shall stay at home and await your returning as the wisest of men."

The brothers parted for a very long time. Years went by. The elder brother went from wise man to wise man, from temple to temple, learning the teachings of the Orient and the Occident, journeying to the North and to the South. He possessed a colossal memory, and his keen intellect quickly grasped everything he heard and committed it to heart.

For about sixty years the elder brother plied the highways and byways of the world. His hair and beard turned to ashen grey. His inquisitive mind kept roaming and honing his wisdom. And this ageing pilgrim came to be considered himself the wisest of men. He was followed around by a crowd of disciples. To inquisitive minds he generously preached his wisdom. Both young and old hung on his every word. And his glory and fame preceded him wherever he came, and communities would proclaim in advance the wise man's great coming.

And so it was in an aura of glory, surrounded by a throng of obsequious disciples, that the ageing wise man drew nearer and nearer to the village where he was born and the house which he had left sixty years before as a youth of fifteen.

All the people of the village turned out to greet him, and the younger brother, showing similar signs of grey, ran toward him rejoicing, and bowed his head before his learned brother. And he whispered with gladsome tenderness:

“Bless me, O my learned brother. Come into our home, I shall wash your feet after your long journey. Come into our home, my wise brother, and take your rest.”

With a magnanimous sweep of his hand he gestured to all his disciples to remain on the little hill in front of the village, accept gifts from the well-wishers and engage in learned conversations, while he himself entered the home of his younger brother. The wise man, like an ageing dignitary, sat down wearily at the table in the spacious upper room. And the younger brother began washing his feet with warm water and listening to what his learned brother had to say. And the wise man began speaking to him as follows:

“I have fulfilled my duty. I have learnt the teachings of the great wise men of the Earth, and I have created teachings of my own. I shall not stay long at home. Now to impart what I have learnt to others — that is my part. But since I promised to bring my wisdom home, I shall fulfil my promise and sojourn a day or two with you. During this extent of time, my dear younger brother, I shall impart to you the wisest pearls of truth in the world.

“Here is the first: *all people should live in a splendid garden.*”

Drying his elder brother’s feet with a beautifully embroidered towel, the younger went to considerable effort to please him, saying:

“Go to, my brother. On the table before you are the fruits of our garden — I have gathered the very best for you.”

The wise man thoughtfully tasted the marvellous array of fruits before him, and went on:

"Every Man living on the Earth should cultivate his own family tree. When he dies, the tree will remain as a good memorial for his descendants. It will purify the air with its leaves so that his descendants will be better able to breathe. We should all be able to breathe good air."

The younger brother began to show signs of haste and effort, and said:

"Forgive me, my wise brother, I forgot to open the window so that you can breathe fresh air." Whereupon he threw the window open and then went on:

"Here, breathe the air of our two cedar trees. I planted them the year you left. I dug a hole with my spade for one of the saplings, for the other I used the spade you played with when we were youngsters."

The wise man thoughtfully gazed at the trees, and then intoned:

"Love is a grand feeling. Not everyone is handed the opportunity to live his life with love. And there is a grand wisdom: *each of us should strive every day for love.*"

"Oh, how wise you are, my dear elder brother!" exclaimed the younger. "You have learnt such great wisdom, and I am embarrassed in your presence. Forgive me, I have not even introduced you to my wife..." And he called out toward the doorway:

"*Starushka!* Where are you, my little cookie?"¹

"Here I am!" a voice piped up. And in the doorway a cheerful old woman appeared with plates of fresh steaming pies in her hands. "Sorry, I've been busy making pies."

¹ *starushka* — an affectionate term for an elderly woman; *little cookie* (Russian: *striapushka*) — an endearing name derived from the word *striapukha* (lit., 'cook'), and rhyming with *starushka*.

Putting the pies down on the table, the cheerful *starushka* did a playful curtsy to the two brothers. And then she went over to the younger brother, her husband, and whispered in his ear, but loudly enough for the elder brother to hear:

"And now you must forgive me, hubby, I have to go lie down."

"How now, my ne'er-do-well?" her husband replied. "You've decided to go have a nap when we have an honoured guest? My very own brother — and you go...?"

"It's not that, my head is spinning and I'm starting to feel a bit nauseous."

"And how could that possibly happen to you, my little busy-body?"

"Perhaps you are the one to blame, no doubt, again. I am once more with child," laughed the *starushka*, as she ran off.

"My apologies, brother," the younger brother excused himself in some embarrassment. "She doesn't know the value of wisdom, she's always been light-hearted and is still that way, even in her old age."

The wise man's thoughtful moments became increasingly longer. His reverie was broken by the sound of children's voices. The wise man heard them and said:

"Every Man should strive to learn great wisdom. *To learn how to raise children that will be happy and righteous.*"

"Tell me, learned brother, I long to make my children and grandchildren happy — you see, my noisy little grandchildren have just come in."

Two boys no older than six and a little girl of about four were standing in the doorway and quarrelling amongst themselves. In an attempt to smooth things out, the grey-haired younger brother hastened to say to them:

"Quickly tell me what all the fuss is about, my noisy ones. You're interfering in our conversation."

"Oh," the smaller boy exclaimed, "it seems our one grandpa has become two! Well then now, which is ours and which is not, how do we tell?"

"Here's our Grandpakins sitting right here, isn't it clear?" piped up the little girl, running over to the younger brother, putting her cheek against his leg, tousling his beard and prattling:

"Grandpakins, Grandpakins, I was coming to see you all by myself, to show you how I've learnt to dance, and the boys decided to tag along all on their own. One of them wants to draw with you — see, he's brought a board and some chalk. The other's brought a flute and a pipe — he wants you to play them for him. But Grandpakins, Grandpakins, I was the one who decided to come and see you first. You tell the others that. You can send them home, Grandpakins!"

"She's wrong. I came first to draw with you, and my brother only then decided he wanted to come with me, to play the flute," observed the boy carrying the thin piece of board.

"There are two of you grandpakins, you decide," the granddaughter chimed in. "Which of us came first? You'd better decide that I was first, or else I'm going to feel terribly hurt and cry."

The wise man smiled sadly at the youngsters. He furrowed his brow, working out a response in his mind, but said nothing. The younger brother became flustered, and decided to cut short the ensuing pause. He took the flute out of his grandson's hands and said without stopping to think:

"We don't have any cause for quarrel here. Dance, my pretty little jumper, and I shall accompany your dance on the flute. My dear little musician will accompany me on the pipe. And you, my dear little artist, draw what the sounds of the music are drawing, and draw the ballerina doing her dance. And now, everybody to their tasks — look to it, lads!"

Whereupon the younger brother struck up a cheerful and splendid melody on the flute, and the grandchildren enthusiastically imitated him in time, portraying their favourite images. The future famous musician playing the pipe tried his best to keep up with the melody. The blushing girl leapt about like a ballerina in a delightful portrayal of her dance. The future artist drew a picture full of joy.

The wise man kept silent. The wise man realised... When the merriment was finished, he rose and said solemnly:

“You remember, my dear younger brother, our father’s old hammer and chisel. Give them to me, and I shall hew out on a rock the most important lesson of all. Then I shall go away. I probably shan’t come back. Don’t stop me, and don’t wait for me.”

The elder brother left. The ageing wise man went with his disciples over to a great rock which a pathway bent around. The same pathway that lured wisdom-seeking pilgrims into lands far from home. A whole day passed, and night fell, but the grey-haired wise man kept hammering and chiselling away at the inscription on the rock. When the aged man finished his work in exhaustion, his disciples read the inscription on the rock:

Whatever you seek, pilgrim, you are already carrying with you. You keep losing it with every step you take, and are finding nothing new.

Upon finishing the parable, Anastasia fell silent. She gave me an enquiring look in the eye, no doubt wondering what I had got from it.

“Well, Anastasia, I took from the parable that all the pearls of wisdom the elder brother talked about, the younger brother was already implementing in his day-to-day life. There’s just one thing that isn’t clear to me, though: who taught the younger brother all these wise things?”

“No one. All the wisdom of the Universe is included for ever in each soul right from the moment it is created. It is just that wise men slyly intellectualise for their own interests, and thereby lead people away from the most important thing.”

“From ‘the most important thing’? But what *is* the most important thing?”

CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX



Even today everyone can build a home

“The most important thing, Vladimir, is that even today everyone can build a home. Everyone can feel God with their soul and live in Paradise. One single moment is all that separates Paradise from people living on the Earth today. Each one possesses conscious awareness within. When dogmas do not interfere with this awareness, then look, Vladimir, what can come to pass...”

All at once Anastasia brightened. She grasped hold of my hand and led me to the shore of the lake where there was a patch of bare sand, and started talking to me along the way.

“It only takes a moment. You will understand everything in just a moment of time. And everyone will understand — the readers, yours and mine.

“Within themselves they will define the essence of the Earth, and become aware of their destined purpose. Right this moment, Vladimir, see, right this moment we shall in our thoughts build our home! I and you, and all of them too. And I assure you indeed that the thought of each one of them will be brought into contact with the thought of God. The gates of Paradise will open. Let us go, let us move with more speed. I shall draw it with a stick upon the shore...”

“We shall build a home together with those who into contact with your written words will later come. All human thought will merge together into one. Believe me, people have God’s ability within them to turn what they conceive into reality. And many a home will stand upon the land. And

each one in their own homes will be able to grasp everything first hand. They will be able to feel and understand the aspirations of the Divine dream. We shall build a home! I and you, and all of them too!"

"Hold on there, Anastasia. There are a whole bunch of different designs out there for homes where people are living now. What sense can there be in proposing yet another one?"

"Vladimir, you must do more than simply listen to me! You must feel everything that I outline, and mentally complete yourself the whole design, and let everyone else draw it along with me. O, God! People, at least give it a try, I beg of you!"

Anastasia was literally trembling with joyful excitement. She was reaching out to people, and I found myself growing more and more interested in her design. And at first it seemed simple to me, yet at the same time I had the feeling as though this recluse, Anastasia, was revealing to everyone a most extraordinary secret. The whole secret was in utter simplicity, and if I can remember the events in order, this is how they all went.

Anastasia continued:

"First choose for yourself a place of your own you like best of all the pleasing spaces on the Earth. A place where you would like to live, and would like your children to live out their lives. And then you will indeed leave to your great-grandchildren a fitting memorial to you. The climate, too, in that place must be favourable for you. Take one hectare¹ of land in that place for yourself in perpetuity."

"But nobody can just come along and take any piece of land they jolly well desire. Land today is sold only in places where people wish to sell it."

¹*hectare* — designating an area 100 metres square or 10,000 square metres, approximately equivalent to 2.5 acres in the Imperial system.

“Yes, unfortunately, everything happens that way today. Our Motherland is extensive, but there is not a single hectare of your land where you can create a corner of Paradise for your children and descendants. And yet the time has now come when we must begin acting on this cause. And take advantage of the most favourable of all the existing laws.”

“I don’t know all the laws, of course, but I’m sure there is no law allowing someone to take possession of a parcel of land in perpetuity. Farmers can rent a good deal of land, but only for ninety-nine years.”²

“Well then, we can start by taking it for a shorter span of time, but we need at once to plan a law so that everyone may have his own parcel of ground, his own Motherland. Whether or not and to what degree the country flourishes as a state depends on this. And if there is no appropriate law at the moment, well, you will have to make one.”

“That’s easier said than done. Our laws are made by the State Duma. It has to make some amendment or introduce a new article into the Constitution. And the parties in the Duma are constantly fighting with each other — there’s no way they can settle the land question.”

“Then if there is no party capable of enshrining into law everyone’s right to their Motherland, you will have to form such a party.”³

² *ninety-nine years* — Ninety-nine-year leases, still in effect in Russia, were once common in many lands. Yet even today, the right to so-called ‘land ownership’ in most Western countries can be all too easily abrogated by governments if taxes on the land are not paid (and paid on time!), or if ‘private’ land is expropriated for a deemed ‘public’ need (the legal doctrine of *eminent domain*).

³ *a party* — In 2005 the Russian ‘Motherland party’ (*Rodnaya partiya*) was established with the specific purpose of bringing forth legislation on allocating ‘pieces of Motherland’ to people in the form of family plots, just as Anastasia proposes here. In fact, the name *Rodnaya partiya* was suggested in Book 8 (Part 2) of the Ringing Cedars Series, published shortly before the new party was announced.

“And who will set it up?”

“Those who will read about the home we are creating and become aware of what a Motherland means to each one, to each Man living today, and to the future of the whole Earth.”

“Well, enough about political parties. Tell me rather about this unusual home of yours. I’m really interested now in what new design you can possibly bring forth. Let’s say someone has come into possession of a hectare of land. Not exactly a Paradise, but, say, one grown over with wild grasses — they’re probably not going to give him better than that. And there he is, standing on his hectare of land — what next?”

“Think about it yourself, Vladimir, and dream a little, too. What could you do if you were standing on your own land?”

CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN



A fence

“First of all,” I said, “first of all, everything, of course, must be enclosed by a fence. Otherwise, when they start bringing in building materials to construct the manor house, somebody could come along and pilfer them. And when you plant a crop, it might be stolen before you harvest it. Or are you against fences on principle?”

“I am not against them, Vladimir. Even animals mark out their own territory. Only what are you going to make the fence of?”

“What d’you mean, what of? Fence boards, of course... No, wait. Fence boards can turn out to be on the expensive side. For starters you need to dig post holes and string up barbed wire all around the property. Even then you should still put up boards so people wouldn’t see inside the fence.”

“And how many years could a board fence last without needing repair?”

“If it is constructed of good material, if you keep it painted or varnished and smear the parts of the posts that are in the ground with pitch, it might go five years or more without needing repair.”

“And then?”

“Then you’d probably need to do some repair work and touch it up to keep it from rotting.”

“So, that means you will constantly have to fuss over the fence. And it will give your children and grandchildren even greater cause for concern. Would it not be better to construct it so your children will not have to bother about it, and so that

their view will not be spoilt by the sight of rotting timber? Let us think how to make the fence more solid and long-lasting, so that your descendants may have fonder remembrances of you."

"Of course, you can build it so it will last longer. Who wouldn't want that? For example, you could make brick pillars and a brick foundation, and put cast-iron grill work in between — that kind of fence doesn't rust. It can even last a hundred years. But only very rich people can afford to build a fence like that. Can you imagine? A whole hectare — that's a perimeter of 400 metres. A fence like that's going to set you back several hundred thousand roubles, maybe even millions. Still, it'll last a good hundred years, maybe two hundred or more. You can even have it made with all sorts of family monograms. Your descendants will look at it and remember their great-grandfather, and it'll be the envy of everyone around."

"Envy is not a good feeling, Vladimir. In fact, it is harmful."

"Well, there's not much you can do about that. I tell you, enclosing a hectare of land with a good fence is not something many people can afford."

"That means we must think up some other kind of fence."

"What other kind? Can you suggest something?"

"Would it not be better, Vladimir, in place of a whole lot of posts, which can later rot, to plant trees?"

"Trees? And then what, nail boards...?"

"Why nail boards to them? Look there, in the forest there are a lot of trees growing with their trunks only one-and-one-half to two metres apart."

"Yes, you're right. But there are holes between them. It's not the same as a fence."

"But it is possible to plant bushes in between them that people cannot get through. Take a careful look, and think what a splendid living fence you would have! And it would

be just a little bit different with each person. And everyone would come to admire the view. And your descendants in the ages to come will remember the creator of this splendid hedge. And the hedge will not only save them time on repairs but will bring them benefits as well. It will serve, in fact, as far more than just a barrier. One person will make a hedge out of birches growing in a row. Another will use oak. And someone with a creative impulse will make a coloured hedge, the kind one reads about in fairy tales.”

“What d’you mean, coloured?”

“Planting different-coloured trees. Birches, maples, oaks and cedars. Someone may intertwine a rowan-tree with clusters of bright red berries and still plant guelder-roses in between. And make room for bird-cherry trees and lilac bushes. After all, you can plan it all out in advance. Each planter should watch to see how high each one grows, how it blooms in the spring, what kind of a fragrance it has and what feathered friends it attracts. Thus your hedge will be both sonorous and pleasantly fragrant, and you will never get tired of looking at it, as the picture will be changing its tints with each passing day. It will flourish with colours anew every spring and every autumn burst forth in an explosion of fiery hues.”

“Well, Anastasia, it seems you’re a poetess as well. We began with just a simple fence, and now see what all you’ve made of it! You know, I really like the way you’ve turned the whole thing around. And why haven’t people thought of this before? No painting required, no repair. And when the trees get too big, they can be cut down and used for firewood and people can plant new trees — they can change the picture, just like an artist. The only thing is, won’t it take a long time to plant that kind of a hedge? And if you’re going to plant the trees two metres apart, then you’ve got to dig two hundred holes for the saplings. And then plant the bushes in between. And no technology will be allowed, you’ll say.”

"On the contrary, Vladimir. There is no sense in rejecting technology for the project at hand. Indeed, any invention of the dark forces must be put to use to serve the forces of light. It will hasten the implementation of the plan if you use a plough to dig a trench around the perimeter of the ground-lot and plant the saplings in it, along with the seeds at the same time — for the bushes you have decided to plant between the trees. Then you can go over it again with the plough to fill in the soil. While the earth is still loose, you can adjust the position of each sapling to even out the row."

"That's fantastic. So in two or three days one person can put in a whole hedge."

"Yes."

"The only drawback is that until the hedge grows, it won't deter any thieves. And people will have to wait a long time for it to grow. Especially in the case of oak and cedar."

"But birch and aspen grow quickly, and the bushes between them will not take much time either. If you are in a hurry, you can plant tree saplings two metres high right away. When the birches are grown, they can be cut up for household use, and their places will be taken by the maturing cedar and oak trees."

"Okay, then, a living fence is something I can grasp. I really like it. Now tell me, what style of house do you see on the ground-lot?"

"Perhaps we should first plan out the lot as a whole, Vladimir?"

"What d'you have in mind — different beds for tomatoes, potatoes, cucumbers? That's usually women's work. House-building is a man's job. I think you need to build one large house right off — a fashionable manor house in the European style so that your grandchildren and great-grandchildren will remember you fondly. Then there can be a smaller cottage for the servants. It's a pretty big lot, after all. It'll require a lot of work."

“Vladimir, if everything is done properly from the start, there will be no need for servants. Everything around you will serve you with great pleasure and with love — and not only you but your children and whole family, and your grandchildren too.”

“It doesn’t happen that way with anyone. Even with your beloved *dachniks*.¹ They only have five or six hundred square metres, yet they’re working it every free day from dawn ’til dusk. And here they’re going to have a whole hectare! It’s going to take at least a dozen dump-trucks every year just to bring in the fertiliser and manure.

“First the loads of manure have to be spread over the whole growing area, and then all the earth has to be dug up and turned over. Otherwise nothing will grow right. And you’d better add some kind of fertiliser — you can get it in special stores. If you don’t fertilise, the soil won’t give a good yield. It’s something agronomists — people who study agriculture — know and *dachniks* have learnt from experience. I hope you agree on the need for fertiliser.”

“Of course, the earth needs fertilising, but the task need not be devitalising. God has thought through everything in advance so that the ground in the place you wish to live will turn out to have the right nutrients and be in an ideal condition without wearisome physical efforts on your part. You need only make contact with His thought and feel the wholeness of the system He has designed, instead of just relying on your own intellect in making decisions.”

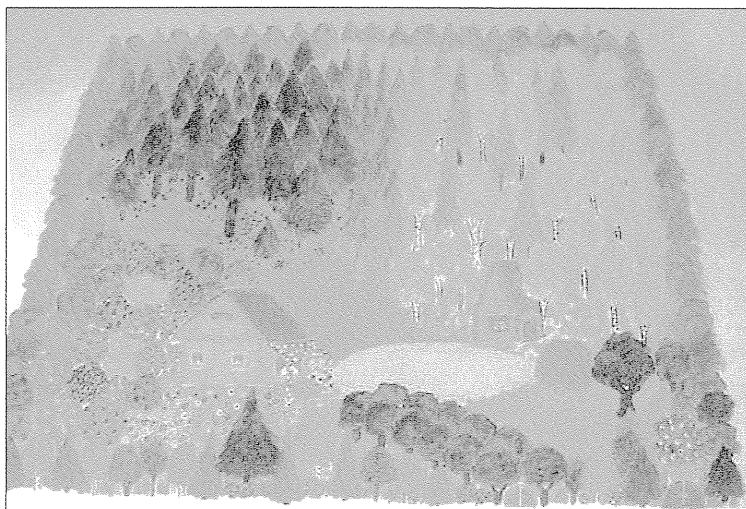
“Then why is nothing fertilised today, anywhere on the Earth, according to God’s system?”

¹ *dachniks* — people who spend time (their days off, especially summer holidays) tending a garden at their *dacha*, or cottage in the country. See further details in Book 1.



Above: A raspberry 'living fence' grown by Sergei and Vera Bondar, Nizhny Novgorod, Russia. In addition to producing abundant harvests of raspberries, this maintenance-free hedge protects the garden from winds, attracts birds that naturally control pests and keeps unwanted visitors out. Photo © 2004 by Alexey Kondaurov.

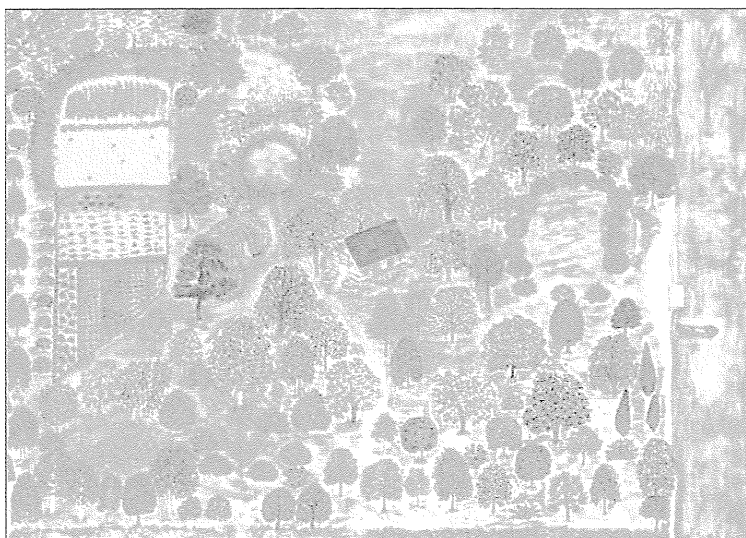
Below: Kin's domain design © 2003 by Irina Labountsova, *Zapolyanie* eco-village. In response to Anastasia's plea, thousands of people all across Russia and beyond have created designs of their family domains and started turning them into reality.





"Vladimir, you must do more than simply listen to me! You must feel everything that I outline, and mentally complete yourself the whole design, and let everyone else draw it along with me. O, God! People, at least give it a try, I beg of you!"

— *Anastasia's words from Ch. 26: "Even today everyone can build a home"*



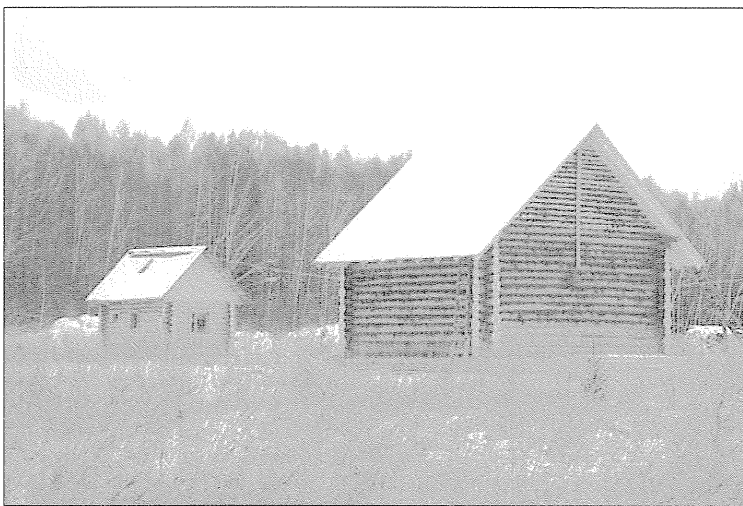


Opposite page: Plan of the Solnysbko ("Sunshine") community composed of kin's domains (top). Marina Detner's kin's domain (bottom).

This page: kin's domains of Marina (top) and Dima & Julia (bottom).

All drawings © 2003 Raduga Centre, Murmansk.

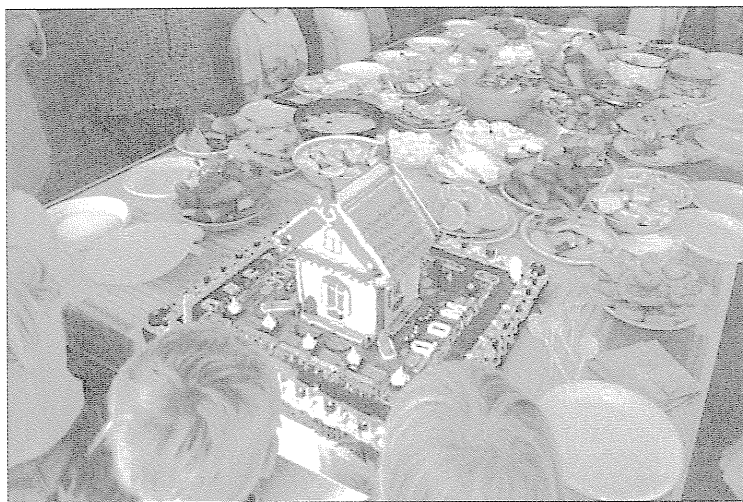




“We shall build a home together with those who into contact with your written words will later come. All human thought will merge together into one. Believe me, people have God’s ability within them to turn what they conceive into reality. And many a home will stand upon the land.” — Ch. 26: *“Even today everyone can build a home”*

True to Anastasia’s promise, new homes have sprouted all across Russia as thousands of people, inspired by her dream, start to lay foundations for their family domains or bring dying villages back to life.





Above: a 'build-your-home wonder-cake', representing a small-scale model of a kin's domain complete with a 'living fence' and garden plantings, becomes a festive table centrepiece in the *Kovcheg* eco-village, Kaluga Region, during a celebration on 16 September 2006. *Below:* young girls in search for their intended mate set small rafts afloat during a 'Find-your-soulmate' festival in the *Rodovoe* eco-community, Tula Region, 20 June 2006. For a description of this ancient ritual and its significance, see Chapter 5 in Book 6 of the Ringing Cedars Series. Photos © 2006 Alexey Kondaurov, Nizhny Novgorod.





Dachnik Day celebration at the *Rodnoe* eco-village, Vladimir Region, 23 July 2006. Residents of *Rodnoe* and nearby eco-villages, along with numerous guests, share greens, vegetables and fruit they have grown themselves on their plots. The Dachnik Day holiday — proposed in Book 2 of the Ringing Cedars Series to honour the millions of gardeners and celebrate Man's connectedness to the Earth — is now celebrated by thousands of individuals, families and communities throughout Russia and beyond. Photo © 2006 by Leonid Sharashkin.



This page & opposite page, top: new homes & residents of the Rodnoe eco-village, Vladimir Region, © Leonid Sharashkin, 2004–2006. Opposite page, bottom: flourishing gardens in the Podgornoe village (Raduzhie community), Republic of Mariy El, Russia, attract visitors to a permaculture workshop, August 2006, © Alexey Kondaurov, 2006.





Mixed permaculture plantings in Vasiliy and Marina's garden, *Raduzhie* community (*Podgornoe* village), Republic of Mariy El, Russia, © Alexey Kondaurov, 2006. Like millions of other food-gardeners throughout Russia, this family uses no chemical fertilisers or pesticides, yet manages to grow abundant harvests in a climate with a growing season of only 110 days. According to official statistics, in 2005 Russian gardeners, using less than 3% of the country's agricultural land, produced over 53% of the nation's agricultural output — more than all the commercial producers taken together.



"Vladimir, right now you are in the taiga. Look around you, how high the trees are, how mighty their trunks! Among the trees herbs and bushes are growing. There are raspberries, and currants... indeed, a whole lot of everything grows right here in the taiga for Man's use. And over thousands of years not a single person has fertilised the ground. But the land remains fruitful. What do you think: how has it been fertilised and by whom?"

"By whom? I don't know how or by whom. But you've pointed out a really important fact. Indeed, it's simply amazing how Man somehow gets everything twisted around. Tell me yourself, why aren't various kinds of fertiliser needed in the taiga?"

"Here in the taiga God's thought and God's plan are not interfered with to the same degree as where Man lives today. In the taiga leaves fall from the trees, and little branches are torn off by the breeze. And these leaves and branches, along with worms, fertilise the ground in the taiga. And the grass which grows all around regulates the composition of the earth. The bushes help it clear away excesses of acids and alkalis. None of the fertilisers you are familiar with can substitute for leaves falling from the trees. After all, leaves include many of the diverse energies of the Universe. They have seen the stars, the Sun and the Moon. And not only seen, but they have interacted with them. And even many thousands of years from now, the ground here in the taiga will still be fertile."

"But the ground-plot where our house is to be built is not the taiga, you see."

"Then start planning! You yourself can plant a forest of different kinds of trees."

"Anastasia, maybe it'd be best if you told me right off how to make it so that the soil on the plot stays fertilised all on its own? That is a major undertaking, since there are so many other things to do. Planting beds, warding off various kinds of pests..."

"Of course we could talk about details and particulars, but it would be best for each one to apply his own thought, his soul and his dream to the building work. Each of us knows instinctively what will be the most suitable arrangement for him and bring joy to his children and grandchildren. There can be no one single plan that fits all. Each plan is individual, like a great artist's masterpiece. Each Man must make it his own."

"But give me an example. At least tell me in general terms."

"All right — look, I shall do a little outlining for you. But first there is the most important thing to understand. Everything is created by God's hand for the good of Man. You are a Man and can control everything around you. You are a Man! Try to comprehend and feel through your soul what constitutes a real Paradise on the Earth..."

"Now more specifically, Anastasia, without philosophising. Tell me what to plant and where, tell me where I should dig. What cash crops should I grow that will bring me the biggest return on my investment?"

"Vladimir, do you know why peasants and farmers today are so unhappy?"

"Well no, why?"

"So many of them are striving to bring in as big a harvest as they can. To sell. They think more about money than about the land. They themselves do not believe they can be happy in their own family nest, they think the rest of the people are happy in the big cities. Believe me, Vladimir, whatever is created in your soul will unfailingly be reflected in the whole world around you.

"Of course, outward details are also necessary. Let us think together about one way we can plan out our plot. I shall simply start things rolling, and you help me on your part."

"Okay, I'll help. You start."

“Let us say our lot is on a barren section of land, and is now enclosed on all sides by a hedge. Let us divide it, reserving half or three-quarters of the lot for a forest, and there plant a variety of trees. On the edge of the forest, where it borders on the remaining part of the lot, we shall plant a hedge in such a way that animals cannot pass through it and trample the crops growing in the garden plot.

“In the forest we shall set up a pen using densely planted saplings, which in time will be home to a goat or two. And we shall also use saplings to construct a shelter for egg-laying hens.

“In the garden plot we shall make a pond approximately 16 metres across. We shall plant raspberry and currant bushes among the trees in the forest, and wild strawberries around the edge. Later, after the trees in the forest have grown a little, we can set up two or three empty log hives there for bees. And we shall use trees to make a gazebo where you will have a cool place, safe from the heat, to talk with your children or your friends. And we can make a summer sleeping area out of living things, along with a creative workshop for you. And sleeping places for the children, and a living room.”

“Wow! It won’t be a forest we end up with, but more of a palace!”

“Only the palace will be a living entity, and continue to grow in perpetuity. This is how the Creator Himself thought up the whole balance of things. And all Man has to do is to assign everything its task — according to his own taste, design and understanding.”

“But why didn’t the Creator do it all this way to begin with? Everything in the forest grows just where it happens to end up.”

“Think of the forest as a book for you as a creator. Look more closely, Vladimir — everything therein has been written by the Father. Look over there: three trees are growing just a

half-metre apart. You are free to plant them in a row and use a whole lot of them to make up other configurations. In among the trees there are bushes growing — think of how you can make use of them to sweeten your life. And where the trees do not allow grass and bushes to grow between them, you can take that as a lesson for building your future house out of living materials. It is as though all you have to do is to formulate the required programme and adjust it according to your taste. Everything around you is charged with the task of cherishing and delighting you and your children, cherishing and feeding them.”

“To feed ourselves, we’ll need to plant a vegetable garden. And that’ll take a lot of sweat.”

“Believe me, Vladimir, even the vegetable garden can be set up so that it will not be an aggravation. You just need to keep everything under observation. Among the herbs, just the way everything grows in the forest, you could have the most splendid tomatoes and cucumbers under cultivation. Their taste will be much more appealing and healthful for the body than when they are grown simply on a patch of bare ground.”

“But what about the weeds? And won’t they be destroyed by pests and beetles?”

“There is nothing useless in Nature, Vladimir, and there are no purposeless weeds. Neither are there any beetles that are harmful to Man.”

“What d’you mean, there aren’t any harmful beetles?! Take locusts, for example, or the Colorado beetle — a real vermin that eats away at potato crops in the fields.”

“Yes, it does. It is also thereby showing people how their ignorance is eating away at the self-sufficiency of the Earth, contradicting the designs of the Divine Creator. How can people keep stubbornly ploughing year after year in one and the same place, torturing the ground? It is like scraping an open wound, at the same time demanding benefits from the

wound. Locusts or the Colorado beetle will not touch the ground-lot which you and I have outlined. When everything grows together in one grand harmony, the fruits accruing to the owner are also harmonious.”

“But if that’s the way everything is going to ultimately turn out, meaning that on the lot you have thought up there is no need for Man to fertilise the ground, or fight off vermin with various kinds of poisons, or do weeding, and everything is just going to grow all by itself, then what is there left for *Man* to do?”

“Live in Paradise. The way God wanted us to. Anyone who is able to build himself a Paradise like that will come into contact with the Divine thought and produce a new co-creation together with Him.”

“What new co-creation?”

“Its turn will come once the creation of Paradise has been completed in due course. Let us consider now what you and I still need to do.”

CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHT



Home

"We still have to build ourselves a decent home," I observed. "A place for our children and grandchildren to live, problem-free. A two-storey brick manor house with a toilet, bathroom and hot-water heater. You can do that for any private home these days. I was at a building fair recently and noticed how a lot of different facilities have been developed for conveniences in private homes. Or are you again going to object that we don't need to use any technological gadgets?"

"On the contrary, they are necessary. You need to make everything serve the cause of good as the opportunity presents itself. Besides, it is important that there be a smooth transition in people's habits. Only your grandchildren will not need the kind of home *you* are building. They will understand on their own as they grow up. They will need another kind of home. That is why it is not worthwhile spending too much effort to make the house extremely big or solid."

"Anastasia, I can tell you've got another sly trick up your sleeve. You keep rejecting everything I propose, even the house. I think there is no question but it should be a decent house. You said we would be designing this project together, and here you're thwarting me at every turn, no matter what I say."

"Of course we are doing it together, Vladimir. Besides, I am not rejecting anything, I am simply expressing my views. And each one must decide for himself what comes closest to his own taste."

"You should have told me a little more about your views right off. I don't think anyone's going to understand why the house should not stay the way it is for the grandchildren."

"The other home will still preserve their love for you and their everlasting memories of you. When your grandchildren grow up, they will understand which materials out of all the ones thought up on the Earth will be the most pleasant, solid and useful for them. Right now you do not have those kinds of materials. Your grandchildren will build a wooden house using those trees which their grandfather planted 'way back when' and which their father and mother so loved. That home will start curing them, it will keep them from impurities and inspire them to what is bright. The grand energy of Love will dwell in that home."

"Yes... Interesting... A home made of materials, of the trees cultivated by their grandfather, and their father and mother. And you say it will help protect those living in this home? How? There's some kind of mysticism involved here."

"Why would you call the bright energy of Love 'mysticism', Vladimir?"

"Because not everything's clear to me. Here I've been talking about designing a home and a ground-lot, and now you've all of a sudden started stating things about *love*."

"But why 'all of a sudden'? You have to create everything with love right from the start."

"What — the living fence too? And d'you have to plant the saplings in the forest with love, too?"

"Of course. The grand energy of Love and all the planets in creation will help you lead a full life, a life inherent in a son of God."

"Now you've *really* started talking incomprehensibly, Anastasia. From a house and garden you've gone back to 'God' again. What relation could there possibly be here?"

"Forgive me for not being clearer in my explanation, Vladimir. Allow me to try a different route in trying to explain the significance of our project."

"Go ahead. Only it turns out it's *your* project, not *ours*."

"It belongs to everyone, Vladimir. Many people will sense it intuitively in their hearts. But Man will be prevented from grasping its specific details by fly-by-night dogmas, sounds of the technocratic way of doing things and the many scientific disciplines that are attempting to lead people away from happiness."

"All the more reason for you to try putting everything in more specific terms."

"All right, I shall try. Oh, how I wish my explanations could be clearer to people — oh, how I wish they could! O logic of Divine aspirations, help me choose phrases and word-combinations that will be more clearly understood!"

CHAPTER TWENTY-NINE



The energy of Love

“The great energy of Love is sent to the Earth by God for His children. It comes to each of them at one time or another. It frequently tries to cheer Man with its warmth and stay near him for ever. But most people do not give the great Divine energy the opportunity of remaining with them for long.

“Imagine a couple where he and she meet at one point in the resplendent radiance of love. They endeavour to join their lives together in perpetuity. They consider that their union will be made more solid if affirmed on paper and by ritual in front of a large gathering of witnesses. But all to no avail. It takes but a few days for the energy of Love to fade from their lives. And it happens that way with just about everyone.”

“Yes, you are right, Anastasia. A tremendous number of people get divorced. About seventy percent. And it often happens that those who don’t get divorced end up living like a dog and cat together, or show complete indifference to each other. Everybody knows this, but nobody can figure out why it happens on such a massive scale. You claim the energy of Love fades from their lives, but why? As though it were somehow aiming to tease everyone or playing some kind of game it’s invented?”

“Love does not tease anyone and it does not play games. It tries to stay with everyone for ever, but Man chooses his own way of life, and this way of life frightens the energy of Love. Love cannot give inspiration to annihilation. It is unseemly for the offspring of love to live in torment when he and she are beginning to build a new life together — when they are

endeavouring to establish a home in an apartment resembling a vault of lifeless stone. When each has their own work and interests and their own environment. When there is no common vision of the future, no conjugal aspirations. When their bodies are attracted by mere fleshly alleviation, only to hand over their child to the cruel ways of a world devoid of clean water, a world filled with bandits, wars and disease. It is from this that the energy of Love flees.”

“But what if he and she have lots of money? Or the parents give the newlyweds, instead of a tiny flat, say a six-room apartment in a fancy modern block, with a guard on duty at the entrance, and they give them a fine car, and deposit lots of money into their bank account — would the energy of Love agree to remain under those conditions? Could he and she live their whole life in love?”

“Then they will be obliged to live their lives to the end of their years in cold fear, deprived of love and freedom. And watch everything around them grow old and rot.”

“So what exactly does this finical energy of Love require?”

“Love is not finicky or obstinate, it aspires to the Divine creation. It can forever warm the heart of one who agrees to co-create with it a Space of Love.”

“And is there a Space of Love somewhere in the design you have come up with?”

“Yes.”

“And where is it?”

“It is in everything. First it is born for the couple, then again for their children. And through three planes of being the children will have a connection with the whole Universe.

“Imagine, Vladimir, that *he* and *she* will begin in their love to implement this design that you and I are outlining. They will plant family trees and herbs in the ground, together with an orchard. And how happy they will be in the spring when their co-creations burst forth into bloom. Love will eternally

dwell between them, in their hearts, all around. And each will see the other in a spring flower, remembering how they planted a flowering tree together. And the taste of raspberries will remind them of the taste of love, since in the autumn *he* and *she* — in love for each other — touched the twig of a raspberry bush.

“In the shady orchard splendid fruit is ripening on every tree thereof. And the orchard was planted jointly by *he* and *she*. They planted the orchard in love.

“*She* laughed resoundingly when *he* dug a hole and perspiration covered his brow, and *she* wiped it off with her hand and planted a kiss on his burning lips.

“It often happens in life that only one of the partners is in love, while their mate simply tolerates the other’s presence. Once they start working on the orchard, the energy of Love will multiply itself and never forsake either of them! After all, their way of life will help them both live their lives in love and convey the Space of Love to their children in continuation. And help them raise their children together with God in His image and likeness.”

“Anastasia, tell me in greater detail about the raising of children. A desire to know more about this is something many readers in their letters have expressed. Even if you don’t have a system of your own, at least tell us, out of the existing systems, which is best.”

CHAPTER THIRTY



In His image and likeness

“You will not find a single system of child-raising that will suit everyone, Vladimir, if only because each one must first respond to the question of exactly what kind of individual they want to raise their child to be.”

“What d’you mean, what kind? A Man, of course — a happy, intelligent Man.”

“If so, then the parents themselves must become that kind of Man. And if they themselves have not been able to achieve happiness, then they should know what has prevented them from doing so.

“I very much want to speak about happy children. Raising them, Vladimir, means also raising yourself. The project we have been outlining all together will help in this. You and everyone else know the way children are born these days. People do not pay enough attention to their whole experience leading up to the birth, and many children are deprived of the planes of being inherent only in Man, and so children are inevitably born cripples.”

“Cripples? D’you mean without arms or legs, or polio victims?”

“A Man may be born crippled not only in outward appearance. Sometimes the body may appear externally quite healthy. But Man has a second self, and each Man should have a full set of all forms of energy. Intellect, feelings, thought and much else besides. But more than half of all children, even by today’s very low standards, are deemed by your medical professionals to be deficient. If you want proof of this, take a

look and see how many schools there are today for the ‘mentally retarded’. That’s how your medical professionals classify them. Only they are comparing their abilities with those of children considered relatively normal. But if the doctors saw what the mind and the inner complexes of human energy could be in the ideal, only a few rare individuals among all the children born on the Earth would be considered ‘normal’.”

“But why are all children not completely perfect, as you say?”

“The technocratic world aims to prevent the three most important points in newly born children from merging into one. Technocracy tries to break Man’s links with the Divine Mind. And the links are broken before the child is born. And in looking for this connection, Man goes searching the world in suffering, and does not find it.”

“What ‘most important points’ are you talking about? What’s this about ‘links with the mind’? I don’t get any of it.”

“Vladimir, in a great many aspects Man is formed even before his entrance into the world. And his upbringing should come into contact with all creation. What God has used in creating His splendid creations should not be neglected by His son. Parents should impart to their co-creation the three most important points, the three primary planes of being.

“Here is the first point of Man’s birth — it is called *parental thought*. Both the Bible and the Koran talk about it: “In the beginning was the Word”¹ — though it could be put more precisely: “In the beginning was the Thought”. Let anyone calling themselves a parent today remember when they conceived their child in thought, and what kind of child they thought of him as. What kind of life did they foresee for him? What kind of world did they prepare for their creation?”

¹John 1: 1 (*Authorised King James Bible*).

"I think, Anastasia, that very few would even care to think of anything like that before the woman actually gets pregnant. In other words, they simply sleep together. Sometimes without even being married. And they get married when the girl gets pregnant, since there's no way of knowing whether she'll get pregnant at all. And there's no sense in thinking about it ahead of time, when there's no guarantee she'll even have a child."

"Yes, unfortunately, that is the way it often happens. Most people are conceived in fleshly indulgence. But Man, the image and likeness of God, should not come into the world as the result of fleshly indulgence.

"Now picture a different scenario. *He* and *she* build their splendid living home in love for one another and in thoughts about their future co-creation. And they visualise how their son or daughter will be happy in that place. How their offspring will hear its first sounds — its mother's breathing and the singing of the birds, God's creations. Then they will visualise how their child, when he grows up, will want to rest in his parents' garden after a hard day's journey and sit in the shade of a cedar tree. In the shade of a tree planted in love for him by his parents' hands, with thoughts of him, in their native land. The planting of the family tree on the part of the future parents will define this *first point*, and this point in turn will call upon the planets to aid them in their future co-creation. It is vital! It is important! And above all else it belongs to God! It is confirmation that you will be creating in His likeness! In the likeness of Him, the Grand Creator! And He will rejoice in the conscious awareness of His son and daughter.

"*Thought is the origin of everything.* Please believe me, Vladimir. The currents of all the diverse energies of the Universe will unite in that spot where the thoughts of two have merged into one in love, where two together are contemplating a splendid creation.

“The *second point*, or rather, yet another human plane, will be born and light a new star in the heavens when two bodies merge into one — merge in love and with thoughts of a splendid creation — in the very place where you build your Paradise home, your living home for your future child.

“Then the wife who has conceived should live in that spot for nine months. And it is best of all if these months are the blossoming of spring, the sweet fragrance of summer, and the fruits of autumn. Where nothing will distract her except for joy and pleasant feelings. Where the wife, in whom a co-creation is already dwelling splendidly, is surrounded only by the sounds of Divine creations. She lives there and feels with her whole self the whole Universe. And the future mother should see the stars. And mentally give all the stars and all the planets to her splendid child as a gift — something the mother can do all with the greatest of ease, something completely within her power. And everything will follow the mother’s thought without hesitation. And the Universe will be a faithful servant to the splendid creation these two people have produced in love.

“And a *third point*, a new plane of being should come about in that space. Right there on the spot where the conception occurred the birth should take place. And the father should stay close around. And the great all-loving Father will raise over the three of them a crown.”

“Wow! I don’t know why, Anastasia, but I find your words even took *my* breath away. You know, I was able to visualise the spot you’re talking about. And oh, how I could visualise it! It made me feel as though I wanted to be born again myself in such a place. So that right this moment I could go and rest in a splendid garden planted by my father and mother. So that I could sit in the shade of a tree planted for me before my birth. The place where I was conceived and where I was born. Where my mother walked in the garden, thinking about me, even before I came into the world.”

“Such a place would greet you with great joy, Vladimir. If your body should fall ill, it would heal the body. If your soul, it would heal the soul too. And if you were weary it would give you food and drink. It would embrace you in a gentle sleep and wake you with a joyful dawn. But, as with most of the people living on the Earth today, you do not have such a spot. You do not have a native land — a Motherland — where the planes of being can merge into one.”

“But why does everything we do turn out so lousy? And why do mothers continue to bring semi-retarded children into the world? Who took this spot away from me? Who has taken it away from everyone else?”

“Vladimir, perhaps you yourself can say who failed to create such a place for your daughter Polina?”

“What?! You’re not suggesting I’m to blame for...? For my daughter not having a spot?”

CHAPTER THIRTY-ONE



But who is to blame?

“But I had no idea all that could be done so fine, just like that. Pity I can’t turn the clock back in time and correct everything.”

“But why go back? Life goes on, and each one is given the opportunity at any moment to create a splendid way of life.”

“Life goes on, of course, but what good are old people, for example? Now they expect their children to help *them*, while the children themselves are unemployed. Besides, how can children be properly brought up now, when they’re all grown up themselves?”

“Adults can still give their children a Divine upbringing.”

“But how?”

“You know, it would be good for the elderly to apologise to their children. And sincerely apologise, for not having been able to give them a trouble-free world. For dirty water and polluted air.

“And let them begin to build, with their elderly hands, a real living home for their grown kids. If only such a splendid thought is born in them, the days of their lives will be extended. And when the elderly reach out their hand to touch their Motherland, believe me, Vladimir, the children they yearn to see will return to them. And perhaps the elderly will not be able to grow their living home completely, but their very children will be able to bury them right in their Motherland, and thereby help them come to life again.”

“Bury them in their Motherland? Oh, by ‘Motherland’ you mean their lot of family terrain. So, we should bury our

relations on this lot of land, instead of in a cemetery? And we'll put up memorials to them there?"

"Of course, on their own land, their own plot of ground. In the forest planted by their own hand. But of man-made memorials they have no need. Indeed, everything around will serve as a memorial to them. And every day everything around you will remind you of them and not with sadness, but with gladness. And your line will be immortal — after all, it is only good memories that will bring back souls to the Earth."

"Hold on, hold on there. What about the cemeteries? D'you mean to say they're completely superfluous?"

"Vladimir, cemeteries today are something like cesspits, where people throw their useless garbage. Even up until recently the bodies of those who died were buried in family tombs, chapels and temples. And only those without family or wayward people were taken outside the community. What is left today is but a distorted remembrance ritual of long ago. You go through a ritual after three days, then nine days after that, then six months, then a year, and so on. Then the remembrance is wholly superseded by the ritual itself. The souls of those who have passed away are gradually forgotten by those living today. And even the living are all too often forgotten, when children abandon their own parents and run away to some far-off land. And the children themselves are not to blame — they are simply running from what they intuitively perceive as the parents' lie and the hopelessness of their own aspirations. They are running away from impending hopelessness, only to find themselves at the same dead end.

"Everything in the Universe is arranged so that those souls who are called by good memories from the Earth are the first to be re-embodied in material form. Called not by ritual, but by genuine feelings. They will appear in those living on the Earth when the departed, by virtue of their way of life, leave

behind pleasant memories of themselves. When the memories of them are not ritualistic, but are real and tangible.

"In comparison with the multitude of other human planes of being in the Universe, the human material plane is no less significant, and we must lovingly cherish our relationship to it.

"From the bodies buried in the forest they themselves planted, grass and flowers will come up, along with bushes and trees. You will see these and delight in them. Every day you will come into contact with a piece of your Motherland tilled by your parents' hand, you will communicate with them subconsciously, and they will communicate with you. Have you ever heard of guardian angels?"

"Yes, I have."

"These guardian angels, your ancestors both close and distant, will endeavour to watch over you. In three generations their souls will once again be embodied on the Earth. But even when they do not have an earthly, material incarnation, the energy of their souls will not refrain from watching over you every moment. Nobody will be able to aggressively invade your kin's terrain. The energy of fear is in each person — an energy that will also be awakened in the aggressor. The aggressor here will find himself subject to a multitude of diseases, arising from stress. In time they will also destroy him."

"In time,' you say, but that aggressor might wreak a lot of havoc in the meantime."

"Who will seek to attack, Vladimir, if he knows that his punishment is inevitable?"

"But what if he doesn't know it?"

"Every person today knows this intuitively."

"Well, okay, let's say you're right about aggressors, but what about friends? Let's say I want to have my friends over for a visit one night. They'll come and get a fright from everything around them."

"Any friends you have whose thoughts are pure will be gladly welcomed by what is around them, as you will be glad to greet them. And here I might bring up the example of the hound. When a friend comes to the dog's owner, a faithful watchdog will not lay a paw on him. When an aggressor attacks, however, the faithful hound is ready to do mortal combat with him.

"And on your plot of Motherland even each blade of grass that grows will be healthful both to you and to your friends. And each breeze that blows will bring you healing pollen from the flowers, bushes and trees. And the energy of all your forebears will be present with you. And in anticipation of co-creation the planets themselves will await your dictation.

"And the face of your beloved will reflect from every petal of the splendid flowers in perpetuity. And the children you raise will tenderly talk with you for millennia to come. And you yourself will be embodied in new generations. And so you will talk with yourself, and help with your own upbringing. And you will produce co-creations with your Parent. In your own Motherland, in your own Space of Love will dwell the Divine energy — love!"

When Anastasia told me about the plot of land back in the taiga, my breath was simply taken away, captivated as it was by her fervour and the intonations of her voice. Later, after coming home and writing these lines, I often wondered how important it really is for each individual to have such a spot of his own — this piece of one's Motherland, as she calls it? Can one really see to a child's upbringing when he is already grown, with one's own last breath? Is it really possible, with the help of one's own family terrain, to speak with one's parents again and for their energy to protect one, both in spirit and in body? And — just imagine — it came about that all my doubts were erased all on their own by life itself. This is how it happened...

CHAPTER THIRTY-TWO



The old man at the dolmen

Three years ago I went to the northern Caucasus to write the first chapters about the dolmens, which people now flock to visit in an unending stream. But back then very few bothered to come and see these edifices of our ancient forebears. I would make frequent visits — on my own — to the dolmen situated on a property belonging to a farmer by the name of Stanislav Bambakov in the settlement of Pshada,¹ in the Gelendzhik district. And each time I went, there was old Bambakov at the dolmen. He always showed up unexpectedly, wearing a patched shirt and carrying a jar of honey from his apiary.

The elderly man was tall, lean and very agile. He had acquired his land only recently, at the beginning of *perestroika*,² and gave the impression he was most anxious to get everything set up on it as quickly as possible. He built himself a small house and a shed for his beehives, along with farm buildings made of various scrap materials. He started putting in an orchard and digging a small pond, thinking to coax forth a water spring, but he ran into a layer of rock.

In addition, old Bambakov was very attentive to the dolmen. He would sweep all around it. He also took the rocks he found in the field beside the dolmen and put them in a pile.

¹*Pshada* — see footnote 8 in Book 2, Chapter 33: “Your sacred sites, O Russia!”.

²*perestroika* — see footnote 3 in Chapter 19 of the present volume: “A secret science”.

He told me that these rocks had been brought here manually from other places, and pointed out how different they were from other rocks in the vicinity. People had made them into a mound, he said, and erected the dolmen on top.

The old man's farmstead stood off to one side, away from the settlement and the main road. Most of the time he worked it all by himself. I wondered whether he realised how pointless his efforts were. There was no way he could set up his farmstead, work the land and build himself a regular modern house. But even if a miracle should happen and he should succeed in beautifying the surrounding land and establishing his farmstead, he would still hardly have cause for rejoicing. Everybody's children were running off to the cities. Indeed, this old man's son had set himself up with his wife in Moscow, where he'd become a civil servant.

Didn't the old man realise how pointless his efforts were? They weren't of any use to anyone, even the children. Their father would no doubt have to die with a heavy heart, knowing that his farmstead would go to ruin. Knowing that everything would grow over with wild grasses, and his bees would swarm out. And the dolmen standing so awkwardly in the middle of his field would once again get covered in garbage. He ought to have taken it easy in his advanced years, while here he was working his heart out from morning 'til night, always digging or building something like a possessed man.

One time I arrived at the dolmen well after dark. The path leading to it was lit by the light of the moon. Silence reigned — the only sound was the rustle of leaves in the breeze. I stopped a few steps short of the trees growing around the dolmen.

There sitting on a rock next to the dolmen's portico was the old man. I recognised his gaunt figure at once. Usually agile and cheerful, he sat there without so much as a stir. He appeared to be weeping. Then he got up and began pacing

back and forth near the portico with his usual quick gait. Then he stopped abruptly, turned toward the dolmen and gave an affirmative wave of his hand. I realised that Bambakov was communicating with the dolmen, having a conversation with it.

I turned and headed back to the settlement, endeavouring to tread as softly as I could. Along the way I fell to wondering how this old fellow, already in his twilight years, could possibly be helped by the dolmen, no matter how strong or wise a spirit it possessed. How indeed?! Surely not just through communicating like that? *Wisdom!* Wisdom is something you need when you're young. What good is it when you're old? Who needs it? Who's going to listen to speeches of wisdom, if even one's own children are a million miles away?

Then a year and a half later, during one of my regular visits to Gelendzhik, I once again set out for the dolmen on old Bambakov's property. I already knew that Stanislav Bambakov had died. And I was a little sad that I wouldn't be seeing this cheerful, stalwart old fellow again. And I was sorry that I wouldn't have the chance to taste any more honey from his apiary. But what worried me the most was the prospect of seeing garbage around the dolmen and the whole place in a state of ruin. However...

The lane leading from the main road to the farmstead, it turned out, was freshly swept. Just before the path turned off that led to the dolmen, there among the trees stood wooden tables with benches around, even a beautiful gazebo. Along the lane, neatly marked off by whitened stones, were growing green cypress saplings. Lights burned in the windows of the little house, as well as outside, on a lamp-post.

His son! Old Bambakov's son, Sergei Stanislavovich Bambakov, had left Moscow, quit his job and moved with his wife and son here to his father's farmstead.

Sergei and I sat at one of the tables underneath the trees...

"My father rang me in Moscow, asked me to come. I came, looked around, and brought my family," recounted Sergei. "And I started working here with my dad. Such a joy it turned out to be, working alongside him. And when he died, there was no way I could leave this place."

"No regrets moving here from Moscow?"

"No regrets, and my wife has no regrets either. I thank my father every day for this. We feel a lot more at home here."

"Have you got some facilities in — running water for instance?"

"Facilities... well, you see the outhouse there — that's something my father fixed up before he died. No, I'm talking about feeling at home in a different way. You know, feeling better inside, more satisfied."

"And what about work?"

"We've got our fill of work. There's the new orchard to tend to, and looking after the apiary. I'm still not a hundred percent knowledgeable about working with bees. Too bad my father's skill didn't rub off on me."

"More and more people are coming to the dolmen, and every day we greet the touring coaches. The wife's always glad to help out. My father asked me to keep on greeting people, and I greet them. I've set up a little coach stop, I want to bring in running water. But they keep harassing us over taxes. Right now we don't really have enough to get by. At least we can be thankful that the head of the local administration can give us a little help."

I told Sergei about what Anastasia had said about land, about the lots, and remembering parents, and he responded:

"You know, she's right! She's a hundred percent right! My father died, and yet it seems as though I talk with him every day — sometimes we argue, even. And he's becoming closer and closer to me — it's as though he never died."

"What d'you mean? How can you talk with him? The way mediums do — you hear voices?"

"Of course not. It's much simpler than that. You see that crater over there? He was searching for water and stumbled across a layer of rock. I was going to fill in that crater and put another table with benches in its place. And then I thought to myself: *What have you done here, dear old dad? You didn't think things through. Now I've got extra work to do, and there's so much on my plate already.* Only the rains came, and water gushed down from the mountain and filled the crater, and it stayed — the water level stayed up for several months. A little pond formed. And I thought: *Jolly good, dad! That crater of yours is good for something after all!* And now I see there's so many other things he thought of here, I'm still trying to figure them all out."

"Can you tell me how he managed to get you to come here, Sergei, all the way from Moscow? What words did he use?"

"As far as I can recall, he used very simple words. Ordinary words. I only remember that his words gave me some kind of feelings and desires I'd never had before... and here I am. *Thank you, dad!*"

What words did old Bambakov learn when he communicated with the dolmen? What wisdom did he learn to make his son come back to him? And come back to him for good! Pity they buried him in the cemetery, and not on his own land, like Anastasia said. And I began to be even a bit envious of Sergei — his father found, or created for him, his own piece of his Motherland. Will I ever have mine? Will others have theirs? Bambakov has it good. It would be good for everyone to be able to stand on their own piece of their Motherland!

CHAPTER THIRTY-THREE



School, or the lessons of the gods

After my final visit to the dolmen on Stanislav Bambakov's property and my meeting with his son I began recalling more distinctly my conversation with Anastasia about one's Motherland, and about her 'lot' project. My head was floating in memories of the individual plots comprising splendid communities of the future which she had outlined with a stick in the moist earth. And how enthusiastically, with unusual intonations in her voice, she had endeavoured to describe them — it was as though I could hear the very leaves rustle in the gardens now covering the former wasteland, and hear the pure water gurgling in the brooks, and look and see the beautiful and happy men and women living among them. And hear the children's laughter, and the songs at the close of the day. Along with this, the extraordinary nature of her description provoked a whole range of questions, such as:

"The way you've drawn them, Anastasia, it looks as though the lots are not right up against each other. Why?"

"This splendid community has to have walkways, roadways and paths. There should be a passage no less than three metres wide on all sides between the lots."

"And will there be a school in this community?"

"Of course — look, there it is, in the middle of all the squares."

"I wonder what kind of teachers will be teaching in the new school, and how they will structure the classes. Probably the way I saw at Shchetinin's school. A lot of people are going there now. Everybody likes the forest school at Tekos.¹

And a lot of people want to set up similar schools in their own communities.”

“Shchetinin’s school is indeed marvellous. It is a step toward the school where children in the new communities will study. The pupils who have gone through Shchetinin’s school will help build them and teach in them. But wise and educated teachers are not the only principal component here. Parents will also be teaching their children in these new schools, and at the same time they will learn from their children.”

“But how can parents become teachers all of a sudden? Will all the parents have a higher education, let alone specialised education? There are a lot of different subjects — maths, physics, chemistry, literature — who will teach the children these in the schools?”

“The level and specialisation will not be uniform, of course, for everyone on the whole. But then, after all, the study of sciences and other subjects should not be considered an end in itself, a primary goal. It is much more important to learn how to be happy, and that is something only the parents can show by their example — that is their role.

“It is not at all necessary for the parents to teach classes in the traditional sense. Parents, for example, can participate in joint discussions or collectively administer an examination.”²

“An exam? Whose exam could the parents administer?”

“Their children’s, and the children could examine them, examine their parents.”

“Parents administer their kids’ exams?! You’re talking about school exams?! Now that has to be some kind of joke!

¹*Tekos* — the name of the settlement near Gelendzhik where Mikhail Petrovich Shchetinin’s school is located. For a description of the school, see Book 3, Chapter 17: “Put your vision of happiness into practice” and Chapter 18: “Academician Shchetinin”.

²*administer an examination* — It should be remembered that in Russian schools examinations are usually oral, rather than written.

Then all the kids would end up with top marks! What parent is going to give his own child a low mark? Any parent, of course, is automatically going to mark their son or daughter near the top of the class.”

“Vladimir, do not jump to conclusions. Along with classes resembling those in today’s schools, the new school will have others — more important ones.”

“Others? What kind of others?”

And all at once a thought crossed my mind: if Anastasia could so easily show scenes from millennial antiquity (whatever the process involved — her ray, hypnosis, or something else besides — it still worked), that means... that means, she must be able to show the near future too. So I asked her:

“Could you show me, Anastasia, at least one class from that school of the future, the kind of school that those new communities will have? Could you show me a non-traditional class?”

“I could.”

“Then show me. I want to compare it with what I saw in Shchetinin’s school. And with the classes I had back in my own schooldays.”

“And you will not ask about or be frightened by the power that I use to create scenes of the future?”

“I don’t care how you do it. It’ll simply be most interesting for me to watch.”

“Then lie down on the ground, relax, and doze off.”

Anastasia quietly placed her hand on top of mine and...

I could see, as though from above, amidst a whole lot of plots, one which had an internal configuration different from the rest. It comprised several large wooden buildings linked by footpaths, lined on either side by a variety of flower-beds. Near the building complex stood a natural amphitheatre: along the side of a hill rows of benches descended in a semi-circular formation. On these were seated about three hundred people of different ages, including both grey-haired

elders and some quite young. It looked as though they were sitting in family groups, since adult men and women were interspersed with children of various ages. Everyone was talking excitedly amongst themselves, as though they were anticipating something out of the ordinary — a concert performance by a superstar or a presidential address.

In front of the audience on a wooden stage or platform stood two small tables and two chairs, with a large chalkboard behind. Alongside the platform there was a group of children, about fifteen in all, ranging in age from five to twelve, engaged in an animated discussion.

"This is the beginning of something resembling a symposium on astronomy," I heard Anastasia say.

"But what are the children doing here? Don't their parents have anybody they can leave them with?" I asked Anastasia.

"One of the group of children arguing amongst themselves will now give the keynote presentation," she explained. "Right now they are voting on who it shall be. There are two candidates, you see — a boy, he is nine years old, and a girl, she is eight... Now the children are voting... Ah, the majority has picked the boy."

A young boy approached one of the tables with a confident, businesslike step. From a cardboard folder he took out some papers containing designs and sketches and laid them out on the table. The rest of the group of children — some slowly and solemnly, others with a hop, skip and a jump — headed over to where their parents were seated on the benches. A little red-headed, freckle-faced girl — the other candidate, who was not chosen — walked past the table, her head held proudly in the air. The folder in her hands was a little bigger and thicker than the boy's — no doubt it too contained sketches and designs.

The boy at the table tried to say something to the girl as she went by, but she didn't stop. She simply straightened her

braid and walked on past, deliberately looking the other way. For some time the boy followed her distractedly with his gaze. Then he once more focused his attention on rearranging the papers in front of him.

"Who on earth could have managed to teach these kids enough astronomy so that they can make a presentation before a group of adults?" I asked Anastasia.

And she replied:

"Nobody taught them. They were given the opportunity to work out for themselves how the whole Universe is structured, to prepare their arguments and present their conclusions. They have been working on it for more than two weeks already, and the final moment has come. They will now defend their views, and their conclusions may be refuted by anyone who wishes to do so."

"So, it turns out this is some kind of game?"

"You can think of what is going on here as a 'game'. Only it is very serious. Each person present will now have their thinking about the planetary order accelerated, and may perhaps start contemplating something even greater than that. After all, the children have been thinking and pondering for two weeks now, and their thought is not limited by anything — there are no dogmas or theories of planetary order to weigh them down. We still do not know what they will come up with."

"They'll be fantasising with their child mindsets, you mean to say?"

"I mean to say, they shall present their own theories. After all, even adults have not come up with any proven truths regarding planetary order. The goal of this symposium is not to work out any canons, but to accelerate thought, which afterward will determine what is true, or at least come closer to the truth."

At this point a young man stepped up to the second table and announced the presentation was about to begin. Whereupon the nine-year-old started to speak.

He spoke confidently and enthusiastically for about twenty-five or thirty minutes. What he said struck me as sheer childish fantasy — a fantasy not grounded in any scientific theories or even an elementary knowledge one would get from a high-school astronomy course. He spoke in substance as follows:

“If you look up to the sky in the late evening, you see a whole lot of stars shining there. There are different kinds of stars. Some stars are little and others a little larger. But very small stars can be big, too. Only we think at first that they are little. But they are very big. Because when an aeroplane flies very high, it is small, but when it is on the ground and we walk up to it, it turns out to be big, and it can hold a whole lot of people. And each star could hold a whole lot of people.

“Only there are no people on the stars right now. But they shine in the evening. The big ones shine, and the little ones too. They shine so we can see them and think about them. The stars want us to make the things we do on the Earth just as good on them too. They are a little envious of the Earth. They really want berries and trees to grow on them the way they do here, they want the same little streams and fishes.

“The stars are waiting for us, and each of them is trying to shine to make us pay attention to it. But we can’t yet travel to them, ’cause we’ve got a lot of things to take care of here at home. But when we do take care of everything at home, and things are good everywhere on the whole Earth, then we shall travel to the stars. Only we shan’t travel by plane or rocket ship, ’cause flying by plane would take too long and the rocket ship would be long and boring. Besides, we won’t all fit into a plane or a rocket ship. And there won’t be room for all sorts of things we want to take with us. There won’t be any room for trees, or a stream. But once we make everything right all over the Earth, we’ll fly the whole Earth to the nearest star.

“Besides, some stars will want to come to Earth themselves and snuggle up to it. They have already sent their fragments, and their fragments have snuggled up to the Earth. People used to think that these were comets, but they are fragments of stars which really, really wanted to snuggle up to our beautiful Earth. They were sent by the stars, which are waiting for us. We can fly the whole Earth to a far-off star, and whoever wants to can remain on the star, to make it beautiful, like on the Earth.”

All this time the boy had been holding up his sheets of paper and showing them to the audience. They contained drawings of a starry sky and the Earth’s trajectory as it headed toward the stars. The last drawing portrayed two stars blossoming with gardens and the Earth moving away from them on its intergalactic journey.

When the boy finished talking and showing the drawings, the master of ceremonies announced that anyone who wished could challenge him or put forth his own views on what had just been said. But no one hastened to speak. Everybody remained silent — it looked to me as though they were concerned about something.

“What are they hesitating for?” I asked Anastasia. “Don’t any of the adults here know about astronomy?”

“They are hesitating because they know whatever arguments they put forth must be clear and well thought through. After all, their children are present. If what they say is not understandable or acceptable to the children’s hearts, then the speaker will risk being mistrusted or, even worse, treated unsympathetically. Adults cherish their relationship with their children, and hesitate to risk any harm to it. They are afraid of incurring the audience’s disfavour — especially their children’s.”

The heads of many in the audience began turning in the direction of a grey-haired elderly man sitting in their midst.

He had his arm around the shoulders of the little red-haired girl sitting beside him, the same one who had been one of the candidates to give the keynote presentation. Sitting next to them was a young and very beautiful woman. Anastasia commented:

“A lot of people now have their eyes on the elderly man in the middle of the audience. He is a university professor, a scientist, now retired. His personal life got mixed up rather early on, and he had no children. Ten years ago he procured a lot of land, and began to establish a home on it all by himself. A young woman fell in love with him and the little red-headed girl was born to them. The young woman next to him is his wife and the mother of his child. The retired professor very much loves the child of his old age. And the girl, his daughter, treats him with great respect and love. Many of those present here today believe that the professor is entitled to take the floor first.”

But the elderly professor had trouble getting his first words out. I could see him nervously rumpling the pages of some journal with his hands. Finally he got up and started to speak. He said something about the structure of the Universe, the comets and the mass of the Earth, and finally summed up his remarks something like this:

“The planet Earth, of course, is moving through space and rotating. But it is inextricably linked with the solar system, and cannot move independently. It cannot leave the solar system and travel to distant galaxies. The Sun gives life to everything living on the Earth. Moving away from the Sun would involve a serious cooling of the Earth, and we would end up with a dead planet. We can all observe what happens even when we move just a fraction away from the Sun. We get winter.”

At this point the professor stopped abruptly. The boy who had presented the paper flipped distractedly through his sketches, then gave a questioning glance to his peers in the

group, the ones who had helped him prepare the presentation. But it was apparent that everybody had found the argument of winter and cooling very cogent and plausible. This argument had the effect of crushing the children's beautiful dream of a space-travelling Earth. And all at once in the ensuing quiet, which had lasted a half-minute already, the voice of the elderly professor once more sounded forth.

"Winter... Life can't help but slow down if the Earth doesn't get enough solar energy. Simply can't help! You don't need any scientific studies to see that, to be convinced... On the other hand... it *is* possible that the Earth itself possesses energy, the same as the Sun. Only it hasn't yet manifested itself. Nobody's discovered it yet. Perhaps you yourselves will discover it at some point. Perhaps it is possible that the Earth could be self-sufficient. This energy will be made manifest in some way... The Sun's energy will show itself on the Earth, and, like solar energy, it will be able to unfold the petals of the flowers. And then we can travel on the Earth across the galaxy... Yes, then..."

The professor lost his train of thought and fell silent. A murmur of dissatisfaction could be heard through the audience. And then it all began...

The adults in the audience began getting up from their seats and holding forth, denouncing the professor, especially the possibility of living without the Sun. Some of them spoke of the photosynthesis of plants, others about environmental temperature, still others about the fixed nature of planetary trajectories. Through all this the professor sat with an increasingly drooping head. His red-haired daughter turned her head to look at each of the speakers — on occasion she would try standing up, as though she were trying to protect her father from his challengers.

An elderly woman who looked like the teacher type took the floor and started holding forth on how it wasn't right to

appease or flatter children just to curry a favourable attitude toward you on their part.

"Any lie will be exposed with time, and then how will we all look then? This isn't just a lie, it's cowardice!" said the woman.

The red-headed girl tugged on the lapels of her father's jacket. She began shaking him, practically crying, her voice breaking as she kept at him:

"Papochka,³ you lied about the energy... Did you lie, Papochka? Because we're children? The lady called you a coward. Is that bad?"

A silence fell upon the large open-air amphitheatre. The professor raised his head, looked his daughter in the eye, put his hand on her shoulder and quietly said:

"I believed what I said, daughter."

At first the girl remained silent. Then she quickly stood up on the bench and cried out as loudly as her little child's voice could muster:

"My Papa's not a coward. Papa believed what he said. *He believed it!*"

The little girl surveyed the now hushed audience. Nobody was even glancing in their direction. She looked at her mother. But the young woman turned away with her head lowered; she fiddled with the buttons on the sleeve of her cardigan, undoing them and doing them up again. The girl once more surveyed the hushed audience, and looked at her father. As before, the professor seemed to be gazing helplessly at his little daughter. Once more, this time in the absolute quiet, the red-headed girl's voice sounded gently and tenderly.

"People don't believe you, Papochka. They don't believe you 'cause the Sun's energy has not yet showed itself on the Earth — the energy that is like the Sun and can open the petals

³*Papochka* (pronounced *PAH-poch-ka*) — an endearing form of *Papa*.

of the flowers. But once it appears, then everybody will believe you. They will believe you later, when it appears. Later..."

And all at once the professor's daughter quickly straightened her hair, then leapt out into the aisle and ran off. She ran to the edge of the amphitheatre, and hurried toward one of the nearby houses. She disappeared inside, only to reappear in the doorway a few seconds later. This time the girl was holding in her hands an earthenware pot with a plant in it. She ran with it over to the speaker's table, which was now vacant. She put the potted plant down on the table. And her child's voice, now loud and confident, resonated over the heads of the audience:

"Look, here's a flower. Its petals are closed. All the flowers' petals have closed. 'Cause there's no sun out today. But they will open, because there is energy on the Earth... I shall... I shall transform myself into the energy which can open the petals of flowers."

With that the little girl closed her hands into a fist and began staring at the flower. She went on staring without blinking.

The people sitting in their seats refrained from conversation. Everyone was looking at the little girl and the plant in the earthenware pot on the table in front of her.

Slowly the professor rose from his seat and went over to his daughter. He went up to her and put his hands on her shoulders, trying to lead her away. But the little redhead shrugged him off and whispered:

"Why don't you help me instead, Papochka!"

The professor was no doubt utterly bewildered. He remained standing at his daughter's side, his hands on her little shoulders, and he too began staring at the flower.

But nothing was happening with the flower. And I began to feel somehow sorry for the little girl and her professor-father. But he really got himself into a fix with his declaration of faith in some kind of undiscovered energy!

All at once a boy stood up in the front row — the same boy that had given the presentation. He partially turned toward the silent audience, sniffed his nose and headed over to the table on the stage. Solemnly and confidently he approached the table and stood next to the red-haired girl. Just like her, he fixed his gaze firmly on the plant in the earthenware pot. But as far as the plant was concerned, of course, nothing was happening.

And then I saw it! I saw how children of all ages began rising from their seats and one by one came down to the stage. They silently took up a position, staring intently at the flower. The last little girl, about six years old, was carrying her very small brother in her arms. She managed to squeeze in front of those standing and someone helped her stand her younger brother up on the chair by the table. The toddler, after taking a good look at everyone around, turned to the flower and began blowing on it.

And all at once the potted plant began to gradually unfold the petals of one of its flowers. Little by little. But it didn't escape the notice of the hushed crowd in the amphitheatre. And several of them rose silently from their seats. And now, on the table, a second flower was already opening its petals, along with a third, and a fourth...

"Oooh..." cried the teacher-type in an excited, childlike voice, and began clapping her hands. Then the whole amphitheatre broke into applause. The beautiful young woman ran over to her professor-husband, who by this time had stepped off to one side of the crowd of delighted children surrounding the flower and was rubbing his forehead. She leapt at him on the run, threw her arms around his neck and began kissing his cheeks and lips...

The little redhead took a step in the direction of her embracing parents, but the boy who had given the presentation stopped her. She managed to wriggle her hand away, but after

taking a few more steps, she turned, went up close to him and buttoned up a button which had become undone on his shirt. With that she gave him a smile, then quickly turned and ran off to her still embracing parents.

More and more people were now heading from their seats down to the stage, some with babes in arms, others shaking the hand of the young presenter. He just stood there, his arm outstretched for handshaking, while his second hand was clasping the button the little girl had just done up for him.

All at once someone struck up a tune on a bayan⁴ — something between a gypsy melody and a Russian folk dance. And when some old fellow began stamping his feet on the stage, he was joined by a plumpish lady who made her entrance like a swan. And two young fellows had already launched into a boisterous *prisiadka*.⁵ And the flower with its unfolding petals watched as more and more people got carried away by the tricky and boisterous rhythms of a Russian folk dance.

Then, all of a sudden, the scene of the unusual school disappeared, as though a screen had been turned off. I was sitting on the ground. Taiga vegetation stretched all around, as far as the eye could see, and there beside me was Anastasia.

⁴*bayan* — in this case a Russian folk-instrument of the accordion family, using a single reed and a chromatic scale, with rows of buttons on both the left and the right sides (not to be confused with a similarly named bass drum in India). Derived from another accordion-type instrument, the diatonic *garmon'*, it is often played together with a stringed instrument (such as the *domra* or *balalaika*). It takes its name from a legendary Russian singer-storyteller named Bayan or Boyan, whose songs inspired ancient warriors to do their utmost in battle. By extension, the word *bayan* (derived from an ancient Russian verb signifying 'to tell') could refer to any wandering poet-storyteller — a counterpart of the Celtic *bard*.

⁵*prisiadka* (pronounced *prees-YAT-ka*) — one of the more famous Slavic dances, usually performed by men, involving squatting on one knee while kicking out the opposite leg in front, then alternating the leg positions in quick succession.

Inside me, however, a kind of excitement lingered, and I could still hear the laughter of happy people and the sounds of the cheery dance music, which I didn't want to let go of. When the sounds within me gradually died down, I said to Anastasia:

"What you showed me just now is nothing at all like any school class I've ever seen. It's some kind of family gathering, of families living in the community. And there wasn't a single teacher there — everything happened all by itself."

"There was a teacher, Vladimir, a very wise teacher. But he purposely did not attract anyone's attention to himself."

"But why were the parents there? Their emotional reactions only provoked stress."

"Emotions and feelings can accelerate thought by a factor of many times. They have lessons like that every week in this school. Teachers and parents are united in their aspirations, and children consider themselves to be equal with adults."

"All the same, it seems weird to think of parents participating in their children's education. After all, parents aren't trained to be teachers."

"It is sad, Vladimir, that people have got into the habit of handing over their children to others to be raised, regardless of who these others are — a school, or some other institution. They simply hand their children over, often not knowing what kind of world-view will be inculcated in them, or what destiny awaits them as a result of somebody's particular teaching. By giving their children over to an uncertain future, they are actually depriving themselves of their own children. That is why children whom mothers hand over to someone else to be taught learning often forget their mothers in turn."



The time came to leave. My mind was filled up full with all the information I had acquired, so much so that I was scarcely aware of my surroundings. I took my leave of Anastasia in some haste. I told her:

“Don’t bother seeing me off. When I’m walking alone, I can think unhindered.”

“Yes, do not let anyone hinder your thinking,” she responded. “When you come to the river, my grandfather will be there, and he will help ferry you across to the landing.”

I walked alone through the taiga in the direction of the river and thought about everything I had seen and heard, all at the same time. But one question persisted above all others: how did we get into this situation (‘we’ meaning the majority of people)? We think everyone has their Motherland, and yet none of us has a little piece of Motherland to call their own. And there isn’t even any law in our country, no law guaranteeing a Man or his family the opportunity to own in perpetuity a single hectare of land. Political leaders and parties in their ever-changing procession promise all sorts of benefits, but they all manage to avoid the question concerning a piece of our Motherland. Why?

And yet our grand Motherland consists precisely of little pieces. Native, small family homesteads, with little houses and gardens on them. If nobody has anything like that, then what does our Motherland consist of? A law must be drawn up to guarantee everyone their piece of Motherland. For every family that wants one. The deputies⁶ can pass such a law. The deputies are chosen by all of us. That means we must vote people into office who agree to pass such a law.

A law! How should it be worded? Maybe this way?

⁶*deputies* — members of the Russian *Duma*, or national parliament.

The State is obliged to provide each family couple, upon request, one hectare of land for use in perpetuity, with right of inheritance. Agricultural yields on these family lands shall never be subject to any kind of taxation. Family lands are not subject to sale.

Something like that would be okay. But what if somebody takes the land and doesn't do anything with it? Then the law should also state:

If over a period of three years the land is not cultivated, the State may take it back.

But what if some people want to live and work in the city and use their family domain like a dacha? Well, let them. Women will still come to their kin's domain⁷ to give birth. Those who do not will not be forgiven later by their children.

And just who will push this law through to final adoption? A political party? Which one? We need to set up a party for this purpose.⁸ And just who will take care of organising it? Where do we find politicians like that? We must seek them

⁷The terms *family domain* and *kin's domain* are used here interchangeably to translate the Russian term *rodovoe pomestie*. *Pomestie* is equivalent to *domain*, *estate* or *homestead*. *Rodovoe* comes from the same root as *Rod* (signifying 'God the Creator', 'origin', 'birth' or 'kin') and *Rodina* ('Motherland'); it literally means 'belonging to one's kin' and points to the unity of the past, present and future generations of one's family. Both *kin* and *family*, as used henceforth in the Ringing Cedars Series, include the whole range of one's ancestors and descendants and not merely the present generation of a family. Interestingly enough, the concept of *kin's domain* is not unlike the concept underlying the English word *kingdom*, since *king* originally meant 'head of a kin or family clan', while *dom* stems from a root signifying 'home place' or 'domain'. For more on *Rodina* see footnote 1 in Chapter 24 above: "Take back your Motherland, people!"

⁸a party — see footnote 3 in Chapter 26: "Even today everyone can build a home".

out, somehow. As soon as possible! Otherwise you could die, and not once come nigh to your Motherland. And your grandchildren won't remember you. When will an opportunity like this come again? When will it be possible to say, "Greetings, my Motherland!"?



Anastasia's grandfather was sitting on a log by the shore. Nearby a small wooden boat was tied up, rocking ever so gently on the waves. I knew it wasn't too hard to row to the nearest landing a few kilometres downstream on the other side of the river,⁹ but how would he fare coming back against the current, I wondered as I greeted the old fellow. I asked him about it.

"I'll make it by and by," answered Anastasia's grandfather. Always cheery as a rule, on this occasion he seemed rather sombre and not much inclined to conversation.

I sat down beside him on the log.

"I can't understand," I said, "how Anastasia can hold so much information inside her — how she can recall things from the past and know everything that is going on in our lives right now. And here she lives way out in the taiga, and delights in the flowers, the Sun and all the little creatures. It's as though she doesn't think about anything."

"What's there to think about?" her grandfather replied. "She feels it, this information. When she needs it, she takes as much as she wants. The answers to all questions are right

⁹*the river* — the Ob, which flows from south to north.

here in space, right with us. We need only know how to perceive them and make them manifest."

"How do we do that?"

"How... How... Say you're walking along the street of a city you know very well, thinking about your own affairs, and a passer-by suddenly comes up to you and asks how to get somewhere. Can you give him an answer?"

"Sure."

"You see how simple it all is. You were thinking about something completely different. The question put to you has absolutely no connection with what you were thinking about, and yet you are still able to give an answer. The answer 'lives' in you."

"But that's just a request for directions. But if the same passer-by were to ask me what happened in the city we're in — let's say, a thousand years before we met, no Man could give an answer to that."

"He couldn't if he's lazy or neglectful. Everything, right from the very moment of creation, is stored in and around each individual Man... Why don't you get into the boat? Time to push off."

The old fellow took the oars. When we had got about a kilometre from our departure point on the shore, Anastasia's erstwhile taciturn grandfather began to talk.

"Try not to wallow in all your information and contemplations, Vladimir. Decide what's real by yourself. With your self, you should be able to feel both matter and what you cannot see in equal measure."

"Why are you telling me this? I don't understand."

"Because you've started digging around in all that information, trying to define it with your mind. But you won't get it with your mind. The mind can't possibly fathom the volume of information known to my granddaughter. And you'll stop being aware of the creative process taking place around you."

"I'm aware of everything — the river, the boat..."

"If you're aware of everything, then why weren't you able to say a proper good-bye to my granddaughter and your son?"

"Well, maybe I wasn't able to after all. You see, I was thinking more globally."

I had indeed left almost without saying good-bye to Anastasia, and I got so immersed in thought during my whole journey back to the river that I hardly noticed the time, but suddenly found myself on the riverbank. I added:

"Anastasia also thinks about other things, she thinks globally, she doesn't need a whole lot of sentimental gestures."

"Anastasia feels with her self all planes of being. She doesn't feel one at the expense of another."

"So?"

"Take your field-glasses out of your bag and have a look back at the tree on the bank where we pushed off."

I got out my field-glasses and had a look. Standing there by the tree-trunk, holding our son in her arms, was Anastasia. On her bent arm hung a little bundle. She stood there with our son and waved her hand at our boat, which was moving further and further away downstream. And I waved back.

"Looks as though my granddaughter and her son followed you. She was waiting for you to finish your contemplating and start thinking of your son, and of her too. And she gathered together that bundle for you. But it seemed the information you had gathered from her was more important to you."

"The spiritual and the material — you need to feel it all in equal measure. Then you'll be able to take a solid stand in life, with both feet planted firmly on the ground. When one predominates over the other, it's like a person going lame."

The old man spoke with no trace of anger as he handled the oars with dexterity.

I tried to respond aloud, either to him or to myself:

"Most of all now I need to understand... To understand things for myself! Who are we? Where are we?"

CHAPTER THIRTY-FOUR



Anomalies at Gelendzhik

Dear readers, everything I have written in these books I either heard from Anastasia, or saw and experienced myself. All the events I describe are real events from my own life, and my descriptions, especially in the first couple of books, included people's real names and addresses — a decision I later had cause to regret. These people came to be bothered more and more by curious busybodies.

Another thorny problem has been all the various rumours, events and phenomena attached to both myself and Anastasia. The particular interpretations of these events — and, consequently, the particular conclusions drawn therefrom — have also been upsetting. Many of them I cannot agree with at all. For example, I am dead set against worshipping the dolmens. I believe that we can and must communicate with the dolmens on the basis of respect, but not worship them.

The readers of the Anastasia books comprise people of various faith groups and religious confessions, with various levels of education. I believe that anyone's interpretation of events is worth our attention. Everyone has the right to their own opinion, but when expressing it, they should say: "This is my opinion, my suggestion." And of course one should not mystify everything right off, and should certainly not mystify either me or Anastasia. Otherwise one may transform Anastasia from a Man — albeit not a very ordinary Man — into some kind of extraordinary being. Might it not be that she in fact is a *supremely normal* Man, and we are the ones who are abnormal? So please excuse me for getting carried away here

with my own opinions. It's on account of my being disturbed by a particular set of circumstances:

Rumours are circulating lightning fast at the moment about the fiery sphere with which Anastasia communicates. I ask my readers to recall my various descriptions of it in previous books — how this sphere appeared next to Anastasia in emergency situations: how it first appeared when little Anastasia was crying over her parents' grave, and then taught her to take her first little baby steps, and how it defended her when she was attacked. To her grandfather's question, "What is it?" she replied: "I would call it *Good*."

Yes, she does communicate with it, but even she does not fully comprehend what kind of natural phenomenon it is.

Now why have I all of a sudden brought up the fiery sphere which appeared out of nowhere? Because according to a mass of witnesses, it was this very sphere that appeared in the sky over Gelendzhik and stirred up a good deal of turmoil. Now rumours are being spread by detractors to the effect that Anastasia can practically bomb anyone she doesn't like with the help of this sphere, and that she communicates not only with the forces of light but also with the dark forces. And here the readers themselves are adding fat to the fire. I have already had a request from Tuapse to send this sphere to the Sochi city hall so that they might see the light the way the Gelendzhik council did.²

I shall now attempt, dear readers, to offer you a true account of what really happened in Gelendzhik, and I would ask you to read it calmly and understandingly.

A local non-profit organisation in Gelendzhik was preparing to hold a readers' conference on the *Anastasia* books. The

¹See Book 2, Chapter 27: "The anomaly"; also Book 3, Chapter 7: "Assault!".

²*Gelendzhik, Tuapse, Sochi* — cities on the eastern shore of the Black Sea (see footnote 2 in Book 1, Chapter 30: "Author's message to readers").

relationship of the organisation's board with the city council was, to put it mildly, tense. And in Book 2 I had already given a rather unflattering portrayal of the old city leadership. Against a background like that, you can just imagine what happened.

Some time after noon on 17 September 1999, on the eve of the reader's conference, a wind blew up in the city, and a thunderstorm began. All at once a fiery sphere appeared on the small square in front of the city hall. Its subsequent behaviour, people now say, was very much like that of Anastasia's sphere.

The sphere which appeared over Gelendzhik somehow evaded the lightning-rods of the surrounding buildings, and made contact with a tree standing in the middle of the square. Then the sphere emitted several fiery spheres or rays of somewhat smaller proportions. One of them flew into the Mayor's office, flew around the room right in front of onlookers and then flew out.

A second sphere flew into the window of the Deputy Mayor, Galina Nikolaevna,³ and hovered in the air for a while. Then it went over to the window and etched on the window-pane a strange symbol that nobody has yet been able to erase, and then flew off.

Subsequent rumours have it that the Gelendzhik administrative council has become 'holy' or 'enlightened'. They say that right after the incident with the fiery sphere, the council decided to adopt measures for a more favourable reception of the readers of my books coming to the city from out of town, to fix up the dolmens in the area, hold an annual inspirational

³*Galina Nikolaevna* — Note: *Nikolaevna* is a patronymic (i.e., a middle name derived from one's father's first name), not a surname. The combination of first name and patronymic is a common polite form of address in Russian, especially in business relationships.

songwriters' festival, and a lot more besides, which it was unwilling to do before.

Rumours of what had happened spread, together with the affirmation that Anastasia's sphere had visited Gelendzhik. I tried countering that it was only ball lightning, and that its resemblance in behaviour to what I had described in the book was purely coincidental, and the city council would have adopted some kind of resolution, regardless. But they would have none of it. They immediately began arguing that there are no coincidences, and besides, it wasn't just one coincidence in this case, but a whole chain. And they further declared that when coincidences follow one after another in a chain, it can be termed a pattern.

Of course one could say that the coincidences *had* come together in a chain. For now, at least, there was no logical explanation for the sphere bypassing the lightning-rods. Why did it make contact with the big tree standing in the square, flare up and make thundering sounds over it, yet refrain from destroying it and fly over to the city council windows? Why did it fly right into the offices of the very people capable of taking decisions with respect to readers coming to the city? Why did the city council render a favourable decision on a whole lot of questions immediately afterward? Why did the chairman of the municipal assembly take it upon herself to personally welcome the conference delegates the next day? And so forth.

According to one recent rumour the Mayor of Gelendzhik and the whole administrative apparatus has changed so much that now Gelendzhik will start to flourish, and become, as Anastasia said, "richer than Jerusalem or Rome".⁴ Another rumour has it that the sphere simply struck fear in everyone.

⁴See Book 2, last page of Chapter 32: "Title!".

Upon my arrival at Gelendzhik I met with the Mayor and her deputy. I saw the symbol the sphere had etched on the glass and I touched it. I sensed an unusual aroma in the office, something similar to incense or sulphur. But there was no sensation of fright. On the contrary: Galina Nikolaevna, the Deputy Mayor, for example, even seemed more cheery than on previous occasions. She also recounted to me how everything had happened, and asked me whether I thought this might be some kind of sign.

Altogether, the way things turned out, the theory about ordinary ball lightning was quite unacceptable. And I got accused of simplifying the situation.

I don't deny that I really did try to simplify things — and not only this situation. Why? Because I have heard reports about how certain religious leaders are frightening people with their speculations on Anastasia's unusual powers — saying that these powers were not of God, and that Anastasia was not a Man. They're writing articles about this in their religious journals. I can only imagine the exaggerations that will now come up with the appearance of the sphere at Gelendzhik.

I am not about to try to either prove or refute the identification of the fiery sphere at Gelendzhik with Anastasia's — there's no sense in it now. Everybody's going to stick to their own opinion. All I want is to try to reason a little together with you, dear readers, as to what kind of forces the fiery sphere at Gelendzhik might have represented.

The Bible says: "By their fruits ye shall know them."⁵ Well then, what are the fruits?

First, the fiery sphere caused no damage to the city hall. Even the glass on which it etched its symbol wasn't broken. The lingering aroma in the office was not an unpleasant one. Galina Nikolaevna (the occupant of the office) spoke with me

⁵Matth. 7: 20.

in the presence of four people, and none of them detected any sense of fear in her.

The sphere made thundering noises over the tree in the square, and there was a bright flare — people said it looked as though the tree itself was flaring up. But there it is, still growing away in perfect health.

The city council resolved to improve the level of service to readers from out-of-town. It also made a decision to offer regular, properly organised excursions to the dolmens Anastasia spoke about.

I myself cannot see a single negative consequence. Therefore, the fruits must be judged positive.

Anastasia says about the fiery sphere that it acts completely self-sufficiently, that it cannot be ordered about — one can only make a request of it.

In my books I am attempting to describe, as accurately as I can, situations I have seen with my own eyes, experienced with my own feelings or heard with my own ears. As for the incident with the fiery sphere at Gelendzhik, well, everyone can put forth their own version of events. But I certainly don't want anyone using this incident for the purpose of frightening people.

Besides, if one were to continue along that line, then it is possible to mystify the most mundane situations. Now people are even starting to say that this fiery sphere assisted me in making my presentation at Gelendzhik. But that's not true. I don't have any connection with it at all. And the press has not been blameless in feeding these rumours.

The respected magazine *Ogonyok*⁶ printed a long article in which the author states that “an experiment is being

⁶*Ogonyok* (stress on last syllable) — one of the oldest weekly illustrated magazines in Russia (published since 1899). The name literally means ‘little flame’.

conducted on this country on a major scale". Specifically he notes about me that "he talked on stage for eight hours straight — I haven't seen oratory like that for a long time". And another paper adds: "through all this he remained fresh as a cucumber". All these descriptions, to put it mildly, are exaggerated and inaccurate.

In the first place, at the conference I spoke not for eight hours straight, but only six. Two hours were 'added' from my presentation on the following day.

As far as assistance goes, it really was there, but with no mysticism.

On the eve of the Gelendzhik conference Anastasia came to see me, telling me I should get a good night's sleep. She offered me a tea extract that she had brought with her from the taiga, for me to drink just before bedtime. I agreed, since lately I really hadn't been able to sleep much at night. Then, when I lay down, she sat down beside me, took my hand — as she used to do back in the taiga (I described this in my chapter "Touching Paradise"⁷). And I fell asleep, as though literally flying off somewhere. Whenever she did this in the taiga, a sense of peace would always come over me.

I awoke the next morning to see a beautiful day out, I felt in top shape, and my mood was cheerful.

For breakfast Anastasia offered me only cedar milk, saying it was better not to eat any meat, since a lot of energy would be spent on digesting it. And after the cedar milk I didn't even feel like having meat. Whenever I have cedar milk, I never feel like having anything else.

When I gave my talk to the readers at the conference, Anastasia was not beside me. She stood quietly for a while in the auditorium among the readers, then went off and disappeared altogether.

⁷"*Touching Paradise*" — Chapter 21 in Book I.

But after the publication of the articles and the rumours giving a mystic interpretation to my presentation at the conference, I began to wonder myself whether Anastasia had somehow been helping me, and I said to her:

“Don’t tell me, Anastasia, you quite forgot I was supposed to look tired, at least toward the end of my presentation? Why did you let these people indulge in mystical speculation?”

She laughed, and replied:

“What kind of mysticism can there be in someone well-rested talking in a good mood with his friends? As for your speaking for so long, this was because your thought is still confused, you tried to grasp hold of a number of topics at once. It was possible to have phrased it more clearly and concisely, but you were not able to do that — also on account of the fact that your shoes were too tight and squeezing your feet, so that the blood had trouble circulating through your veins.”

You see now how utterly simple in fact it all was. There was absolutely no mysticism in my presentation.



Dear readers! I’m receiving more and more letters from you asking why neither I nor the Anastasia Foundation are responding to the critical articles in the press, to the insults and accusations of bigotry directed at me and my readers in general. What a waste of time that would be! Anyway, what’s the sense of responding to people who are simply out to provoke a scandal?

In November one journalist (by the name of By... — I’m not going to spell it out in full, no need to immortalise him)

saw fit to publish one and the same article under different titles in no less than five publications at the same time. He changed the titles, transposed a few sentences in the text and signed himself with different names. He naturally disparages me and then rants away with a diatribe on morals, ethics and commercialism. His editors will deal with him themselves before too long. I know how distasteful such a situation can be for editors. And it's considered highly unethical in journalists' circles. After all, each publication paid him an honorarium on the understanding they were getting an 'exclusive'. What's the point of my arguing with him? Maybe the poor fellow needs the money to buy himself a decent meal. And as for the muck and lies he dishes out, I don't think they'll ever stick to Anastasia — they'll all fall back on him.

Let's face it: Anastasia's a pretty hot topic right now, so I wouldn't be surprised if a few more publications tried to capitalise on her popularity. After all, you readers number more than a million already. Let's say I start a polemic with a tabloid of maybe 50,000 subscribers. You are naturally going to want to read it, and that means you'll be giving a huge boost to their circulation. There's absolutely no sense in arguing with them. You know yourselves, after all, whether you're bigots or not. *If you really want to get back at a publication, your best bet is simply to refuse to buy it, or cancel your subscription if you have one.*

As for me, the only way I can communicate with you is through my books. So now I'm going to try and answer some of your questions.

First of all, at the present time I'm not engaged in any business activities — I spend my whole time writing. I don't belong to any religious group. I'm simply trying to come up with my own sense of what life's all about. But the criticisms and fabrications directed at me and Anastasia are likely to increase. Seems a lot of people see Anastasia as an obstacle to their own pet plans.

You can bet they'll expose themselves sooner or later. But one thing that seems pretty clear to me now is that this Siberian girl's being seen as one hell of a threat to more than a few religious groups and at the same time to some financial-industrial empires both here in Russia and abroad.

They're the ones that are persistently blowing up the question in the press: *Does Anastasia exist or not? And just who is Megré?* And then they give their own answer: *No, she doesn't. And Megré's a penny-pinching entrepreneur.* In actual fact, they are more aware than just about anyone else of Anastasia's existence.

But they feel a need to go to any length to distract people from the central message of what information is coming out, to cut off the source of information at any cost, try to take control of it, and if that doesn't work, to exterminate it.

It seems they have been better and quicker than we have at evaluating the information coming from Anastasia. They even laugh at those who question Anastasia's existence. Think about it: would anyone listening to information on the radio question the existence of the station broadcasting it? But while some self-professed 'wise guys' have got caught up in an endless round of asking *Does she exist or not?*, in the meantime there has been an intense buying up and exporting of cedar nuts in the Irkutsk, Tomsk and Novosibirsk regions — for foreign currency, yet. According to reports out of Novosibirsk and Tomsk, Chinese representatives have been involved.⁸

1999 was a banner year for cedar nut crops in many parts of Siberia. But the Novosibirsk medical factory⁹ is not

⁸Indeed, China's domestic *consumption* of pine nuts ('cedar nuts' in Russia) is estimated to be greater than its total domestic *production*. Yet, China is the largest exporter of pine nuts to America (controlling over 90% of US imports, worth tens of millions of dollars each year). The 'Chinese' pine nuts found in North American health food stores and supermarkets are predominantly Russian in origin — they are, in fact, the nuts of Siberian cedar and Korean cedar trees 'exported' across the border to China, to be shelled and sent overseas, often without the necessary level of refrigeration.

increasing its output of cedar oil. There is a shortage of cedar nuts — the same nuts which are being made into expensive medicines in the West, where the manufacturers are taking great pains to conceal the identity of the main ingredient.

Remember I wrote back in Book 1 about how they were shipping cedar nuts abroad? And when I tried searching for information about cedar nut oil, I got a warning from Poland to back off.¹⁰ This year they've managed again to hold their own. But as to the future, well, we shall see. In the next book I shall tell about a certain surprise being prepared by Anastasia.

I am an entrepreneur. My idea was to write the books I promised and then get back to business. And I never hid my intentions from anyone — in fact I wrote about them right in Book 2.¹¹ But now my plans have changed. Let other Siberian entrepreneurs compete for trade with these Western smart alecs.

My plans changed because those behind critical publications continue to insult and frighten readers, labelling as bigots anybody who bothers to read my books, which they consider silly and devoid of literary value. Granted, I don't have any higher education, or experience in the literary field, and those who have these are irritated by the popularity of my books. They are especially upset by the fact that, given my level of education, I still refuse to submit my work to editors.

And they are simply furious over my publication of the five-hundred-page collection of readers' letters and poems entitled *The soul of Russia sings in Anastasia's ray*.¹² Again, I didn't

⁹Novosibirsk medical factory — see Ch. 24: "Take back your Motherland, people!"

¹⁰See Book 1, toward the end of Chapter 1: "The ringing cedar".

¹¹See Book 2, at the very end of Chapter 31: "How to produce healing cedar oil".

¹²*The soul of Russia sings in Anastasia's ray. A people's book* (Russian title: *V luche Anastasii zvuchit dusha Rossii. Narodnaya kniga*) — a 544-page volume of readers' poetry, art and letters. Seven sample poems from this collection are reproduced in English translation at the end of Book 1, Chapter 30: "Author's message to readers".

allow anyone to edit this. I wrote the preface myself, saying that the collection was quite an historic publication. I still say this. How else could one characterise it, containing as it does letters and musings on life, on the purpose of Man, on what people today cherish in life. The letters and poems are sincere, and written by people of different ages, different social situations and religious inclinations. And this book has been pretty popular. In fact, its popularity has quite given the lie to the myth that modern Man is interested only in crime novels and books about sex. People are eager to read poetry — even if it's not professionally written, but sincere nevertheless.

I've been told on a number of occasions that because I've thrown out a challenge to the whole brotherhood of the pen and their erudition, I'm going to be wiped off the face of the map — nobody will ever recognise me as a writer.

But it wasn't my intention to challenge anyone as a writer. That was never my intention, but now, when the press is going so far as to attribute the popularity of my books to the fact that "Russia is a stupid country", and that all my readers are fools and bigots, I have no choice but to respond to them. I shall be a writer! I'll do a little more practising, study some more... I'll ask Anastasia for help... and I shall be a writer! I shall write new books and reprint the ones already published in the best printing houses in the world. I shall make the books about Anastasia and about the people of Russia today the best books of the millennium.

This is how I shall respond to my present and future critics, but in the meantime I'll simply say this to them:

"To my critics, I bid you farewell. I'm going off with Anastasia — maybe she's a bit naïve, but she's beautiful, kind and sincere. We shall set off into our new millennium with more than a million readers in whose hearts a splendid and inspired image is alive and well. And what is in your hearts, critics? Phooey on you! Don't come crawling into our new

millennium. Get the... *how can I put it?* Get the hell on back to your own! And even if you do come crawling into ours, you'll only choke on your own anger and envy.

"In our millennium we're seeing the start of a new and splendid co-creation, where the air will be pure and there will be living water and fragrant gardens. And in that millennium I shall continue publishing new collections with readers' poems and letters. I shall call the series *A people's book*. You may say that "the poems therein are horrendous" but I say they are resplendent.

"I shall also put out some audiocassettes with songs of the bards — songs of Soul, of Russia, of Anastasia.¹³ You may say that anyone can strum a guitar. But I say that these bards sing from the heart. And I would add, in Anastasia's words: *Not in any of the galaxies could there be found a single string capable of producing a better sound than that of the singing of the human soul.*"¹⁴

Dear readers, I extend to all of you my heartfelt greetings on the dawn of *our* millennium! On the dawn of your splendid co-creation on the Earth!

Who are we? That is what I have decided to call my next book.

Respectfully,

Vladimir Megré

To be continued...

¹³Over the past five years, over a dozen albums — collections of bards' songs inspired by Anastasia — have been released by the Anastasia Foundation alone, and many more albums have been released independently. A 'Caravan of Love of Sun-bards' (*Karavan Liubvi Solnechnykh bardov*) has also been set up as an itinerant song festival, with large groups of bards travelling from city to city and giving free song performances in Russia and beyond.

¹⁴See Chapter 6: "Birth".



Hope for the world

Translator's and Editor's Afterword

Wow! Four books translated and counting. Not a bad record, when one considers that just a year ago (as of this writing) not a single page of this series had yet come off the Ringing Cedars presses in America.

The series was launched with the publication of Book 1, *Anastasia*, in February 2005, followed by Book 2, *The Ringing Cedars of Russia*, and Book 3, *The Space of Love*, later in the year. And now *Co-creation* makes four, with at least five volumes still to come. And for this swift progression we have *you* to thank, dear readers, for your ongoing support and encouragement, without which the publication of the new volumes would not have been possible. And needless to say, our gratitude goes out to our original source of support, the One whose inspiration inevitably underlies any legitimate act of 'co-creation'.

Equally noteworthy is the co-creation evident in the evolution of the original series itself, particularly the remarkable transformation of a hard-nosed Siberian commercial trader into one of Russia's bestselling authors. All the more amazing when one remembers that because of Vladimir Megré's initially 'choppy' writing style, the original Russian manuscript of *Anastasia* was rejected by publisher after publisher, leaving him no choice but to bring out the first edition on his own.¹ However, after several print-runs of the self-published *Anastasia* sold out simply by word of mouth, with no advertising campaign or bookstore exposure, professional publishers were

¹See Book 1, Chapter 30: "Author's message to readers".

only too eager to reconsider, and it was not long before the volumes in the Ringing Cedars Series were selling in the millions.

And now in America, as elsewhere in the English-speaking world, *Anastasia* and its sequels are once again running counter to the book-industry's long-held axioms. Even though corporate wholesalers declined to distribute the Ringing Cedars Series to major retailers on the grounds that "no book sells by word of mouth alone, without a budget sufficient for a large advertising campaign", you the readers have proved otherwise, and the books have already spread around the globe without so much as a single advertisement or paid-for review in the press. Many of you have taken it upon yourself to purchase additional copies to give to the family and friends. Some have even gone further and become independent distributors, devoting considerable time and effort to making the books available in your local regions. Thus, as with their original editions, the success of the books in translation is once again the result of the resourcefulness of their readers — readers who have let a new splendid *image* live in their hearts — and the ideas these books set forth are already leaving their mark on the world.

Indeed, there are signs that the world is beginning to grasp the message that there is a better path to freedom, enlightenment and happiness than the one along which it has been hurtling forward at breakneck speed, and that the 'new millennium' on the Earth which Vladimir Megré welcomes on the final pages of *Co-creation* is already dawning with a most glorious radiance. Both in Russia and abroad, *Anastasia* and the Ringing Cedars Movement are already the subject of many day-to-day conversations and frequent reports in the press (some pertinent examples are detailed below).

Many might find these developments surprising. However, there have been numerous thinkers in both the distant and the recent past who have attempted to send a similar message

to humanity: that *it is on the wrong path*. A few of these are worth noting here.

In the late 19th century the great Russian writer Leo Tolstoy took special note of how “millions of people — men, women and children — working ten, twelve or fifteen hours a day, are being transformed into machines and perishing in factories that manufacture unnecessary and harmful gadgets... while more and more villages become deserted”. He further observed that “in our time the human heart has been crying out more strongly, more strongly than ever before, against this false life, and calling people to the life demanded by revelation, reason and conscience”.²

At the same time, on the other side of the Atlantic, religious thinker and Christian Science founder Mary Baker Eddy was calling for a new approach to spiritual freedom from ‘mental slavery’ to long-held beliefs. She summed up this approach in her major work, *Science and health* (originally published in 1875) as follows: “The despotic tendencies, inherent in mortal mind and always germinating in new forms of tyranny, must be rooted out through the action of the divine Mind”.³

In 1931 the American prophet Edgar Cayce established his Association for Research and Enlightenment to promote alternative solutions to humanity’s problems based on, among other things, personal spirituality and holistic health. Interestingly enough, in one of his many ‘readings’ he received an intimation that “*on Russia’s religious development will come the greater hope of the world*”.⁴

²Leo Tolstoy, *An appeal (Vozzvanie)*, 25 May 1889.

³Mary Baker Eddy, *Science and health with key to the Scriptures* (final edition, 1910), p. 225. Not unlike Mègré, Eddy frequently used ‘divine Mind’ (with a capital M) as a synonym for God.

⁴From Cayce reading 3976-10 (February 1932). Edgar Cayce Readings are copyrighted (© 1971, 1993–2005) by the Edgar Cayce Foundation. This quotation is used by the kind permission of the copyright holder. Italics ours.

Three years later the world-renowned humanitarian, Dr Albert Schweitzer, re-published the English translation of his book, *On the edge of the primeval forest*. While decrying the injustices inflicted on the indigenous peoples by European settlers,⁵ he intimates that the only path to successful colonialism is to turn the indigenous people into more productive workers by *removing them from their native villages, families and plots of land*. Surprisingly, in the same piece Schweitzer even holds labour compulsion (forcing the African native peoples to provide labour in return for material 'benefits' bestowed on them) to be justifiable.⁶

Separating people from their own (or their family's) land is a social trend that goes back centuries. Thomas More described it in Book 1 of his *Utopia* (published in 1516), accusing greedy landowners of taking land from their peasant farmers for their own enrichment. Stalin's forced collectivisation of agriculture in the Soviet Union in the 1930s, the loss of family farms in the United States in the years following World War II and the establishing of huge 'factory farms' in present-day Canada (nearly always achieved by buying up small, family operations at an 'irresistible' price) are further examples of concerted efforts on the part of the 'dark forces' of this world to break Man's ties to the land. This in turn has the effect of subduing his free will and destroying his independence.

⁵He writes, for example: "Who can describe the injustice and cruelties that in the course of centuries they [the coloured peoples] have suffered at the hands of Europeans?... If a record could be compiled of all that has happened between the white and the coloured races, it would make a book containing numbers of pages which the reader would have to turn over unread because their contents would be too horrible" — A. Schweitzer, *On the edge of the primeval forest: experiences and observations of a doctor in Equatorial Africa* (London: A.&C. Black Ltd, 1934), p. 115.

⁶See A. Schweitzer, *On the edge of the primeval forest*, pp. 112–118.

All of which gives added weight to Anastasia's proposal, so eloquently set forth by Vladimir Megré in *Co-creation*, of bringing Man (more specifically, a Man's *family*) and his land back together again in the form of what is called in Russian *rodovoe pomestie* — translated in this book as 'family domain' or 'kin's domain'.⁷ This phrase is in turn linked, in terms of both meaning and etymology, to the Russian concept of *Rodina*, which has been rendered 'Motherland' in the Ringing Cedars Series, though it is equally translatable as 'native land'.⁸

A brief word on the translation is in order here: inasmuch as both *Rodina* and *rodovoe pomestie* convey concepts that have deep roots in the Russian historical context, unparalleled in Western cultures, a good deal of thought — not to mention countless paragraphs of text and e-mail correspondence — has gone into selecting the most appropriate English equivalents.⁹

We were aided in this decision in part by two of our readers who were asked to voice their thoughts on the selection of an equivalent for *Rodina*. Here is a brief excerpt from each of their responses:

To me *Motherland* seems to invoke the most profound connection one can have to the land. It is the land in which

⁷This proposal of Anastasia's — a 'family domain' comprising one hectare of land — is presented throughout the latter part of *Co-creation*, beginning with Chapter 24: "Take back your Motherland, people!". The origin of the Russian term rendered *family domain* (or *kin's domain*) is discussed in footnote 7 in Chapter 33: "School, or the lessons of the gods".

⁸For further discussion of the original meaning of *Rodina*, please see footnote 1 in Chapter 24: "Take back your Motherland, people!".

⁹Even then the final results were, shall we say, less than unanimous, and involved a significant element of compromise on the part of both editor and translator. We can only hope our readers will be able to glean at least a glimmer of understanding from the choices we eventually decided upon.

you were likely born. But even more so, it is the land to which you have bonded through work, toil, sweat and blood, laughter, joy and sustenance.

I like *motherland*. It brings the “life giving” nature of the earth to my heart, “my mother”, evoking feelings of tenderness and responsibility. There is much meaning to women in the idea of being a mother and a common thread which relates to my personal life’s experience and has a place in the emotional file cabinet of the brain for most people. The relationship between “life” and the earth is shattered in this country [America], as people are so removed from the idea the earth gives us our life.

The linkage made by the latter reader between one’s ‘personal life’ and ‘the Earth’ is significant. Early in Chapter 24 (appropriately entitled “Take back your Motherland, people!”) Anastasia acknowledges that “the whole Earth could be a Motherland [*Rodina*] for each one of its inhabitants”, and she designates a family’s personal plot of land (subsequently identified as one’s *kin’s domain*) as a “piece of the Motherland”¹⁰ — thus linking the feelings associated with one’s personal family to the broader concept of the family of humanity as a whole. Indeed, perspectives on the concept of the family as revealed in *Co-creation* are by no means confined to the world of the early twenty-first century we call *home*, but reach out in both time and distance to look at *family* not only through the lenses of the past, the present and the future but from beyond our usual sense of planetary space as well.

On this basis, then, it may be seen that the concepts of both *Motherland* and *family domain* reach far beyond the borders of Russia alone. In fact, as indicated above, there are

¹⁰See Chapter 31: “But who is to blame?”.

signs that Anastasia's appeal to "take back your Motherland" is already resonating in the hearts of many people in many parts of the world.

In May 2005, for example, a massive power outage in Moscow reminded many of Anastasia's words concerning the inevitable collapse of artificial life-support systems.¹¹ This one accident paralysed Russia's capital city for several days in a row and, among other things, resulted in the sewage from millions of dwellings being flushed into the Moskva River untreated. In a radio programme devoted to possible solutions to this problem, one of Russia's most prominent ecologists — and President of the Centre for Russia's Environmental Policy — Academician Alexey Yablokov, made pointed reference not only to E.F. Schumacher's book *Small is Beautiful*¹² but also to the "*bugely popular 'Anastasia' movement of people building their family domains*".¹³

In neighbouring Latvia, journalist Liudmila Stoma was curious about what was behind a movement of hundreds of people in Latgal Province — "all well-educated specialists in high demand in the labour market" — relocating to a newly formed eco-village in a remote rural area. Upon investigation, she was amazed by what she could only describe as a "new revolution":

Over the last few years Russia, Belarus and Ukraine have been experiencing a real eco-village boom: thousands of

¹¹See, for example, Book 2, Chapter 8: "The answer", and Book 3, Chapter 19: "What to agree with, what to believe?".

¹²E.F. Schumacher, *Small is beautiful: economics as if people mattered* (New York, Harper & Row, 1973).

¹³From Dr Yablokov's interview on ecological threats to Moscow resulting from electricity outages (*Problemy ekologicheskoy bezopasnosti Moskvy v sluchae otkliucheniya podachi elektroenergii*), aired on Radio Svoboda on 25 May 2005. Italics ours.

families are building 'family domains' on one hectare of land each, attaining remarkable self-sufficiency with only sparing use of all the technological achievements of the technocratic world. They are all united by the same goal: to build a Paradise on the Earth.¹⁴

She ended her article by wondering if "the settlers following Anastasia's advice" in building their own family domains might actually succeed where government subsidies had so miserably failed.

In fact, thousands of new kin's domains are being established each year — not only in Russia and Latvia, but in many other countries as well. And *Dachnik Day* — an annual celebration of our connectedness to Mother Earth on 23 July, the idea of which was proposed in Book 2 (*The Ringing Cedars of Russia*) only eight years ago¹⁵ — has now become an international holiday, and in 2005 it was celebrated for the first time by readers of the series in both America and Canada.

These are but a few examples of a growing, world-wide phenomenon rounded out by international readers' conferences, bards' festivals and multitudes of new poems, songs, paintings and other forms of artistic expression. And already the reaction of readers of the English translation of the series in America, Britain, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and elsewhere is indicating a real 'globalisation' of interest not only in *reading* the Ringing Cedars books, but in *acting on the*

¹⁴Liudmila Stoma, *Vozvrashchenie v Edem* (Return to Eden). *Ezhenedelnik "Vesti"* (Weekly News), n° 8 (601), 24 February 2005. Interestingly enough, Israeli writer and poet Efim Kushner also used the term *revolution* (in the phrase "a global-scale moral revolution") in reference to the Ringing Cedars Series in his book *Beskrovnaya revoliutsiya* (*A bloodless revolution*), published in 2003.

¹⁵See Book 2, Chapter 9: "Dachnik Day and an All-Earth holiday!".

ideas they present as well, revealing new manifestations of a Motherland that completely transcends national boundaries.

And to think it all started from a single simple idea, which, multiplied through its first faltering attempts at implementation, still keeps on blossoming and helping people all over the world ‘take back’ their own Motherland — even as Vladimir Megré’s blossoming series of publications started from a single simple proposal to write a book implanted in the thought of an inveterate ‘non-writer’. And this former non-writer’s initial ‘choppy’ attempts have now evolved into a flourishing trademark style of poetic prose which characterises Books 3 and 4 of the series. (How well we have succeeded on conveying this evolution of style in the English version, particularly the melodious effect his resulting poetic mode of expression can have on the one who reads it with a heart attuned to textual harmonies, will be up to you the readers to judge.)¹⁶

As translator and editor we have only to wish you as fascinating an experience in discovering this book on your own as we ourselves had in reading and ‘co-translating’ it (not to mention ‘co-editing’ the translation). For now we shall leave you with Anastasia’s appeal from Chapter 26 (“Even today everyone can build a home”): “You must feel everything that I outline, and mentally complete yourself the whole design,

¹⁶We are reminded here of the words of British poet Robert Graves: “The reason why the hairs stand on end, the eyes water, the throat is constricted, the skin crawls and a shiver runs down the spine when one writes or reads a true poem is that a true poem is necessarily an invocation of the White Goddess, or Muse, the Mother of All Living...”. We feel that this ‘goddess’ — whom Anastasia calls *Love* — is invoked in this volume with tremendous power. The quote is from Robert Graves, *The White Goddess: a historical grammar of poetic myth* (London: Faber & Faber, 1946; now also published in New York by Noonday Press), pp. 24–25.

and let everyone else draw it along with me. O, God! People, at least give it a try, I beg of you!”

We look forward to meeting you again on the pages of the next book — entitled *Who are we?* — which, like *Co-creation*, will offer ever greater hope for the world.

Ottawa, Canada

John Woodsworth

Ozark Mountains, USA

Leonid Sharashkin

February 2006

ABOUT THE RINGING CEDARS SERIES

Anastasia, the first book of the Ringing Cedars Series, tells the story of entrepreneur Vladimir Megré's trade trip to the Siberian taiga in 1995, where he witnessed incredible spiritual phenomena connected with sacred 'ringing cedar' trees. He spent three days with a woman named Anastasia who shared with him her unique outlook on subjects as diverse as gardening, child-rearing, healing, Nature, sexuality, religion and more. This wilderness experience transformed Vladimir so deeply that he abandoned his commercial plans and, penniless, went to Moscow to fulfil Anastasia's request and write a book about the spiritual insights she so generously shared with him. True to her promise this life-changing book, once written, has become an international bestseller and has touched hearts of millions of people world-wide.

The Ringing Cedars of Russia, the second book of the Series, in addition to providing a fascinating behind-the-scenes look at the story of how *Anastasia* came to be published, offers a deeper exploration of the universal concepts so dramatically revealed in Book 1. It takes the reader on an adventure through the vast expanses of space, time and spirit — from the Paradise-like glade in the Siberian taiga to the rough urban depths of Russia's capital city, from the ancient mysteries of our forebears to a vision of humanity's radiant future.

The Space of Love, the third book of the Series, describes author's second visit to Anastasia. Rich with new revelations on natural child-rearing and alternative education, on the spiritual significance of breast-feeding and the meaning of ancient megaliths, it shows how each person's thoughts can influence the destiny of the entire Earth and describes practical ways of putting Anastasia's vision of happiness into practice. Megré shares his new outlook on education and children's real creative potential after a visit to a school where pupils build their own campus and cover the ten-year Russian school programme in just two years. Complete with an account of an armed intrusion into Anastasia's habitat, the book highlights the limitless power of Love and non-violence.

Co-creation, the fourth book and centrepiece of the Series, paints a dramatic living image of the creation of the Universe and humanity's place in this creation, making this primordial mystery relevant to our everyday living today. Deeply metaphysical yet at the same time down-to-Earth practical, this poetic heart-felt volume helps us uncover answers to the most significant questions about the essence and meaning of the Universe and the nature and purpose of our existence. It also shows how and why the knowledge of these answers, innate in every human being, has become obscured and forgotten, and points the way toward reclaiming this wisdom and — in partnership with Nature — manifesting the energy of Love through our lives.

Who are we? — Book Five of the Series — describes the author's search for real-life 'proofs' of Anastasia's vision presented in the previous volumes. Finding these proofs and taking stock of ongoing global environmental destruction, Vladimir Megré describes further practical steps for putting Anastasia's vision into practice. Full of beautiful realistic images of a new way of living in co-operation with the Earth and each other, this book also highlights the role of children in making us aware of the precariousness of the present situation and in leading the global transition toward a happy, violence-free society.

The book of kin, the sixth book of the Series, describes another visit by the author to Anastasia's glade in the Siberian taiga and his conversations with his growing son, which cause him to take a new look at education, science, history, family and Nature. Through parables and revelatory dialogues and stories Anastasia then leads Vladimir Megré and the reader on a shocking re-discovery of the pages of humanity's history that have been distorted or kept secret for thousands of years. This knowledge sheds light on the causes of war, oppression and violence in the modern world and guides us in preserving the wisdom of our ancestors and passing it over to future generations.

The energy of life, Book Seven of the Series, re-asserts the power of human thought and the influence of our thinking on our lives

and the destiny of the entire planet and the Universe. It also brings forth a practical understanding of ways to consciously control and build up the power of our creative thought. The book sheds still further light on the forgotten pages of humanity's history, on religion, on the roots of inter-racial and inter-religious conflict, on ideal nutrition, and shows how a new way of thinking and a lifestyle in true harmony with Nature can lead to happiness and solve the personal and societal problems of crime, corruption, misery, conflict, war and violence.

The new civilisation, the eighth book of the Series, is not yet complete. The first part of the book, already published as a separate volume, describes yet another visit by Vladimir Megré to Anastasia and their son, and offers new insights into practical co-operation with Nature, showing in ever greater detail how Anastasia's lifestyle applies to our lives. Describing how the visions presented in previous volumes have already taken beautiful form in real life and produced massive changes in Russia and beyond, the author discerns the birth of a new civilisation. The book also paints a vivid image of America's radiant future, in which the conflict between the powerful and the helpless, the rich and the poor, the city and the country, can be transcended and thereby lead to transformations in both the individual and society.

Rites of Love — Book 8, Part 2 (published as a separate volume) — contrasts today's mainstream attitudes to sex, family, childbirth and education with our forebears' lifestyle, which reflected their deep spiritual understanding of the significance of conception, pregnancy, homebirth and upbringing of the young in an atmosphere of love. In powerful poetic prose Megré describes their ancient way of life, grounded in love and non-violence, and shows the practicability of this same approach today. Through the life-story of one family, he portrays the radiant world of the ancient Russian Vedic civilisation, the drama of its destruction and its re-birth millennia later — in our present time.

To be continued...

THE AUTHOR, Vladimir Megré, born in 1950, was a well-known entrepreneur from a Siberian city of Novosibirsk. According to his account, in 1995 — after hearing a fascinating story about the power of ‘ringing cedars’ from a Siberian elder — he organised a trade expedition into the Siberian taiga to rediscover the lost technique of pressing virgin cedar nut oil containing high curative powers, as well as to find the ringing cedar tree. However, his encounter on this trip with a Siberian woman named Anastasia transformed him so deeply that he abandoned his business and went to Moscow to write a book about the spiritual insights she had shared with him. Vladimir Megré now lives near the city of Vladimir, Russia, 190 km (120 miles) east of Moscow. If you wish to contact the author, you may send a message to his personal e-mail megre@online.sinor.ru

THE TRANSLATOR, John Woodsworth, born in Vancouver (British Columbia), has over forty years of experience in Russian-English translation, from classical poetry to modern short stories. Since 1982 he has been associated with the University of Ottawa in Canada as a Russian-language teacher, translator and editor, most recently as a Research Associate and Administrative Assistant with the University’s Slavic Research Group. A published Russian-language poet himself, he and his wife — Susan K. Woodsworth — are directors of the Sasquatch Literary Arts Performance Series in Ottawa. A Certified Russian-English Translator, John Woodsworth is in the process of translating the remaining volumes in Vladimir Megré’s Ringing Cedars Series.

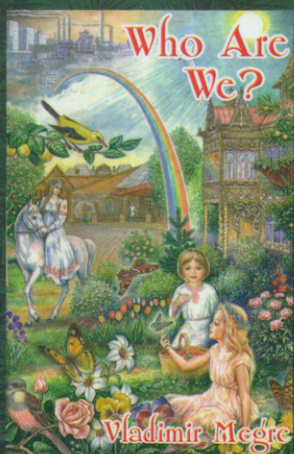
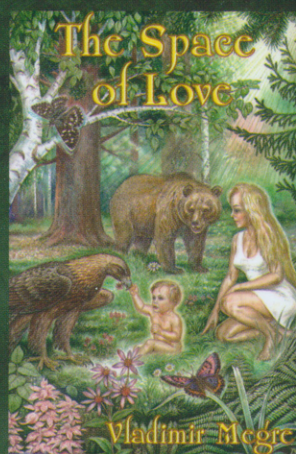
THE EDITOR, Leonid Sharashkin, is writing his doctoral dissertation on the spiritual, cultural and economic significance of the Russian *dacha* gardening movement, at the University of Missouri at Columbia. After receiving a Master’s degree in Natural Resources Management from Indiana University at Bloomington, he worked for two years as Programme Manager at the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF Russia) in Moscow, where he also served as editor of Russia’s largest environmental magazine, *The Panda Times*. Together with his wife, Irina Sharashkina, he has translated into Russian *Small is beautiful* and *A guide for the perplexed* by E.F. Schumacher, *The secret life of plants* by Peter Tompkins and Christopher Bird, *The continuum concept* by Jean Liedloff and *Birth without violence* by Frederick Leboyer.

Co-creation by Vladimir Megre

Book 4 of The Ringing Cedars Series

Spirituality /
Nature

Co-creation paints a dramatic living image of the creation of the Universe and humanity's place in this creation, making this primordial mystery relevant to our everyday living today. Deeply metaphysical yet at the same time down-to-Earth practical, this poetic heartfelt volume helps us uncover answers to the most significant questions about the essence of the Universe and the purpose of our existence. It also shows how and why the knowledge of these answers, innate in every human being, has become obscured and forgotten, and points the way toward reclaiming this wisdom in partnership with Nature.



RINGING CEDARS PRESS

www.RingingCedars.com

1-888-DOLMENS

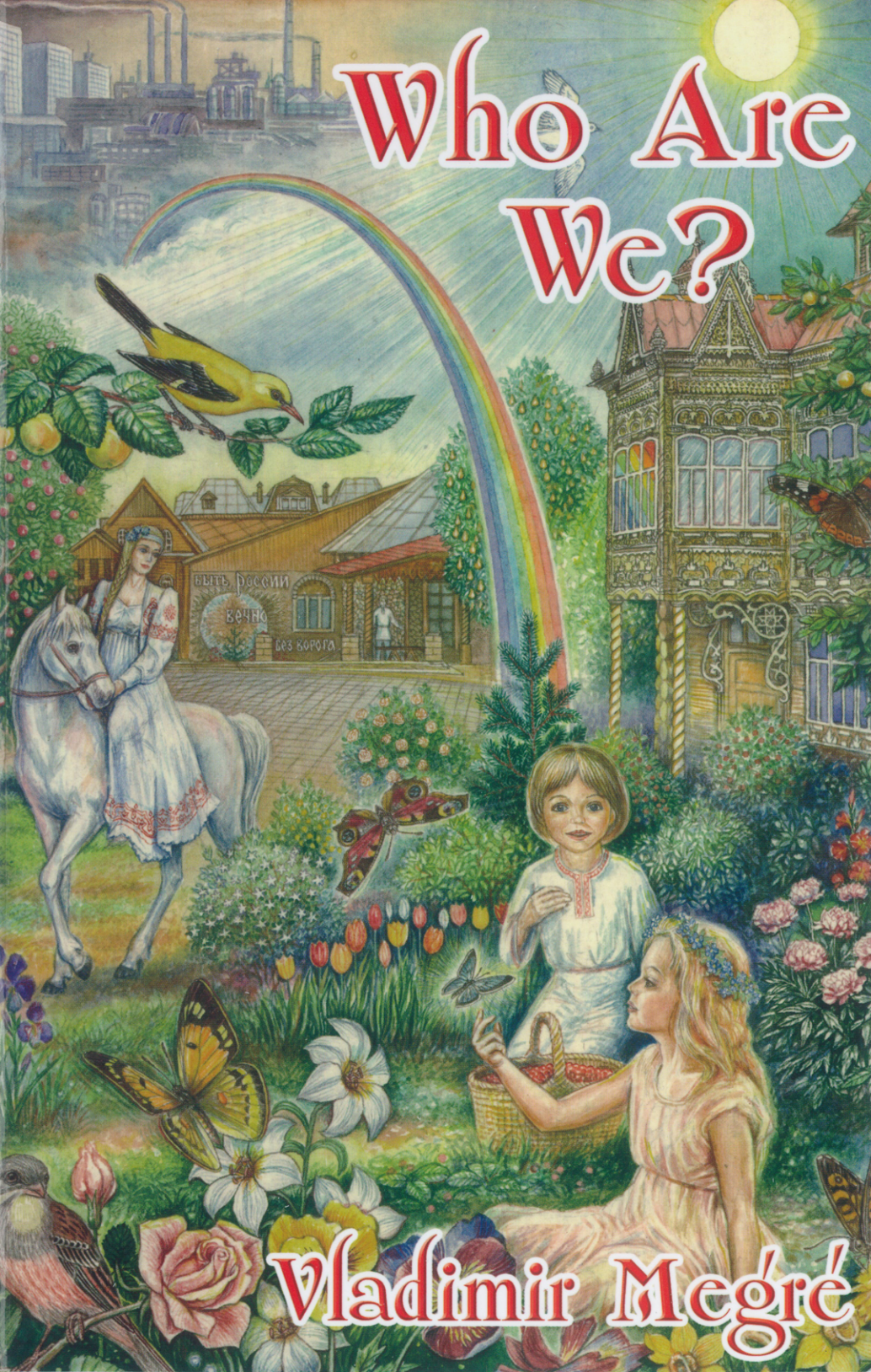
US\$14.95 CAN\$19.95 AU\$24.95

ISBN 978-0-9763333-3-3



9 780976 333333

Who Are We?



Vladimir Megre

Vladimir Megré
The Ringing Cedars Series

English translation by John Woodsworth

- Book 1 Anastasia
(ISBN: 978-0-9763333-0-2)
- Book 2 The Ringing Cedars of Russia
(ISBN: 978-0-9763333-1-9)
- Book 3 The Space of Love
(ISBN: 978-0-9763333-2-6)
- Book 4 Co-creation
(ISBN: 978-0-9763333-3-3)
- Book 5 Who Are We?
(ISBN: 978-0-9763333-4-0)
- Book 6 The Book of Kin
(ISBN: 978-0-9763333-6-4)
- Book 7 The Energy of Life
(ISBN: 978-0-9763333-7-1)
- Book 8, Part 1 The New Civilisation
(ISBN: 978-0-9763333-8-8)
- Book 8, Part 2 Rites of Love
(ISBN: 978-0-9763333-9-5)



Published by Ringing Cedars Press
www.RingingCedars.com

Anastasia herself has stated that this book consists of words and phrases in combinations *which have a beneficial effect on the reader*. This has been attested by the letters received to date from thousands of readers all over the world.

If you wish to gain as full an appreciation as possible of the ideas, thoughts and images set forth here, as well as experience the benefits that come with this appreciation, we recommend you find a quiet place for your reading where there is the least possible interference from artificial noises (motor traffic, radio, TV, household appliances etc.). *Natural sounds*, on the other hand — the singing of birds, for example, or the patter of rain, or the rustle of leaves on nearby trees — may be a welcome accompaniment to the reading process.



Ringling Cedars Press is an independent publisher dedicated to making Vladimir Megré's books available in the beautiful English translation by **John Woodsworth**. Word of mouth is our best advertisement and we appreciate your help in spreading the word about the Ringling Cedars Series.

Order on-line	www.RinglingCedars.com	ordering
call / fax toll-free	1-888-DOLMENS	details
or call / fax	1-646-429-1986	see last page

Generous discounts are available on volume orders. To help spread the word as an independent distributor, or to place the books in your bookstore, or to be kept up to date about future book releases and events, please email us at:

info@ringlingcedars.com

or write to the Publisher, Ringling Cedars Press, 415 Dairy Rd., Suite E-339, Kahului, HI 96732, USA. We also welcome reviews, poetry and artwork inspired by the Series.

Vladimir Megré

WHO ARE WE?

The Ringing Cedars Series
Book 5

Translated from the Russian by
John Woodsworth

Edited by
Leonid Sharashkin



Ringing Cedars Press
Paia, Hawaii, USA

Who Are We? by
Vladimir Megré

Translation and footnotes by
John Woodsworth

Editing, footnotes, design and layout by
Leonid Sharashkin

Cover art by
Alexander Razboinikov

Copyright © 2001 Vladimir Megré
Copyright © 2006 Leonid Sharashkin, translation
Copyright © 2006 Leonid Sharashkin, footnotes
Copyright © 2006 Leonid Sharashkin, cover art
Copyright © 2006 Leonid Sharashkin, design and layout

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, except for the inclusion of brief quotations in a review, without permission in writing from the publisher.

Library of Congress Control Number: 2006920096

ISBN: 978-0-9763333-4-0

Published by
Ringing Cedars Press

www.RingingCedars.com



Contents

1. Two civilisations.....	I
2. Take a taste of the Universe	10
3. Dreams of Auroville.....	16
4. Harbingers of a new civilisation	20
5. A search for evidence.....	24
6. A garden for eternity.....	29
7. Anastasia's Russia	38
8. The richest state	47
9. Good shall prevail on the Earth	56
10. The disarmament race	78
11. Science and pseudo-science	87
12. Do we have freedom of thought?	96
13. Equestrienne from the future	101
14. City on the Neva.....	108
15. Making it come true	115
16. Open letter to the President	121
17. Questions and answers	126
18. The philosophy of life.....	151
19. Who controls coincidences?.....	181
20. Breakdown.....	207
21. Attempt at deconditioning.....	213

22. Our reality	219
23. Your desires	240
24. Eternity lies ahead for you and me	252
Appendix	261

CHAPTER ONE



Two civilisations

We are always in a hurry to get somewhere or get something. There is hardly a single one of us who doesn't desire to lead a happy life, find love and establish a family. But how many of us will actually achieve our desire?

What determines our satisfaction or dissatisfaction with life? What determines our success or failure? What constitutes the meaning of life for each and every *Man*¹ and for all mankind on the whole? What kind of future awaits us?

These questions have been around a long time, but nobody has managed to come up with an intelligible answer. But I wonder: what kind of country will we be living in five or ten years from now? What kind of world are we leaving to our children? We really don't know. And, let's face it, none of us can ever picture our own future, because we are always hurrying off somewhere... but to where?

Strange, but true: the first clear glimpse I ever had about the future of our country came not from statisticians or politicians but from Anastasia, a recluse living in the wilds of the taiga. And not only did she present a picture of a marvellous future, but showed step-by-step its feasibility even for our generation — a design, in fact, for the development of the whole country.

¹The word *Man* (with a capital *M*) is used throughout the Ringing Cedars Series to refer to a human being of either gender. For details on the word's use and the important distinction between *Man* and *human being* please see the Translator's Preface to Book 1.

It was while I was on my way from Anastasia's glade to the river² that this firm conviction, for some reason, came to my thought: *her plan is capable of changing so much in this world of ours*. When we consider that everything her thought conceptualises inevitably turns into a real-life embodiment, we see we are already living in a country with only a splendid future ahead of it. As I walked along, I thought about what Anastasia had said about our country's splendid future, which might even come about in our generation's lifetime. It will be a country without regional conflicts, criminal gangs and diseases, a country without poverty. And while I didn't understand all the thoughts she came out with, there wasn't a single thing she said this time that I felt like doubting. On the contrary, I felt as though I wanted to show everyone how *right* she was.

I firmly resolved to do everything within my power to bring her plan to fruition. On the surface it seems simple enough: each family should be allotted a hectare³ of land for lifetime use, whereon to set up its own 'kin's domain',⁴ its own 'piece of the Motherland'.⁵ But my thought was immersed in the details of this plan. They were utterly simple in themselves, and yet at the same time utterly incredible.

Amazing! It isn't an agricultural scientist but a reclusive woman from the taiga that has shown that, with the right planting arrangement on a plot of land, it can take just a few short years to dispense with the need for fertilisation. Not only that, but even soil that isn't terribly fertile will be significantly improved.

²*from Anastasia's glade to the river* — see the last part of Book 4, Chapter 33: "School, or the lessons of the gods".

³*hectare* — 1 hectare is equivalent to approx. 2.5 acres in the Imperial system.

⁴*kin's domain* — see footnote 7 in Book 4, Chapter 33.

⁵*Motherland* — see footnote 1 in Book 4, Chapter 24: "Take back your Motherland, people!"; also the Translator's and Editor's Afterword to Book 4.

As a basic example Anastasia referred to the situation in the taiga.⁶ The taiga has been around for thousands of years, and everything grows in it, even though it has never been fertilised. Anastasia says that all the things growing in the earth constitute the materialised thoughts of God, and that He has arranged everything so that Man has no need to worry about difficulties in finding food. One needs only to try to understand the Creator's thought and create splendid things together with Him.

I can cite an example of my own. The island of Cyprus, which I have visited, has a very rocky soil. But the ground wasn't always this way. Centuries ago the island was home to some splendid cedar forests and orchards, and its many rivers were filled with the purest spring water. The whole island was like an earthly Paradise. Then the Roman legions invaded the island and began to cut down the cedars to build their ships. Whole groves were felled. Today the larger part of the island is covered with stunted growth, the grass looks burnt even in the springtime, summer rains are a rarity and there is not enough fresh water. The residents have had to import fertile soil by the bargeload to be able to grow anything at all. So the upshot is: not only has Man failed to improve what has been created on the island, but his barbarous interference has actually made things worse.

In outlining her plan, Anastasia said that it was essential to plant a family tree, and that people should not be buried in a cemetery but right there on the beautiful terrain they themselves have nurtured. No headstone of any kind need be placed on the grave. It is a Man's living creations, not something dead, that will serve as a memorial for his relations. And not only that, but his soul will be able to take on a material embodiment again, in his earthly garden of Paradise.

⁶*taiga* — the Russian name given to the boreal forest that stretches across much of Siberia and northern Canada.

People buried in a cemetery cannot end up in Paradise. Their souls cannot be embodied in matter as long as there are relatives and friends around thinking about their death. Headstones are monuments to death. Funeral rites were thought up by the dark forces for the purpose of confining, at least temporarily, the human soul. Our Father has never produced any kind of suffering or even grieving for His beloved children. All God's creations are eternal, self-sufficient, self-reproducing. Everything living on the Earth, from the outwardly simple blade of grass to Man, is a self-constituted harmonious and eternal whole.

Here too, I think, she is right. Just look at how things have turned out. Today scientists tell us that human thought is material — but if that's the case, it means that the deceased person's relatives, in thinking of him as dead, thereby keep on holding him in a deadened state, which torments his soul. Anastasia maintains that Man, or, more precisely, Man's soul, can live forever. It has the capacity to constantly re-embody itself anew, but only under certain conditions. These conditions are brought about by a *kin's domain* established according to Anastasia's design. I am simply a believer in this design. As to proving or disproving her claims about life and death, I'll leave that to esoteric scholars who are no doubt more qualified for the task.

"I say, you're going to get a lot of opposition on that one," I observed to Anastasia. To which she only laughed and replied:

"It will all happen very simply now, Vladimir. Man's thought is capable of materialising and changing the shape of objects, predetermining events, creating the future. So it works out that any opponents who try to argue for the frailty of Man's existence only end up destroying themselves, for they will bring about their own decease by their very thoughts.

"Those who are able to comprehend their purpose and the meaning of infinity will start to live a happy life, eternally

re-embodiment themselves, for they themselves will produce with their thoughts their own infinity of happiness.”

I liked her plan even better when I began to calculate its economic potential. I have become convinced that any Man, with the help of a family domain he establishes according to Anastasia's design, can ensure a poverty-free existence for himself as well as for his children and grandchildren. It is not merely a question of providing one's children with good food to eat or a roof over their heads. Anastasia said that the fence around the domain must be made of living trees, and that at least a quarter of the hectare should be given over to forest.

That means about 300 trees. They'll quite likely be cut down in, say, eighty to a hundred years, yielding about 400 cubic metres of lumber.⁷ Even today, lumber well-dried and processed for finishing fetches at least one hundred dollars⁸ per cubic metre, meaning a total income of \$40,000. Of course, one shouldn't cut down the whole forest at once, just the number of mature trees that are needed at the time, and then immediately plant new ones in their place. The overall value of a kin's domain set up according to Anastasia's design may be estimated at a million dollars or more, and any family can build one, even those with an average income.

The house can be quite modest to start with. The main treasure will be the plot of ground, accurately and aesthetically laid out. Even today, wealthier citizens are paying big money to firms specialising in landscape design. There are about forty such firms in Moscow right now, and they are always busy. For upwards of \$1,500 they will take just the hundred square metres of ground around your house and turn it into a landscape designed with detailed accuracy and aesthetic beauty.

⁷ 400 cubic metres of lumber — equivalent to 170,000 board feet.

⁸ dollars — in this case, American dollars, the currency most familiar to Russians after their own rouble.

It costs around \$500 to plant a single conifer about 6 metres high, but people who want to live in beautifully appointed surroundings are willing to pay big money for that. They end up paying it because it never entered their parents' heads to establish a family domain for their children. You don't need to be rich to do something like that, you need only to get your priorities straight. How can we raise our children properly if we ourselves don't grasp such simple things? Anastasia's right when she says that education begins with ourselves.

I myself have had a strong desire to establish my own family domain — to take a hectare of land, build a house and — most importantly — to put in all sorts of plantings around it. I want to set up my piece of the Motherland just as Anastasia described, and have it surrounded by other people's beautifully appointed plots. Anastasia and our son could establish themselves there too, or at least come visiting, and eventually our grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Maybe our great-grandchildren will want to work in the city, but they will still be able to come to their family domain to relax.

And once a year, on the 23rd of July, the All-Earth holiday,⁹ the whole extended family will gather at home. I shan't be around then myself, but the domain I set up will remain, and the trees and garden it contains. I'll hollow out a little pond and put in some hatchlings so there'll be fish. The trees will be planted in the special arrangement outlined by Anastasia. Some things my descendants will like, others they may want to change, but either way I shall be remembered.

And I shall be buried in my own domain, with the request that my grave not be marked in any way. I don't want anyone putting on a show of grief or making a sad face over it. In fact, I don't want there to be any grieving at all. I don't want a headstone with an inscription, just fresh grass and bushes

⁹See Book 2, Chapter 9: "Dachnik Day and an All-Earth holiday!"

growing over the body — maybe some sort of berries too, which will be useful to my descendants. What's the point in a grave-marker? There isn't any — only grief. I don't want people coming to my domain to remember me with sadness, but with joy. Yeah, they'll see how I've set things up, and arranged all the plantings!...

My thoughts kept intertwining in a kind of joyful anticipation of something grand: *I'd better begin as quickly as possible, somehow start the ball rolling. I've got to get back to the city quicker, but it'll still be another ten kilometres just to get through this forest. If only I could get through it sooner!*

And all at once, out of the blue, statistics on Russia's forest lands floated to the surface of my memory. I didn't remember all the figures, but here's what I saw one time in a statistical report:¹⁰

"Forests constitute the basic type of vegetation in Russia, covering 45% of its land mass. Russia has the most extensive forest reserves in the world, amounting to 886.5 million hectares in 1993, with a timber volume of 80.7 billion. This means Russia holds 21.7% and 25.9% (respectively) of the world's forest and timber resources. The higher figure for timber reflects the fact that in terms of its wealth of mature and productive forests, Russia is way above the world's average.

"Forests play a huge role both in the gas balance in the atmosphere and in regulating climate on our planet. According to B.N. Moiseev's calculations, the gas balance of Russia's forests is 1,789 million tonnes¹¹ for carbon dioxide and 1,299 million tonnes for oxygen. Annual carbon deposits in Russia's forests amount to 600 million tonnes. These huge volumes

¹⁰This description appears, among other places, in an environmental atlas of Russia which may be found on the Russian "Practical Science" website at: www.sci.aha.ru

¹¹tonne (metric ton) — 1 tonne = 0.98 UK (long) tons or 1.1 US (short) tons.

of gas exchanges significantly contribute to the stabilisation of the gas composition and climate of the whole planet.”

Just look at what’s happening! I’ve heard it said some kind of special mission lies ahead for Russia — but that’s not in the *future*, it’s already unfolding.

Just think: people all over the planet — to a greater or lesser extent, it isn’t important — are breathing Russia’s air. They’re breathing the oxygen produced by this very forest I’m walking through right now. I wonder whether it’s simply oxygen that this forest is supplying all life on the planet with, or maybe something even more important besides.

My solitary walk through the taiga this time provoked no feeling of trepidation within me as it did before. It felt pretty much the same as walking through a safe park. In contrast to a park, of course, there are no laid out pathways, and my journey was sometimes blocked by fallen trees or thick underbrush, but this time there was nothing that irritated me.

Along the way I would pick berries — raspberries and currants, for example — and for the first time my attention was drawn to the tremendous variety in appearance even among the same kind of trees. And the vegetation, too, was arranged in so many different patterns — no two scenes were alike.

For the first time I really examined the taiga, and it seemed a kinder place than before. No doubt this impression was due in part to the awareness that it was right here in the taiga that my very own son was born and was now living. And then, of course, there’s *Anastasia*... My encounter with this woman has changed my whole life.

In the middle of this endless taiga is Anastasia’s little glade, which she has no desire to leave for any length of time. She would never exchange it for any — even the fanciest — apartment in town. At first glance the glade appears to be just another empty space — no house, no tent, no household facilities — and yet look at how she brightens with joy every time

she approaches it! And now on my third visit I've caught a similar feeling, something like the sense of comfort one feels upon returning home after a difficult journey.

Funny things have been taking place lately all over our world. It seems that, for millennia now, human society has been struggling for the happiness and welfare of the individual, but when you come right down to it, it turns out that this same individual, even though he lives at the very centre of society, at the centre of the most modern and civilised city, finds himself more and more often in a state of helplessness. He gets into a traffic accident, or gets robbed, or constantly falls into the grip of all sorts of aches and pains — he can't live without a drugstore nearby — or some dissatisfaction he can't even explain to himself provokes him into suicide. The suicide rate is increasing particularly in civilised countries with a high standard of living. Mothers from various regions of the country are seen on TV pleading for help for their families threatened with starvation because they can't afford to feed their children.

Yet here is Anastasia, living with a little boy all alone in the taiga, in what can only be called *another civilisation*. Not a single thing does she ask from our society. She needs no police or home security forces to protect her. She gives the impression that nothing bad can possibly happen in this glade to either her or her child.

It's true: we live in different civilisations, and she proposes to take the best of both these worlds. In which case the life-style of many people on the Earth will change, and a new and joyous commonwealth of humanity will be born. This commonwealth will not only be interesting — it will be new and unusual. For example...

CHAPTER TWO



Take a taste of the Universe

For a long time it bothered me that Anastasia appeared so content to leave her nursing child all by himself. She would simply put him down on the grass under some bushes or next to the dozing she-bear or she-wolf. I was already convinced that not a single creature would touch him. On the contrary, they would defend him to the death. But from whom? If all the animals around were acting like nannies, then who would they need to protect him from? Still, it was unusual to leave a nursing baby all alone, and I tried to dissuade Anastasia, saying:

“Just because the animals won’t touch him, that doesn’t mean that there are no other misfortunes out there that could befall him.”

To which she responded:

“I cannot imagine, Vladimir, what misfortunes you have in mind.”

“There are a lot of things that could happen to helpless children. Let’s say he crawls up a hillock, for example, and then tumbles down it, twisting his ankle or his wrist.”

“Any height of ground the baby could crawl up on his own would not cause him any harm.”

“But say he eats something harmful. He’s still too young, everything goes into his mouth, so it won’t be long before he poisons himself, and then who’s going to be around to flush out his insides? There aren’t any doctors in the neighbourhood, and you don’t even have an enema to flush out his intestines in case of emergency.”

Anastasia just laughed.

"What need is there for an enema, Vladimir? The intestines can be flushed out another way, and much more effectively than with an enema."

"How so?"

"Would you like to try it? It will do you a world of good! I shall simply bring you a few little herbs..."

"Hold on, don't bother. I understand. You want to give me something to make my stomach upset."

"Your stomach has been upset for a long time, Vladimir. The herb I have in mind will expel anything causing your stomach harm."

"I get it — in case anything happens you can give a herb to a young child and it will make him go to the bathroom. But why take things to such lengths when it comes to a baby?"

"It will not go that far. Our son will eat nothing that is going to harm him. Children — especially those who are nursing and accustomed to the taste of their mother's milk — will never eat anything else in any significant quantity. And our son will only take a little taste of any berry or herb. If he finds it noxious or bitter — a substance that could harm him, he will spit it out himself. If he eats a little of it and it begins to affect his stomach, he will vomit it, and that will help him remember and he will not try it again. But he will come to know the whole Earth — not from someone else's reports, but by tasting it on his own. Let us allow our son to taste the Universe for himself."

No doubt Anastasia is right. It is true nothing bad has happened to the little one so far, not even once. Besides, I noticed a particularly interesting phenomenon: the creatures around her glade themselves train or teach their young how to interact with Man. I used to think Anastasia was the one that did this, but later I became convinced that that is not something she wastes her time on.

This is what I saw on one occasion: we were sitting in the sun at the edge of the glade. Anastasia had just finished nursing our son, and he was blissfully lying in her arms. Initially he seemed to be having a nap or just dozing, but then all at once his little hand began touching Anastasia's hair, and he broke into a smile. Anastasia looked at her son and smiled back, whispering something in his ear with her tender voice.

I saw the she-wolf come out into the glade with her brood — four cubs, still quite young. The wolf came over to us, and stopped about ten metres away and lay down on the ground. The cubs trailing along behind her quickly began nuzzling up to her belly. Upon seeing the wolf and her cubs lying there, Anastasia rose from the ground, babe in arms, and went over to her. She squatted down about two metres away and began inspecting the wolf's brood, her face all smiles, and saying:

"Oh, what beauties our clever wolf has borne! One of them will most certainly be a leader, while *this* little one is the spitting image of her Mama. She will be a joy to her Mama, and a worthy inheritor to carry on the family line."

The mother wolf seemed to be dozing, her languishing eyes closed tight either from drowsiness or from the soft caressing of Anastasia's voice. The cubs turned away from their mother's belly and began looking at Anastasia. One of them, still unsure of his step, began making his way over to her.

The mother, who just a second before had looked so drowsy, suddenly sprang up, seized the cub with her teeth and dropped him back among the others. Then the same thing occurred with a second cub, then the third and the fourth, all trying to get closer to Anastasia. The inexperienced cubs continued their attempts, but the mother would not let them go until they had finished their little adventures. Two of the cubs began tussling with each other, the other two sat meekly and kept a watchful eye on us.

The baby in Anastasia's arms also noticed the wolf family. He began watching them, and then his legs began kicking impatiently, and he uttered some kind of beckoning sound.

Anastasia reached out her hand toward the wolves. Two of the cubs began heading, with unsure step, in the direction of the outstretched human hand. This time, however, the mother didn't try to stop them. On the contrary, she began nudging the other two cubs, who were still at play, in the same direction. And before long all four were right at Anastasia's feet.

One of them began nibbling on one of her fingers, a second got up on its hind legs and rested its forepaws on her arm, while the other two crawled over to her leg. The boy started to squirm in Anastasia's arms, evidently wanting to get closer to the cubs. Whereupon Anastasia let him down on the ground and he started playing with them, oblivious to anything else! Anastasia went over to the mother wolf, and after giving her neck a gentle stroking, came back to me.

I realised that the wolf had been trained never to disturb Anastasia without being invited, and would approach her only upon a predetermined gesture. Now she was teaching this same rule to her offspring. The wolf, no doubt, had been taught this by her own mother, who in turn had learnt it from *her* mother, and so on from generation to generation — all the creatures transmitted to their young the rules of interaction with Man. A reverent and tactful interaction, it must be said. But who taught them that other kind of interaction and how — to attack Man?

My exposure to the life of the Siberian taiga recluses¹ raised a whole lot of different questions — questions I could not have even imagined asking earlier. Anastasia has no intention of changing her reclusive lifestyle.

¹*recluses* — referring to Anastasia, her grandfather and great-grandfather, introduced in Book I, Chapter 2: "Encounter".

But... stop right there! When I think of Anastasia as a 'recluse', each time I associate the word *recluse* with someone who has isolated himself from society, from our contemporary information systems. But what is really going on? After each visit to her glade I end up putting out a new book. A book that is discussed by all sorts of people, young and old, scientists and religious leaders. The way it turns out, it is not *I* who bring *her* information from our over-informed society, but it is *she* who offers *me* information that proves to be of great interest to our society.

So then, who is the real recluse? Haven't we got caught up so much in the abundance (or, more correctly, the seeming abundance) of information at our fingertips that we have set ourselves apart, distanced ourselves from the true source of information? It's simply amazing when you think about what's really going on — Anastasia's remote taiga glade serves as a real information centre, like a launch pad propelling us into the other dimensions of our existence. Then, *who am I, who are we? And who is Anastasia?*

In any case, perhaps it isn't all that important. Something else is much more important, namely, her latest sayings concerning the possibility of transforming the life of any individual Man for the better. Or, for that matter, any country, or even human society as a whole. And this is effected through changing the living conditions of an individual.

It's all incredibly simple: just give a Man at least one hectare of land, and she goes on to explain what to do with this land, and then... Incredible, how simple it is! And Man will always be surrounded by the energy of Love. Those in marital relationships will love their spouses. Their children will be happy, many diseases will be eradicated, wars and catastrophes will cease. Man will draw closer to God.

She has, in fact, proposed the construction of a whole lot of glades similar to her own in the proximity of major cities. But

this doesn't mean she rejects making use of our civilisation's achievements — "Let what is negative be pressed into service on behalf of good," she says. And I have come to believe in her plan. I believe in that splendid turn of events that is to come about as a result of implementing her ideas in our lives. And a lot of them seem so logical to me. All we have to do is go over everything, think everything through, in the right order. We have to adapt her proposal to each location.

I was especially struck by Anastasia's idea regarding land and its development. I could hardly wait to get home and see what scientists have to say about similar communities — does anything along this line exist anywhere in the world? I wanted to see if I could start by designing a new community in all its detail, and then start building it through the concerted efforts of those desiring to participate in its construction. Naturally, neither I nor anyone else can undertake the responsibility for getting this marvellous community of the future going all on our own. It is something we need to do together! We shall have to examine all the information collectively and design our community, taking into account mistakes other people have made.

CHAPTER THREE



Dreams of Auroville

During the first months after returning from my visit with Anastasia I set about making an intensive search and study of any information about eco-communities I could lay my hands on. Most of my sources told about experiments abroad. Altogether I collected information on 86 communities in 19 countries (Belgium, Canada, Denmark, England, France, Germany, India and others). But I wasn't particularly struck by any of the reports I had collected. No country could boast any kind of large-scale eco-movement, nor did I come across any communities capable of exercising a significant influence on the social situation in their respective countries.

One of the largest and best-known communities that came to my notice is located in India. It goes by the name of *Auroville*. I'd like to elaborate a little on this one.

Auroville was initiated in 1968 by the wife of the founder of the Integral Yoga movement Sri Aurobindo, Mirra Richard.¹ It was thought that the community, once begun, would eventually grow into a thriving city of 50,000 on lands allocated

¹*Sri Aurobindo* (1872–1950) — Hindu mystic, scholar, poet and evolutionary philosopher, considered by his followers to be an 'avatar', or incarnation, of the Supreme Being. His *Integral Yoga* is actually a synthesis of the three yogas: *bhakti*, *karma* and *jnana*, embodying and integrating all aspects of life. His 'spiritual partner', *Mirra Richard* (1878–1973), born in Paris to Egyptian parents, first came to Aurobindo's *Ashram* (Hermitage) in 1914 and eventually settled in Pondicherry in 1920. Commonly known as 'The Mother', she supervised the operations of his *Ashram* and related organisations. Upon Aurobindo's death in 1950, she succeeded him as spiritual leader, and went on to found the Auroville community in 1968.

by the Indian government near Pondicherry, where Sri Aurobindo's *Ashram* — a centre for Integral Yoga adherents — had been operating since the 1940s. Auroville, or the 'City of Dawn', was supposed to embody the idea of unity of people — people united by a common goal of building a harmonious material world which in no way would find itself at odds with the world of the spirit.

The community's charter, written by Mirra Richard, states:

"Auroville will be a site of material and spiritual researches for a living embodiment of an actual human unity."

The idea of building a city wherein people will live in harmony with the world of Nature, in the harmony of the spirit and love, was approved by the Indian government (and personally by Indira Gandhi) as well as by UNESCO. It received financial support from the Indian government along with a large number of sponsors. Representatives of 121 nations and 23 Indian states attended the opening ceremonies, after which this splendid city — no doubt the dream of a lot of people the world over who call themselves 'spiritual' — began to take shape.

However, following the death of Mirra Richard in 1973, one of Aurobindo's disciples by the name of Satprem² spoke out strongly against the Auroville community, calling it nothing but a 'commercial enterprise'. Sri Aurobindo's Ashram, which controlled most of the 'enterprise's' finances, claimed

²*Satprem* (birth name: Bernard Enginger, 1923–) — French author, who discovered the teachings of Sri Aurobindo while serving in the French colonial administration of Pondicherry in the 1940s, and later worked closely with Mirra Richard. It was she who gave him the name *Satprem* ('the one who loves truly') in 1957. Later he published *The Agenda* — a multi-volume account of his collaboration with Richard, disseminated through his Institute for Evolutionary Research in Paris. This was followed by a number of other books he wrote on his experiences in India.

authority over everything going on in the city, but the residents considered that their community belonged to the whole world and was not under the Ashram's jurisdiction. A serious confrontation ensued between the spiritual leaders on both sides — a confrontation which was not confined to the ideological level but became more and more physical. In 1980 the Indian government was obliged to pass a decree removing Auroville from the control of Sri Aurobindo's society, and a permanent police detachment was assigned to the community. The Auroville situation led to a general crisis in Sri Aurobindo's movement and teachings.

Today Auroville has about 1,200 residents, instead of the 50,000 or more envisaged by its initiators. The whole region, including the local population, comprises 13 villages and 30,000 people.

Quite possibly the downfall of the Auroville dream was precipitated by the following situation: while any resident may obtain permission to buy land and build himself a house (at his own expense), legal title to the land on which the house stands belongs to the city. Thus it turns out that full confidence is placed in Auroville as a city, but is not accorded any of its individual residents. Every resident lives in a state of dependency on the community as a whole. And yet the whole project was worked out by people who considered themselves highly spiritual. It seems that in the case of spirituality there is another side of the coin to be considered.

I am extremely disturbed and upset by the situation of Auroville today. While it has not provoked any doubts about Anastasia's project, I cannot say my mind is entirely free from negative thoughts. If things did not work out with a model community in India — a country considered practically the leader in the spiritual understanding of human existence, especially with the financial backing of the Indian government, UNESCO and sponsors from a variety of countries, then how

can Anastasia possibly foresee on her own all the pitfalls that lie ahead? Even if it isn't all on her own, and the masses of readers sharing her views try to make calculations, think everything through and foresee the future — even then there is no guarantee such concerted efforts will succeed, as nobody has any experience along this line.

If anyone knew where to find the foundation on which to build a happy life for both the individual and society as a whole, a happy society would have probably been built somewhere. But it doesn't exist — anywhere in the world! The only experience we have is negative. Where can one find anything positive?

“In Russia!” replied Anastasia.

CHAPTER FOUR



Harbingers of a new civilisation

“The first shoots of a new and splendid future are to be found in the Russian *dachniks*!”¹ These words sounded within me, all by themselves. Anastasia was not around at the time. It took but a moment to recall the enthusiasm and joy with which she talked to me about the Russian *dachniks* four years ago. She believes that it was thanks to the *dachniks* that a global catastrophe on the Earth was avoided in 1992. So it turns out that it was in Russia that this amazing movement began, a movement which has had a kindly influence on a part of the Earth. I remember her telling me:

“Millions of pairs of human hands began touching the Earth with love. With their *hands*, you understand, not a bunch of mechanical contraptions. Russians touched the ground caressingly on these little *dacha* plots. And the Earth felt the touch of each individual hand. The Earth may be big, but it is very, very sensitive. And the Earth found the strength within itself to carry on.”²

Back then, four years ago, I didn’t take this saying seriously, but now, after learning of all the various attempts by people of different countries of the world to create spiritual-ecological communities, I suddenly realised something: with no noisy fanfare, appeals, advertising or pompous ceremonies, the

¹ *dachniks* — people who spend time at their *dacha*, or cottage in the country, surrounded by a garden where fruits and/or vegetables are grown to feed the family all year long (for further details see Book 1).

² See Book 2, Chapter 9: “*Dachnik Day* and an All-Earth holiday!”.

most massive-scale project has come to fruition right here in Russia — a project having significance for all humanity. When seen against the backdrop of all the various Russian dacha communities, all the reports from various countries on the creation of eco-communities there sound quite ludicrous.

Judge for yourselves: here spread out in front of me is a pile of articles and collections of reports seriously discussing the question of how many people should live in an eco-community — a population of no more than 150 is advised. Considerable attention is paid to the governing bodies of such communities and their spiritual leadership.

But Russia's dacha co-operatives have existed for years, sometimes comprising 300 families or more. Each co-operative is managed by one or two people, usually somebody retired from their regular job — if in fact you can call the chairman of a Russian dacha co-operative a manager. He's actually more like a registrar, or a manager who simply carries out the will of the majority.

Russia does not have any centralised management system for its dacha movement. However, according to data published by *Goskomstat* (the State Statistics Committee), in 1997 14.7 million families had fruit-growing plots, while 7.6 million had vegetable plots. The overall land area cultivated by these families amounted to 1,821,000 hectares. These households independently grew 90% of Russia's potatoes, 77% of its berries and fruit, and 73% of its vegetables.³

³These figures have further increased since the book was written, making Russian gardeners the backbone not only of the country's agriculture, but the economy as a whole. Thus, according to the official statistics published by *Goskomstat*, in 2004 Russian gardening families — without any heavy machinery, hired labour or government subsidies — have grown on their free time and using predominantly organic methods 33 million tonnes of potatoes, 11.5 million tonnes of vegetables and 3.2 million tonnes of fruit and berries, which represent 93%, 80% and 81% respectively of the country's total output of these crops. Russian gardeners now produce more products than the whole commercial agricultural apparatus all told. In 2004 the

No doubt the theoreticians who have been designing eco-communities and eco-villages for years will protest that a dacha co-operative is not the same as an eco-community. To which I wish to immediately respond: it is not the name but the content that is important.

The overwhelming majority of Russia's dacha co-operatives conform to eco-community guidelines. Not only that, with no thunderous declarations on spiritual self-improvement and the necessity of a careful approach to Nature, the dachniki have proved their spiritual growth not by words but by their way of life. They have planted millions of trees. It is thanks to their labours on hundreds of thousands of hectares thought to be infertile and good for nothing — so-called marginal lands, that orchards are now flourishing.

We keep hearing how in Russia part of the population is on the verge of starvation. We see strikes by teachers, then by miners, and our politicians are scratching their heads in their attempts to bring the country out of crisis after crisis. More than once during the *perestroika*⁴ period Russia was but a hair's breadth away from a massive social upheaval. But it didn't happen.

And now let's try mentally deducting from just the past few years of our lives the 90% of potatoes, 77% of berries and 73% of vegetable production, and substitute a heightened anxiety level on the part of millions of people. This you would have

value of the Russian gardeners' production represented 51% of the country's total agricultural output — approx. US\$14 billion, or 2.3% of Russia's gross domestic product (GDP). The contribution of dachniki and rural family growers to the Russian economy exceeds that of any of the following industries: steel; electric power generation; chemical and pharmaceutical; forestry, timber, pulp and paper; building materials; or oil refining, natural gas and coal industries taken together.

⁴*perestroika* — the policy of restructuring the economic and political system of the Soviet Union, which led to the collapse of the Communist Party's hold on power and the break-up of the USSR in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

to do if you were going to exclude from the past few years the calming effect of the dachas. You don't have to be a psychologist to see how dachniks are calmed by their contact with the vegetable plots they have planted. So, if we take away that factor, what would we have been left with in 1992, 1994 or 1997? In any of those years a colossal social upheaval could have come about. What kind of result might such an upheaval have led to on a planet chock full of deadly weapons?

But no catastrophe occurred. Anastasia maintains that in 1992 a catastrophe on a global scale was avoided thanks only to Russia's dachniks, and now, having read all the reports explaining the situation, I tend to agree with her.⁵

It's not so important any more to know just which 'smart head' in our nation's government came up with the idea of giving the green light to the dacha movement in Russia (still the Soviet Union back then). Or maybe it was Providence itself that saw fit to accord this privilege specifically to Russia? What's important now is that the movement exists! And it is proof positive that there is indeed a possibility of achieving stability in human society — maybe even that stability so many peoples on various continents having been trying without success to achieve for thousands of years!

Anastasia says that the dacha movement in Russia represents a momentous turning-point in the development of the human commonwealth. Dachniks are the harbingers of a splendid future which will come after them, she has said, thinking of the future communities she has sketched out. And I myself would very much like to live in one of these splendid communities — a community located in a flourishing country, whose name just happens to be... Russia.

⁵See Book 2, end of Chapter 8: "The answer". Some of the factors portending a social upheaval in 1992 are detailed in footnote 1 of Book 1, Chapter 17: "The brain — a supercomputer".

CHAPTER FIVE



A search for evidence

Russia of the future... A splendid land, in which many of to-day's generation will be able to live a happier life.

Russia of the future — a land which will lead the human commonwealth of the whole planet to a happier life. I have seen this splendid country coming into bloom. She, Anastasia, showed me the future of our country. And it is absolutely unimportant and insignificant just *how* this fiery, untiring recluse living alone in the Siberian taiga is able to travel to other planets, or into the future or into the past, or by what means or unseen threads she brings together the hearts of people living in different countries into a single, exciting creative impulse. What is important is that *this impulse exists*. Does it really matter where she obtained such a colossal amount of all kinds of information and knowledge of our life? What matters immeasurably more is the *result* of this knowledge — the fact that people living in different cities, once put in touch with the information she possesses, are now planting cedar allées, that people have started producing cedar nut oil, and that more and more songs and poems about what is beautiful in life are coming to light.

This is simply amazing! She dreams about something, I write about it, and... *presto*, it turns into reality! Like a kind of fantasy! Yet this fantasy, after all, is embodied in real life for everyone to see. Now she has dreamt about a splendid country. Shall not that too come to pass? Of course it must! And we must help in any way we can!

Going over in my mind and analysing everything Anastasia has said or showed has only made me more and more convinced of the reality of a splendid future. I believe in it.

Even though I'd begun to believe all Anastasia's words, there was still no way I could put together and publish a chapter on the future of Russia. It wasn't included in the previous book, *Co-creation*. And the release of this present volume has been delayed more than once for the same reason. I wanted everything I wrote to look sufficiently real and convincing. So that not just I but a whole lot of people could believe and set things in motion to create a splendid future. But there are certain sayings of Anastasia's that have prevented me from being less than fully convincing.

In *Co-creation* I published Anastasia's statement that what our whole natural environment comprises is precisely the materialised thoughts of God. If Man is able to comprehend these, even in part, he will not need to spend so much effort in his search for food, fertilising the ground (since the ground itself is capable of re-establishing its own fertility) or to waste energy on trying to fight noxious pests and weeds. His thought will be liberated from the problems of everyday living, and Man will be able to get involved in tasks more suited to his existence — the co-creation, with God, of splendid worlds. I wanted her words to be believed by a majority of people. But how can people trust her if even the whole agriculture industry, both in Russia and abroad, cannot dispense with the fertilising process?

So many factories in various countries of the world are involved in the production of all sorts of chemicals for 'enriching' the soil. On a number of occasions I have put this question to various agricultural scientists, but each time I've got pretty much the same condescending reply, namely that of course one could set up a Paradise garden on a single hectare of land, but you would need to tend this garden from morning

'til night. And you could not possibly expect a good harvest unless you added fertiliser to the soil, and made use of toxic chemicals, otherwise your harvest would be ruined by a whole bunch of pests. When I brought up Anastasia's argument that everything grows in the taiga without human assistance, the scientists countered:

"Let's assume it grows. But if your recluse is to be believed, the taiga has been programmed directly by God. Man needs a lot more than what can grow in the taiga. For example, the taiga doesn't have any fruit orchards. That's because orchards need to be cared for by Man. They can't grow all by themselves."

I've made several visits to such stores as "Everything for your garden", "The Gardener", "The Dachnik", and seen so many people buying different bags of chemicals. I watched these people and thought that they'll never believe what Anastasia says, and so there's no point in writing about the future of Russia — they simply won't believe in it. They won't believe in it because this future is first and foremost linked to a new conscious awareness, a different attitude to the Earth and our environment.

But there is not a single person today who could confirm what she said, not a single real-life example bearing out her words. On the contrary, everything *contradicts* her position. And the factories producing toxic pesticides continue to operate. There is a whole chain of stores selling fertilisers and chemicals. And a great many people are involved in agricultural research.

The absence of significant evidence to back up Anastasia's statements had such a strong effect on me that I came to the point where I was no longer able to write anything at all. It was for that reason that I accepted an invitation to go to Innsbruck in Austria. A German publisher rang me and said that the director of a bio-energy institute by the name of

Leonard Hoscheneng had invited me to speak on Anastasia at a gathering of the most prominent healers of Europe. The institute would pay my travel and lodging expenses, and was prepared to pay me 1,000 marks for every hour I spoke. I didn't go on account of the money, but in search of convincing arguments that a lot of people could understand either for or against Anastasia's plan — her affirmations about the future of Russia.

Dr Hoscheneng, who invited me to speak to the healers, was himself a professional doctor and a prominent healer, as his father and grandfather had been before him. His grandfather had treated the Japanese Imperial family and many other highly placed dignitaries. His personal domains, apart from the institute building, included several small, cozy hotels (where a great number of patients coming from European countries stayed), along with a restaurant, a park, and some other buildings in the city centre. He was a millionaire, though, in contrast to the image many Russians have about the lifestyle of a Western millionaire, Leonard, as I found out, handles all the serious work involved in people's treatment himself. He personally treats every one coming to see him — which can mean as many as fifty patients a day. Indeed, his working day can sometimes stretch to 16 hours. Only occasionally he has entrusted his consultation task to... a healer from Russia.

I spoke to the gathering of healers at Innsbruck, aware that they were interested first and foremost in Anastasia. I devoted the larger part of my presentation to her, and ended up talking a little about her project, with the secret hope that the audience would either confirm or discredit her ideas on the future of Russia. But they neither confirmed nor discredited them; they just kept constantly asking for more details.

That evening Hoscheneng threw a 'banquet' in his restaurant. I would simply have called it a supper. Even though

everyone could order what they liked, they were all modest, giving preference to the salads. Nobody drank alcohol or smoked. I too refrained from ordering any alcoholic beverages. Not because I was afraid of looking like the proverbial black sheep in their eyes — it was just that for some reason I didn't *feel* like having meat or alcoholic drinks.

At the supper-table the talk again turned to Anastasia. A saying was born (though I don't remember who said it first): *The splendid future of Russia is linked with the Siberian Anastasia*. The phrase caught on, and was in time repeated with various interpretations by healers from Italy, Germany, France and other countries.

I was waiting for specifics as to why and by what means the splendid scenario of the future would unfold, but nobody could offer any specific evidence. The healers were relying on some kind of intuition, whereas I needed proof: can the Earth feed Man without a special effort on his part, simply by virtue of Man correctly understanding the thought of a God whom nobody could see?

After returning to Russia, I recalled the words of the European healers, and continued my search for concrete evidence, for which I was prepared to travel anywhere. But I didn't have to travel very far. An extraordinary coincidence, as though deliberately set up by someone, not only offered theoretical evidence, but proved to be a real and living confirmation of Anastasia's words.

It happened this way...

CHAPTER SIX



A garden for eternity

I set off on a day-trip to the country along with employees of the Anastasia Cultural Foundation of Vladimir.¹ We stopped by the picturesque shore of a small pond. The women went about preparing a variety of salads for lunch, while the men attended to building a fire. I stood at the edge of the pond, gazing at the water and lost myself in thought. I was in a pretty gloomy mood. All at once Veronika, a resident of a nearby village, came up to me and said:

“Vladimir Nikolaevich, just about seven kilometres from here, in the middle of these fields, there are two former manorial estates. There’s nothing left of the buildings, but the fruit orchards have been preserved. Nobody looks after them, but they still bring forth fruit year after year. They give a lot more fruit than the village orchards which are tended to and fertilised.

“In 1976 there was an extremely cold winter in these parts, and a lot of people lost their orchards and were forced to

¹*Vladimir* — in this case the name of one of Russia’s oldest cities (founded in 1108 by Prince Vladimir Monomakh on the site of a much earlier settlement), which once served as the Russian capital. Situated on the Klyazma River about 180 km east of Moscow, it has a current population of about 340,000. Like neighbouring Suzdal (former patriarchate of the Russian Orthodox Church) and a chain of other historic towns, Vladimir forms part of Russia’s circular tourist route known as the *Golden Ring* (*Zolotoe kol'tso*). It is here that the author of the Ringing Cedars Series, Vladimir Nikolaevich Megré, resided at the time this book was written. The name *Vladimir* — though now commonly interpreted as meaning “ruler of the world” — is an ancient Slavic name originally meaning “in harmony and peace”.

plant new ones, but these two, out among the fields, weren't touched by the cold at all, and not a single tree was lost."

"Why didn't the cold touch them?" I asked. "Maybe they were a special variety, cold-resistant?"

"Just the usual variety. But the way everything was set up on these former estates — the way they did it on just a single hectare of land — *wow!* It's pretty much the way Anastasia describes it in your books. Two hundred years ago people planted Siberian cedars all around it along with local oak trees... Another thing: the hay from the grass that grows there is a lot richer. It keeps for a long time.

"If you like we could go see the place right now. It's just a dirt trail through the fields, but your jeep can make it."

I couldn't believe my ears. Who? How? A gift like this — and just at the right place and at the right time. Are such 'co-incidences' really coincidental after all?

"Let's go!" I said.

The trail ran across fields belonging to a former state farm.² I said 'fields', though they were really more like hayfields or meadows, all overgrown with tall grasses.

"They've really cut back their growing areas here," observed Evgeny, Veronika's husband. "The farm company doesn't have enough money for fertiliser... Anyway, the ground's getting a rest. And not just the ground. The birds have started singing again this year. You didn't hear such happy twittering before. What are they so happy about? Maybe 'cause there are no chemicals on the fields now. Before the revolution there were villages here in these meadows — my grandmother told me about them. But there's no trace left of them now.

"Look — there it is, to the right of the trail — a former estate."

² *state farm* (Russian: *sovkhos*) — in the Soviet period, a farm where workers were paid a monthly wage, as in a factory.

In the distance I could see tall trees growing densely together. They appeared to cover about a hectare of ground. This place seemed simply like a green isle of forest, all surrounded by fields and meadows. As we drew closer, I could see in amongst the dense grove of two-hundred-year-old oak trees and bushes an entrance leading to a woodland oasis inside. We went in through the entrance and...

There we were inside... Just imagine: there inside were ancient apple trees with gnarled trunks, spreading their branches out into space. Branches literally dripping with fruit. They hadn't been dug around — they were just growing there amidst the grasses, they hadn't been sprayed for insects, but these old apple trees were bearing fruit, and their fruit showed no sign of worm infestation. Some of the trees were real oldies, their branches were breaking under the weight of the fruit. Real oldies — quite possibly this was their last year for bearing fruit.

They will soon die off, but alongside each ancient tree you could already see shoots of a new tree breaking through the soil. The thought actually came to me that these trees probably wouldn't die — at least not until they saw the fresh and healthy shoots coming from their seed.

I walked through the orchard, took a taste of the fruit, wandered among the oak trees growing all around, and it seemed as though I could discern the actual thoughts of the Man who had created this splendid oasis. It was as though I could hear him thinking:

"Right here, around the orchard, I should put in an oak grove. It will protect the orchard from the winter cold, as well as from summer heat in dry years. Birds will make their nests in the tall trees and stop the caterpillars from taking over. I'll plant a shady oak allée by the shore of the pond. When the trees grow up, their tops will come together, giving shade to the spacious allée below."

And all at once a kind of vague thought made my blood course faster through my veins. What was it demanding of me, this thought? And then... it came in a flash: of course, Anastasia! Naturally you were right when you said that we could feel God in coming into contact with His creations and in continuing His creations. Not by wild antics, jumping up and down and new-fangled rituals, but by directly turning to Him, to His thoughts, it is surely possible to understand His wishes and our own purpose in life. Here I am standing beneath the oak trees on the shore of a man-made pond and I can literally read the thoughts of the Man behind this living creation. And he — this Man, this Russian, who lived here two hundred years ago — no doubt felt more than others the thoughts of the Creator, which enabled him to bring about this Paradise creation. His own garden, his own family nest.

He may have died, this Russian, but his orchard has remained, and is still bringing forth fruit, and feeding the children of the neighbouring villages, who come here every autumn to delight in the fruits. Some people gather them up and sell them. And you, my fine Russian fellow, no doubt wanted your grandchildren and great-grandchildren to live here. Of course you did! I can tell that because you didn't put up just a mansion with a limited life-span, but something that will last for eternity.

But where are your grandchildren and great-grandchildren today? Your family domain has been abandoned, it's all grown over with grasses, and your pond is drying up. But your allée, for some reason, didn't get overgrown with wild grass. In fact the grass beneath it is like a carpet. Your corner of Paradise which you created — your family domain — is no doubt still awaiting the return of your descendants. Decades go by, even centuries, but it is still waiting. So where are they? Who are they now? Whom do they serve? Whom do they worship? Who chased them away from here?

We did have a revolution — maybe that's to blame for everything? Of course it is. Only a revolution is made by people when some sort of qualitative change takes place in the consciousness of the majority. What happened in the minds of your contemporaries, my fine Russian fellow, that your family domain has gone to waste?

The local old-timers told me how the ageing Russian landowner headed off a blood-bath on his domain.

When a group of revolutionary-inclined residents from two nearby villages, pumped up on local beer, marched en masse to pillage his family domain, the old landowner came out to meet them with a basket of apples, only to be slain by a bullet from a double-barrelled gun. He had known already the night before that they were planning to pillage his house, and he had persuaded his grandson, a Russian officer, to leave the domain. The grandson, a front-line veteran, decorated with St George's Cross, fled together with his comrades-in-arms with front-line Mosin rifles³ slung over their shoulders; their open wagon also carried a trusty, battle-worn machine gun. He probably went into emigration and now has grandchildren of his own growing up.

Your descendants, my fine Russian fellow, are growing up in another land, while in Russia, in your kin's domain, the leaves of the trees in your orchard are rustling in the breeze, and every year your old apple trees are bringing forth fruit, astounding all the residents around with a luxuriant harvest. There isn't even a trace of your house left, all the outbuildings have been torn down, but the orchard lives on in spite of everything — no doubt in the hope that your descendants will return to taste the best apples in the whole wide world. Yet your descendants are still not coming.

³*Mosin rifle* (Russian: *vintovka Mosina*) — the standard army-issue three-line (*triokhlineika*) rifle in both the Imperial and Soviet Russian armies, developed in 1891 by Sergei Ivanovich Mosin (1849–1902).

Why have things turned out like this and who is making us seek our own happiness at the expense of others just like us? Who is making us breathe air filled with noxious gases and dust instead of floral pollen and beneficial ethers? Who is making us drink water deadened by gases? Who? Who are we today? Why do not your descendants come back, my fine Russian fellow, back to their family nest?



In the second domain the apples were even tastier than in the first. Around this orchard had been planted beautiful Siberian cedars. Local residents informed me that there had even been more cedars earlier — now only twenty-three of them were left. During the days following the revolution when they still had a day-labour system, they said people were paid for their work with cedar nuts. Now the nuts were there to be collected by anyone who wanted to. The only thing was, sometimes they would beat the trees very hard with logs⁴ to make the cones fall to the ground.

Twenty-three Siberian cedars, planted by the hand of Man two hundred years ago, still stood there all in a row, like soldiers protecting this splendid orchard from freezing winds and harmful pests. There had been more of them, but one by

⁴The customary process of harvesting cedar nuts involves 5 to 10 strong men putting a log on their shoulders and, with a running approach, hitting the trunk of the cedar with one end of the log. This is the most ‘efficient’ method of knocking the cones off the tree to the ground, yet the most damaging to the tree. A milder alternative is to hit the trunk with a special bat, while the best option — recommended by Anastasia (see Book 2, Chapter 31: “How to produce healing cedar oil”) — is to gather the ripe cones that fall naturally to the ground (or to climb the tree and pick them by hand).

one they perished, since in Siberia the cedars were always surrounded by tall pines. A single cedar by itself could not withstand the blasts of wind, as its root system is not all that extensive. Cedars are nourished not only through their roots, but also absorb the surrounding space through their tops. That is why the pines or young cedars protect them. Whereas here the cedars were all standing in a row. They lasted the first hundred and fifty years, but then, after their tops expanded, they began falling, one after the other.

For the past fifty years nobody thought of planting pines or birches beside them, and so the cedars were left to defend the orchard, standing up against the angry winds all on their own. It was probably just last year that one of them began falling, but came to rest against the top of the one next to it in the row. I looked at the sharply leaning tree trunk, whose top was intertwined with that of its neighbour. Their branches had grown together, and the falling tree was still living. Both trees were green and bearing seed. There were only twenty-three left. They are still standing there, supporting each other, bearing seed and protecting the orchard.

Oh you Sibriaks!⁵ Hang in there, just a little longer, please! I'm going to write about you...

Oh, Anastasia, Anastasia! You taught me how to write books, but why didn't you teach me to write words that would be understandable to a lot of people right off the bat? To a whole lot of people?! Why can't I manage to write in an understandable way for a great many people? Why does my thought get confused? Why do the cedars fall, and people only *look* at them and not *do* anything?

Not far from these former domains, which have preserved right up to our day their splendid orchards and shady allées,

⁵ *Sibriak* (pronounced: *sibir-YAK*) — a native of Siberia, in this case referring to the trees.

are located several villages. The sight of these villages spoils the whole surrounding landscape. If you look at them from afar, you get the impression that some sort of worm ran amuck, laid everything waste and dug up the flower-covered meadows. Slums full of grey village houses, farm buildings thrown together out of various rotting materials, dirt from roads broken down under the wheels of lorries and tractors, all contribute to this impression.

I asked the local residents whether they had been to the orchards laid out among the cedar and oak trees. Many had been there, tasted the apples. Young people were accustomed to going to the place for picnics.

"It's lovely there!" was chorused by young and old alike.

But when I asked why nobody had tried to set up their own homestead in the same 'image and likeness', I got pretty much the same answer each time:

"We don't have the kind of money the landowners who created this beauty had."

Older residents said that the cedar saplings had been brought here by the landowner directly from Siberia.

When I asked how much it cost just to take a cedar nut from one of these trees and plant it in the ground, I got a strained silence in reply.

Which brings me to the thought that it is not the lack of opportunity or financial means, but our own inner coding that is somehow to blame for all our woes.

Nowadays people with money are putting up a lot of fancy houses in the country. The land around these houses has been either dug up or buried in asphalt. In twenty or thirty years these houses are going to be in need of repair; they won't look like new any more. And their children won't need this old derelict. They won't be needing a family domain — a Motherland — like that, and so they'll go off to find themselves a new one.

But they'll be taking with them this same mysterious coding they got from their parents and repeating their life as temporary caretakers on the land, instead of creating something for eternity. Who will be able to remove it and how — this mysterious coding for hopelessness?

Perhaps what Anastasia has said and shown about the future of Russia will somehow help in this regard. And just to allay the doubts of the sceptics, I have put on the inside covers of this book photographs of these amazing Russian orchards, spreading out their fruit-laden branches to the Russia of the future.

CHAPTER SEVEN



Anastasia's Russia

As Anastasia was telling me about the communities of the future which would be comprised of family domains, I asked her:

"Anastasia, please *show* me the Russia of the future. I know you can."

"Yes, I can. What place in the future Russia would you like to see, Vladimir?"

"Well, how about Moscow?"

"Would you like to go to the future alone, Vladimir, or together with me?"

"It'd be a lot better with you. You can explain anything I see and don't understand."

The touch of Anastasia's warm hand at once induced a sleepy state, and I started to see...

Anastasia showed me the future of Russia the same way she showed me life on another planet. At some point scientists will probably understand just how she does this, but the means she used are quite irrelevant in this case. In my view, the most important thing is information about what specific actions will enable us to bring about this splendid future.

The Moscow yet to come was nothing like I had imagined. The city had not expanded its geographical boundaries. There were no skyscrapers, as I might have expected. The walls of the old houses were decorated in cheerful colours, and many were painted with pictures — landscapes and flowers. I later found out that this was the work of foreigners. First they covered the walls with some kind of plaster, and then artists —

also from abroad — added the ornamentation. Intertwining vines hung down the roofs of many of the houses, their leaves rustling in the wind, as though greeting the passers-by.

Almost all the streets and avenues of the capital were planted with trees and flowers. Right down the middle of Kalinin Avenue (or the New Arbat,¹ as it is called) stretched a green boulevard about four metres wide. Concrete kerbs rose about a half-metre above the pavement, enclosing earthen beds from which sprouted grass and wild flowers, interspersed at brief intervals with various kinds of trees: rowans with their clusters of red berries, birches, poplars, currant and raspberry bushes and a host of other plants such as one might find in a natural forest.

There were similar boulevard strips down the centre of many of Moscow's avenues and broad streets. And on the reduced traffic portion of these streets there didn't seem to be very many motorcars — mainly buses carrying passengers who did not look at all Russian in their appearance. The same could be said of many of the pedestrians on the sidewalks. I wondered for a moment whether Moscow had been occupied by a technically more developed country. But Anastasia reassured me, saying that the people I was seeing here were not occupiers, but simply foreign tourists.

"And what draws them to Moscow?" I asked.

¹*New Arbat* (in Russian: *Novy Arbat*) — a broad thoroughfare leading west from the Kremlin and city centre to the Novy Arbat Bridge across the Moskva River (*Moskva* is also the Russian name of the city itself). Officially known as Kalinin Prospekt (Avenue) in Soviet times (after Mikhail Kalinin — see footnote 1 in Book 1, Chapter 1: "The ringing cedar"), Novy Arbat was constructed in 1963 parallel to the old Arbat Street, which still runs a short distance to the south and from 1974 to 1986 was turned into a pedestrian mall. Novy Arbat's imposing row of modern high-rise apartment blocks gave 1960s Moscow a new Western appearance, complete with contemporary-looking shops and restaurants.

"The atmosphere of a grand creation, refreshing air and water," came the reply. "Look and see how many people are standing along the banks of the Moskva River and collecting water in containers on strings they let down from the high embankments, and drinking the river water with great delight!"

"But how can they drink water straight from the river without boiling it first?"

"Look and see, Vladimir, how pure and transparent the water is in the Moskva River. It contains living water, not water deadened by gases like the kind sold in bottles throughout the world."

"It must be a fantasy — something impossible to believe!"

"A fantasy? But when you were little, would you and your friends have believed it if someone told you that before long people would be selling water in bottles?"

"You're right: when I was young nobody would have believed that. But how was it possible to make the water so pure in such a big city as Moscow?"

"Stop polluting it, stop throwing harmful waste into it, stop littering the river banks."

"It was that simple?"

"Exactly. Nothing fantasy-like — it is actually all quite simple. Today the Moskva River is protected even from the runoff water flowing over the pavement, and it is closed to dirty ships. They used to consider the Ganges in India sacred, but now the whole world adores the Moskva River and its water, they adore the people who restored the water to its pristine vitality. And people come here from many countries to see this wondrous marvel, taste the water and find healing."

"And where are all the local residents? Why are there so few passenger cars in the streets?"

"There are only about a million-and-a-half Muscovites actually living in the capital now, though the number of tourists

from various countries can be more than six times that figure,” replied Anastasia, and added: “There are fewer cars because the remaining residents have managed to arrange their day on a more rational basis, reducing their need to move around. Their work is usually close by, close enough to walk. And the tourists get around using just the metro² and the buses.”

“And what’s happened to all the other Muscovites?”

“They live and work in their splendid family domains.”³

“Then who works in the plants and factories? Who looks after the tourists?”

And Anastasia told me the following:

“As the year 2000 (according to the accepted Earth calendar of the time) was drawing to a close, the Russian leadership was still in the process of determining the country’s path of future development. The majority of Russian citizens were not particularly inspired by the path the so-called prosperous countries of the West were taking.

“Russians had already tried the food products from these countries, but did not have much of a taste for them. It turned out that the development of what was termed technical

² *metro* — Moscow’s “metropolitan”, or subway system, which has been operating since May 1935. Over the years it has expanded to twelve lines and some 200 stations.

³ The whole description of the Russia of the future in this chapter and elsewhere in the Series bears striking similarities to the ideas of one of Russia’s greatest economists, Alexander Chayanov (1888–1937). Back in the 1920s he already foresaw the eventual return of the country to predominantly rural living after the fall of communism, and even described the Moscow of the future as a garden-city populated mostly by tourists. He also accurately predicted the rise of the dacha movement that would eventually dominate the country’s agriculture. Some of these views are expressed in his insightful *A journey of my brother Alexey to the land of peasant Utopia* (dubbed a ‘utopia’ only to allow the publication of the work under the Soviet censorship in 1920). After Stalin publicly attacked Chayanov’s views in 1929, he was incarcerated and, after years in prison, executed on Stalin’s personal order. Today Chayanov’s works are better known abroad than in his native Russia.

progress in these countries came hand-in-glove with various diseases of both the body and the soul. Crime and drugs became increasingly rampant, and women were less and less inclined toward child-bearing.

“Russians were not attracted to the conditions in which the peoples of the ‘developed’ nations lived. Neither did they wish to revert to the old social order, but they had not yet seen any new path. An increasing mood of depression took hold of the country, affecting the whole society in ever greater numbers. Russia’s population was ageing and dying.

“At the beginning of the new millennium, at the initiative of the Russian President, a decree was signed granting free and unconditionally to each willing family one hectare of land whereon to establish a family domain. The decree allotted this land to the family for lifetime use, with the right to pass it on to their heirs. Any produce grown in this domain would not be subject to taxation of any kind.⁴

“Russian parliamentarians supported the President’s initiative and the Russian Constitution was amended accordingly. The primary aims of the decree, in the eyes of the President and the parliamentarians, were: reducing unemployment in the country, guaranteeing a minimum income level to needy families, and solving the refugee problem. But what subsequently happened was something none of them could have fully imagined.

⁴On 7 July 2003, less than three years after this book was released in Russian, Russian President Vladimir Putin signed into federal law the “Private Garden-plot Act” (*Zakon o lichnom podsobnom khoziaistve*). According to this law, Russian citizens can receive free of charge from the state plots of land in private inheritable ownership. The maximum size of plots differs from one region to another, but in most cases is between 1 and 3 hectares. The produce grown on the plots is not subject to taxation. Subsequently, on President Putin’s instructions the Russian government developed and introduced into the Russian parliament another law to further facilitate the acquisition of land for gardening. This second law was passed in June 2006.

“When the first allocation of land was made for organising a community numbering more than two hundred families, the plots of land in question were taken up not just by the needy, the unemployed or poverty-stricken refugees, but primarily by middle-income families and wealthy entrepreneurs who had read your books, Vladimir. They had been anticipating this turn of events. And they were not just idly waiting for it — many of them had already been growing their own family trees in their apartments from seeds planted in clay pots, and the mighty cedars and oaks of the future were already sprouting their first little shoots.

“It was these entrepreneurs who initiated and financed plans for a community with an infrastructure facilitating a convenient lifestyle, as you wrote in your book *Co-creation*. These plans provided for a store, a medical clinic, a school, a club, roads and a lot else besides. In fact, entrepreneurs made up about half the number of people who expressed their desire to rearrange their life and daily routine to live in the first of the new communities.

“They all had their own businesses, their own source of income. For the actual construction work and setting up their plots of land they required a labour force. The ideal solution, they discovered, was to hire their neighbours from among the needy families as construction and landscape workers. That way some of these families got jobs right away, which gave them the wherewithal to finance their own construction projects. The entrepreneurs realised that nobody would prove to be more meticulous and efficient workers than those who were planning to live in the community themselves, and so external specialists would be hired only where such could not be found among the future community residents.

“Only the establishing of the future orchard and forest and the planting of the family trees and living fences was something each family endeavoured to do on their own.

"Most of them did not yet have enough experience or knowledge as to how best to establish their plot, and as a result among the future residents the elderly people who did have this knowledge commanded considerable respect. The principal focus was not on temporary structures or even houses *per se*, but on the development of the landscaping. In each case the actual buildings people were going to live in were considered just one small part of the larger living house of God.

"Within five years houses for permanent residence had been built on all the lots. They were quite varied in size and architectural style, but it was soon evident that the greatest treasure of each domain was by no means the size of a house. The greatest treasure lay elsewhere, and it was not long before it took form and outline in the splendid landscaping elements of each plot in particular as well as of the community as a whole.

"The oaks and cedars planted in each plot were still very young, and each plot was surrounded by a living fence, which was only starting to grow. But with each new spring, apple and cherry trees, even though still quite small, came stridently into bloom in the young orchards, along with grass and flower beds that were doing their very best to resemble a splendid living carpet. The spring air was filled with delightful aromas and floral pollen. The air became truly invigorating.

"And every woman living in this new community had a desire to bear children. This happened not only in young families but even people considered elderly suddenly began to bear children. People felt that even if they themselves did not live to see the splendid piece of their Motherland their hands had created, they wanted their children to — they wanted their children to delight in the sight and continue the co-creation begun by their parents.

"At the beginning of the new millennium, in each plot, all living shoots represented the first shoots of a splendid, happy

future for the whole Earth. The people that established for centuries to come the first family domains had still not completely felt the significance of what they had done — they simply began looking more joyfully at the world around them. They were still not consciously aware of the great joy their actions were bringing to their Heavenly Father. The Father was sending tears of joy and tenderness upon the Earth amidst the drops of the falling rain. And He smiled with the sunshine, and was endeavouring to use the little branches of young trees to give a secret caress to His children who had suddenly become aware of eternity and had come back to Him.

“The Russian press began writing about the new community, and many people wanted to see this splendid phenomenon for themselves so that they could create one of their own like it.⁵ Perhaps even create a better one.

“Millions of Russian families were seized with the inspired desire for a splendid co-creation. Communities similar to the first one sprang up simultaneously in various regions of the country. An entire movement began, not unlike our contemporary dacha movement.

“Within nine years after the first decree was signed allowing people to establish their lives independently and make their lives happy, more than thirty million families had become involved in creating their own kin's domains, their own piece of the Motherland. They have been cultivating their

⁵This too came to pass. On 12 November 2002, less than two years after this book was published in Russian, *The Moscow Times*, Russia's largest English-language daily newspaper, featured an article (entitled “Urban group dreams of eco-friendly settlement”) on *Rodnoe*, one of Russia's first eco-villages created by inspired readers of the Ringing Cedars Series. This article, describing the emerging Russia-wide eco-village movement which sprang from the ideas expressed in Vladimir Megré's books, was followed by hundreds of other reports in newspapers and in other mass media. Both *Rodnoe* and other eco-communities now receive a steady flow of visitors from all over Russia and abroad.

splendid plots of ground, using, in the process, living, everlasting materials created by God. And, by so doing, they were creating together with Him.

“Each of these families turned their hectare of land provided for their lifetime use into a little corner of Paradise. Against the backdrop of the vast spaces of the Russian Motherland, a single hectare seemed like a very small piece indeed. But there were many such pieces. And all of them together made up a vast Motherland. Through these pieces, all created by loving hands, the whole Motherland flourished like a garden in Paradise! This was their Russia!

“On each of the hectares were planted both evergreens and deciduous trees. People were already aware how the trees themselves would fertilise the ground and the balance in soil composition would be maintained by the grasses growing all around. And nobody had it even cross their mind to use chemical fertilisers or toxic chemicals.

“The quality of Russia’s air and water improved and became health-giving. The food shortage problem was completely resolved. Each family was able — easily and without undue effort — not only to provide for themselves from what grew in their domain, but also to sell their surplus.

“Every Russian family with its own domain started to become rich and free, and Russia as a whole began to grow into the most rich and powerful state in comparison with other countries in the world.”

CHAPTER EIGHT



The richest state

“Hold on, Anastasia, I don’t understand how the state as a whole suddenly got rich. You yourself said that the produce from family domains wasn’t subject to any kind of tax, so what has made the state so rich?”

“How can you possibly ask *what?* Think about it more carefully, Vladimir. You are an entrepreneur, after all.”

“Well, since I am an entrepreneur, I happen to know that the state has always tried its hardest to squeeze just a little more tax out of every citizen. And here you tell me it’s gone and axed thirty million families from the tax roll. The families, of course, could have got very rich, but at the same time it should mean bankruptcy for the state.”

“The state did not go bankrupt. First, unemployment was completely eliminated, since any Man who found himself without a job in the industrial, commercial or public sectors (as we know them today) was able to devote himself either fully or partially to work — or putting it more specifically, to *co-creation* in his own domain. The total elimination of unemployment freed up significant financial resources.

“The abundant supply of food provided by the families with their own domains spared the state from any kind of expenditure on agricultural production. But, more importantly, thanks to the vast number of families who established their domains in accordance with the Divine plan, the Russian state received an income significantly higher than it realises today from the sale of oil, gas and other resources traditionally regarded as its basic sources of income.”

“What could possibly bring it more income than oil, gas and arms sales?”

“A great deal, Vladimir — for example, air, water, ethers, loveliness, contact with the energy of co-creation, the contemplation of pleasant things.”

“It’s still not completely clear, Anastasia. Couldn’t you put it in more specific terms? Where did the money come from?”

“I shall try my best. The extraordinary changes taking place in Russia attracted the attention of many people all over the globe. The world press began writing about the major change in lifestyle most Russians were experiencing. This became a burning issue for a good deal of the world’s population. A huge flood of tourists began pouring into Russia. There were so many that wanted to come, it was impossible to accept them all, and many had to wait their turn, even as long as several years. The Russian government was forced to limit the length of stays by foreign tourists, since many of them, especially the elderly, were attempting to stay months and even years here.

“The Russian government collected huge levies from each foreigner entering the country, but this by no means reduced the number of those applying to come.”

“But why did they want to visit here in person, if they could see it all on TV? You did say the world press was enlightening people about life in the new Russia.”

“People all over the world wanted more — they wanted to breathe Russia’s air which had become so health-giving. They wanted to drink its living water. To take a taste of fruits unlike any other in the world. To talk with the people who were stepping forward into God’s millennium and thereby both slake their souls’ thirst and heal their suffering bodies.”

“And what unusual kinds of fruit appeared? What were they called?”

“The same as they were called before, only the quality was completely different. You already know, Vladimir, how much better tomatoes and cucumbers taste when they are grown in the open air under the direct rays of the Sun, in comparison to hothouse varieties. Well, fruits and vegetables grown in soil free from harmful chemicals are even tastier and more healthful. And they have even greater healing properties when grown in the company of different kinds of herbs and trees. The mood and attitude of the grower also plays a role. And the ethers contained in the fruit also have a tremendous benefit for Man.”

“What do you mean by *ethers*?”

“Ethers are fragrances. A fragrance you detect signifies the presence of an ether which feeds not only the body but also the invisible essence of a Man.”

“Still not clear. Are we talking about the brain, perhaps?”

“One could say that ethers strengthen mental energy and feed the soul. Such fruits were grown only in Russia, and the greatest benefit is realised when used by Man on the day they are picked, and that is why so many people have come to Russia from all over the world — to taste these fruits, among other things.

“Produce from the family domains very quickly took over the market, squeezing out not only imported fruits and vegetables but those that were still growing in the ordinary large-acreage fields. People began to appreciate and feel the difference in the quality of the produce. Pepsi-Cola and the other soft drinks so popular today were replaced by fruit beverages made from natural berries. And even the most sophisticated and expensive liqueurs in today’s society could not compete with the sweet wines prepared from natural berries right in the domains.

“These drinks also contained beneficial ethers, since the people preparing them in their domains knew that once the

berries were picked, they had only a few minutes to begin making them into fruit liqueurs and wines.

"An even greater source of income for families living in their domains was the sale of medicinal plants which they gathered from their groves, gardens and surrounding meadows.

"In time the harvests of medicinal herbs from Russia became a far more sought-after commodity than drugs manufactured abroad — but only the herbs collected in the family domains and not those grown in specialised operations on huge tracts of land. A herb grown in a huge field among others of its own kind cannot take from the soil and surrounding space all the ingredients that are needful and useful to Man. Even though the produce from the domains cost a great deal more than what was produced by the so-called industrial method, people all over the world still preferred it."

"And why did the owners of the domains jack up the price?"

"The minimum price was set by the Russian government."

"The government? Why would it care? It doesn't get anything from family domain production. Why would it take pains to enrich individual families?"

"You must remember, Vladimir, that the state itself consists of individual families, who, as the need arose, took to financing the infrastructure network in their communities — schools and roads, for example. Sometimes they would put money into projects on a national scale. Politicians and economists would publish their projects, but only those which people put their money into passed."

"Tell me, what kinds of projects were the most popular among the majority?"

"The buying up of chemical conglomerates abroad, arms factories and scientific institutes."

"Now there's a switch! You told me that these families had a conscious awareness of the Divine, a sense of goodness.

That it was thanks to them that the whole world was being transformed into a garden of Paradise, and now you're talking about buying up chemical plants and arms manufacturing companies."

"But these ventures were not aimed at *producing* weapons or harmful chemicals, but at destroying the factories making them. The Russian government was involved in the re-direction of the international monetary flow. The energy of money, which had been feeding what was fatally harmful for mankind, was now aimed at the liquidation of the same."

"And what happened — did the Russian government have enough money for such extravagant projects?"

"It did. Russia not only became the richest country in the world but it became immeasurably richer than all the other countries. The whole world's capital started flowing into Russia. Not only the wealthy, but even people of modest means flocked to deposit their savings exclusively in Russian banks. Many wealthy people simply willed their savings to the development of Russian projects — these were people who realised that the future of all mankind depended upon these projects being carried out. Foreign tourists who had visited Russia and seen the new Russians could no longer live by their former set of values. They excitedly told their friends and acquaintances about what they had seen, and the flood of tourists kept getting bigger, and bringing ever increasing profit to the Russian state."

"Tell me, Anastasia, those people, you know, who live in Siberia, what projects could they undertake to become as wealthy as the people in central Russia? After all, in Siberia the summer is shorter and you won't get very rich on growing garden produce."

"People in Siberia, Vladimir, also began setting up their domains. Siberians used their plots of ground to grow things suitable to their climate, and they had one big advantage over

residents of more southern climes. Siberian families received state allotments in the taiga, and each family took care of its own lands and harvested their gifts. And out of Siberia came health-giving berries and herbs. And... cedar nut oil."

"And how much did cedar oil fetch on the international market, in terms of dollars?"

"One tonne of cedar oil cost four million dollars."

"Wow! Finally it was priced at its true worth, which is eight times higher than what it was fetching before. I wonder how much of this cedar oil the Siberians would have prepared in a season?"

"In the year you are looking at now: three thousand tonnes were produced."

"Three thousand?! Wow! That means they would have got twelve billion dollars just for harvesting cedar nuts."

"More, in fact. You forgot that pressed cedar nuts can be made into excellent flour."

"So how much would an average Siberian family make in a year from their labours — in terms of dollars?"

"On average, three to four million dollars."

"Wowee! And you mean to tell me they still don't pay any tax?"

"No tax at all."

"In that case, where on earth could they spend money like that? Back when I worked in Siberia, I saw that anyone in a Siberian village who wasn't lazy could provide enough for himself by hunting and fishing. But here you're talking huge sums!"

"Like other Russians, they invested their money in national government projects. For example, initially, when the Russian people still had not discovered how to control the movement of the clouds, a great deal of the Siberians' money went to the purchase of aeroplanes."

"Aeroplanes? What would they need planes for?"

"To ward off clouds containing harmful deposits. These clouds would form over countries where deadly industrial pollution was still permitted. They were fought off by Siberian aviators."

"And what about hunting — has it been confined to reserved family allotments in the taiga?"

"Siberians have totally stopped all hunting and the killing of animals. Many of them built summer residences on their allotments and spent their summers collecting herbs, berries, mushrooms and nuts. Young creatures of the forest right from birth saw human beings as not a threat to them, and got accustomed to Man as an integral part of their territory. They began communicating with people, making friends with them.

"The Siberians taught many creatures to help them. For example, squirrels would throw down cedar cones with ripe nuts onto the ground, which gave the squirrels no end of pleasure. Some people trained bears to pull heavy baskets and sacks with nuts, and clear away trees felled by the wind."

"Really! They even got bears helping!"

"There is nothing surprising in that, Vladimir. In times which people today call 'ancient', a bear was one of the most irreplaceable helpers in the household. He would use his paws to dig edible tubers out of the ground and put them in a large basket, and then take it upon himself to drag the basket on a rope to a pit cellar hollowed out of the ground not far from Man's dwelling. He would climb trees in the forest to fetch log-hives filled with honey and bring them back to Man's dwelling. He would take Man's children into the forest to gather raspberry treats, as well as do a lot of other things for the household."

"Wow! The bear replaced both the tractor and the plough, and brought home things to eat, and minded the children!"

"And all winter long he slept, needing no maintenance or repairs. And when spring came he would return to Man's

dwelling once more, and Man would treat him to the fruits of the previous autumn."

"I see what's going on: a reflex was trained in those bears to make it seem as though Man had stored up those supplies just for them."

"You could call it a reflex, if that helps you gain a clearer understanding, but you could also say that is the way it was designed by the Father. I will only tell you that tubers were not the most important thing for the bear in the springtime."

"What was, then?"

"After sleeping all alone in his lair the whole winter long, when he awoke in the spring the first thing the bear did was hurry over to see Man, to feel Man's caresses and hear his praise. All the creatures need Man's caresses."

"If dogs and cats are any example, you're right. But what about the other creatures in the taiga — what did they do?"

"Gradually all the other taiga dwellers found themselves a niche too. And the highest reward for these tamed residents of the territory was a tender word or gesture, or petting or scratching for those who had done an exceptionally good job. But they could get jealous of each other some times, if one of them seemed to win special favour from Man. They could even have a quarrel over this."

"And what have Siberians been doing during the winter?"

"Processing the nuts. Instead of husking the cones right after gathering them, the way it is done in our time for ease of transport, they keep the nuts stored in their resinous cones. The nuts keep that way for several years. Also during the winter women do handicrafts. For example, a hand-made shirt woven out of nettle fibres and embroidered by hand fetches quite a handsome price today. And in wintertime Siberians receive people from all over the world and treat their ills."

"But, Anastasia, if Russia has indeed become such a rich land for Man to live in, surely that means that many other

states have a desire to conquer Russia? Especially since, as you said, the arms factories have been shut down. Are you telling me Russia has become in fact an agrarian country, unprotected against an external aggressor?"

"Russia has not been transformed into an agrarian country. It has become a centre for world science.

"And the factories manufacturing destructive weapons in Russia were eliminated only after people discovered an energy, before which the most up-to-date kinds of armaments not only proved useless, but even represented a threat to those countries which maintained them."

"What kind of energy is that? Where does it come from and who discovered it?"

"This energy was possessed by the Atlanteans. But they got hold of it too early, and so Atlantis disappeared from the face of the Earth. And it was rediscovered by the children of the new Russia."

"Children?! You'd better run all this by me in the proper order, Anastasia."

"Very well."

CHAPTER NINE



Good shall prevail on the Earth¹

In one of the Russian domains lived a happy family — a husband, wife and two children: a boy, Konstantin, who was eight, and a little five-year-old girl named Dasha.² Their father was considered one of the most talented computer-programmers in Russia. His study at home contained several state-of-the-art computers on which he compiled programmes for a government military agency. Sometimes he would linger at his computers well into the evening hours, completely absorbed in his work.

The other members of the family, accustomed to gathering in the evenings, headed for his study, where each busied themselves with their own activities. The wife sat in a comfortable armchair and sewed. Their son read or drew sketches of the landscapes of the new settlements. Only five-year-old Dasha would not always find herself an activity to her liking, in which case she would curl up in a chair with a good view of everyone else, and spend a long time carefully observing each member of the family. Occasionally she would close her eyes, and her face would show a whole range of emotions.

On what seemed to be a fairly routine evening the family had gathered in the father's study as usual, each one busy in their own way. The study door was open, which meant that

¹The whole of Chapter 9 and the first few paragraphs of Chapter 10 are told directly in Anastasia's words.

²*Dasha* — the diminutive form of the name *Daria*; family and friends might also call her *Dashenka*, or (indicating a momentary negative emotion) *Dashka*. *Konstantin* may also be known informally as *Kostia* or *Kostienka*. They in turn could address their parents as *Mamochka* and *Papochka*.

they could hear the cuckooing of an old-fashioned mechanical cuckoo clock on the wall of the children's room next door. Usually it would sound off only during the daytime hours, but now it was already evening. So the father glanced up from his work and stared at the door, while the other family members gave an astonished look in the same direction. All except for little Dasha, who simply sat in her chair, her eyes closed, apparently oblivious to everything. A smile — first barely noticeable, then quite evident — crept across her lips. All at once the clock cuckooed a second time, as though someone standing in the children's room had moved the hands forward to announce the next hour. Ivan Nikiforovich,³ as the father of the household was called, turned his swivel chair in his son's direction and said:

"Kostia, please go see if you can fix the clock or at least stop it. We've had it a long time, that gift of Grandfather's. Strange how it got broken like that... Strange... See if you can do something about it, Kostia."

The children were always obedient. Not out of fear of punishment — in fact, they were never punished. Kostia and Dasha loved and respected their parents. They got the highest pleasure out of doing something together or carrying out their parent's wishes. Upon hearing his father's request, Kostia at once rose from his seat, but, to his mother's and father's surprise, did not head for the children's room. Instead, he just stood and stared at his younger sister sitting in the armchair with her eyes closed. Then once again they heard a cuckooing from the next room. But Kostia still stood there and stared, his eyes fixed on his sister.

Galina, their mother, looked concernedly at her son, who remained rooted to the spot. All at once, she got up and cried out in fright:

³*Nikiforovich* — a patronymic, derived from Ivan's father's first name *Nikifor*.

"Kostia... Kostia, what's the matter with you?"

The eight-year-old boy turned to his mother, wondering what she was frightened about, and replied:

"Everything's fine with me, Mama. I wanted to do as Papa asked, but I can't."

"Why not? Are you unable to move? You're unable to go to your room?"

"I can move," replied Kostia, waving his arms about and stamping his feet on the spot to prove it, "but there's no point in my going to our room — she's here and she's stronger."

"*Who's* here? *Who's* stronger?" Mother started getting more and more upset.

"Dasha," Kostia replied, pointing to his younger sister sitting in the armchair, her eyes closed and with a smile on her face. "She's the one who's been moving the hands forward. I tried to put them back in place, but I can't do it when she —"

"What are you talking about, Kostienka?" Mother interrupted. "You and Dashenka are both here with us — I can see you. How can you two be here and at the same time move the clock hands in the other room?"

"Well yes, we're here," answered Kostia, "but our thoughts are in the other room, where the clock is. Only *her* thought is stronger. That's why the clock keeps cuckooing — her thought is speeding up the hands. She's been playing a lot of tricks like that lately. I told her not to. I knew it might upset you, but Dasha doesn't care. All she has to do is fall into a state of contemplation, and she starts thinking up something."

"What is Dasha contemplating on?" Ivan Nikiforovich broke into the conversation. "And Kostia, why didn't you say anything about this earlier?"

"You yourself can see how she's contemplating. The clock hands aren't important — she's just amusing herself. I can move the hands too when nobody's interfering. Only I can't contemplate like Dasha. When she's in a state of

contemplation like that there's no way anyone can counteract her thought."

"What is she contemplating on? Do you know, Kostia?"

"Sorry. Why don't you ask her yourself? I'll stop her contemplation before she thinks up anything else."

Kostia went over to the chair his sister was sitting in and said distinctly in a louder than normal voice:

"Dasha, stop thinking! If you don't stop, I shan't speak to you for a whole day. And besides, you've frightened Mama."

With a flutter of her eyelashes the little girl surveyed everyone present in the room with an observing glance and, as though literally waking up, jumped up from her chair and hung her head apologetically. The cuckooing stopped, and for a while the study was enveloped in complete silence — a silence eventually broken by little Dasha's apologising voice. She raised her head, looked at her Mama and Papa with her sparkling, tender eyes and said:

"Mamochka, Papochka, forgive me for frightening you. But I had to... I just had to finish thinking it through — this thought I had. Now I can't help but think it through. I'll be thinking it through tomorrow too, when I've had a rest." The girl's lips trembled, it seemed just as though she were about to break into tears, but she continued:

"You, Kostia, can refuse to talk with me if you like, but I'll go on contemplating it all the same, until I think it through."

"Come to me, daughter dear," said Ivan Nikiforovich, trying to act restrained. He held out his arms to his daughter, ready to embrace her.

Dasha rushed toward her father, jumped up on his knees and put her little arms around his neck, pressed her cheek briefly against his, then jumped down and stood beside him, bending her head down to him.

Ivan Nikiforovich for some reason had a hard time hiding his emotion. He began telling his daughter:

"Don't worry, Dashenka! Mama will no longer get frightened when you contemplate. Just tell us what you're thinking about. What is so important to think through and why do the clock hands move forward so fast when you're thinking?"

"You see, Papochka, I want to make everything that's nice even bigger in time, and everything that's bad tiny and unnoticeable. Or even... I want to think it through so that the hands skip over the bad things and they aren't there any more."

"But what is nice and what is bad doesn't depend on the clock hands, Dashenka."

"It doesn't depend on the hands, Papochka. I realise that. But I move them along so's I can feel the time. The cuckoo counts off the speed of my thinking, 'cause I have to get it done in time... That's why I move the hands."

"How do you do that, Dashenka?"

"It's simple. I picture the hands of the clock out of the corner of my thought, then I think they should go faster — and they go faster when I start thinking fast."

"What do you want to achieve, daughter dear, by speeding up time? What don't you like about the present time?"

"I like it. I realise now that time isn't to blame. It's people themselves who spoil their time. You, Papochka, are so often at your computer, and then you go away for a long time. You, Papochka, spoil the time when you go away."

"Me? Spoil it? How so?"

"We have a good time when we're all together. When we're together we have very good minutes and hours, even days. Everything around is joyful. Do you remember, Papochka, when the apple tree began to bloom just a little? You and Mama saw the first buds, and you took Mama in your arms and twirled around. And Mamochka laughed so brightly that everything around was joyful with us — the leaves on the trees, and the little birds too. And I didn't feel sore at all

about your twirling Mama around in your arms instead of me, 'cause I love our Mamochka very much. I was so happy with that time, just like everyone else.

"But then a different time came. I realise now that it was you, Papochka, who made it different. You went away from us for a very long time. Baby apples had even begun to appear on the apple tree. But still you didn't come home. And Mamochka went up to the apple tree and stood there all by herself. But there was nobody there to twirl her around, and she didn't laugh brightly, and nothing around had anything to be joyful about. And Mamochka has quite a different smile on her face when you're not around. It's a sad smile. And that is a bad time."

Dasha spoke quickly and excitedly. All at once she seemed to choke on something inside her, and then burst out:

"You shouldn't make it bad when it is good... Time... Papochka!"

"Dasha... You're right about one thing... Of course... But you don't know everything about the times we're all in. The times we live in..." Ivan Nikiforovich spoke disconnectedly.

He was feeling tense. Somehow he needed to explain how necessary it was for him to go away. To explain it in such a way that his little daughter could understand. Finding no better alternative, he began telling her about his work, showing her rocket models and schematics on the computer.

"You see, Dashenka. Of course it's good for us here. And it's good for those who live in our neighbourhood too. But there are other places, other countries in the world. And they've got a lot of weapons, all sorts of them... To protect our splendid garden, and the gardens and the houses of your friends, sometimes Papa has to go away. Our country must also have a lot of up-to-date weapons to defend itself.

"But recently... Dashenka... You see, recently in another country, not ours, they came up with a new kind of weapon.

For the time being it is stronger than ours. Look here, on the screen, Dashenka!”

And Ivan Nikiforovich gave a tap on the keyboard, and the image of a strange kind of missile appeared on the screen.

“Look, Dashenka. This is a large missile, and it holds fifty-six smaller missiles. The large rocket takes off at Man’s command and heads for its assigned target, to destroy everything living there. This missile is very hard to shoot down. When any object approaches it, an on-board computer kicks in and sends out one of the smaller missiles to destroy the object.

“The smaller missiles can travel faster than the big one, since when they’re launched they can use the inertia speed of the larger missile. To shoot down just one such monster, we need to send fifty-seven missiles out against it.

“The country producing this so-called ‘cassette’ missile has only three working models at the moment. They have been carefully concealed in various places, in shafts deep underground, but it only takes a single radio-transmitted command to launch them. A small group of terrorists are already black-mailing a number of countries, threatening to wreak havoc on them. So you see, Dashenka, I have to decode the programme of the cassette missile’s on-board computer.”

Ivan Nikiforovich got up and walked around the room. He continued talking rapidly, getting more and more absorbed in his thoughts about the programme, seemingly oblivious to his little girl standing beside the computer. Ivan Nikiforovich quickly went over to the monitor showing the external image of the missile, gave a tap on the keyboard, and the screen showed a schematic of the missile’s fuel supply system, then one of the targeting radar devices, and then, once more, an overall image. Even as he was switching the screen images, Ivan Nikiforovich was no longer paying any attention to his dear little daughter. He kept reasoning aloud:

"They have obviously equipped each of the smaller missiles with a targeting radar device. Of course, that would apply to every single one. But there can't be any difference in the programmes. The programmes have to be identical..."

All at once one of the other computers emitted an alarm sound, demanding immediate attention. Ivan Nikiforovich quickly turned to the respective monitor and froze in his seat. The screen showed a blinking text message: "EMERGENCY ALERT... EMERGENCY ALERT..." Ivan Nikiforovich gave a quick tap on the keyboard, and an image of a man in a military uniform appeared on the screen.

"What's happened?" Ivan Nikiforovich asked him.

"Three unusual explosions have been recorded," responded the man. "The whole defence complex has been put on Emergency Alert. Explosions of lesser magnitude are continuing. There's been an earthquake in Africa. Nobody's offered any explanations. According to international information exchange networks all military blocs on the planet have been ordered to high alert. Still no determination where the attack originated from. The explosions are continuing and we're trying to shed light on the situation. All personnel have been ordered to set about analysing the situation."

The officer on the screen spoke in a clipped, military fashion. At the end, his voice was already betraying signs of concern:

"Explosions continuing, Ivan Nikiforovich, explosions continuing. I'm signing off..."

The officer's image disappeared from the screen. Ivan Nikiforovich, however, continued to stare at the darkened monitor, intensely absorbed in thought. Slowly and pensively he turned in the direction of his chair, where Dasha was still standing as before.

All at once an incredible conjecture made him shudder. He saw how his little daughter, her eyes screwed up and unblinking, was staring at the screen showing the image of the modern

missile. Suddenly her little body gave a start. Then, letting out a sigh of relief, she hit the 'ENTER' button on the keyboard. When the image of the new missile appeared, she screwed up her eyes again and began staring intently at the monitor.

Ivan Nikiforovich stood as though paralysed, incapable of budging from the spot, feverishly asking himself — though only in his thoughts — the same question over and over again: *Could she have set off the explosions? Set them off by her thought, because she doesn't like the bombs? Did she blow them up? Could that be true? How?*

He wanted to stop his daughter and called out to her. But he did not have the strength to speak very loudly, and could only whisper:

"Dasha, Dashenka, my dear daughter, stop it!"

Kostia, who had observed the whole scene, quickly got up from his seat, ran over to his sister, gave her a little pat on her bottom and began talking at a rapid pace:

"Now, Dashka, you've gone and upset Papa this time. Now I shan't speak to you for two whole days — one day for Mama, the other for Papa. D'you hear? Do you hear what I'm saying? You've frightened them!"

Gradually emerging from her state of concentration, Dasha turned to her brother and let her face resume its normal appearance as she looked him pleadingly and apologetically in the eye. Kostia noticed Dasha's eyes were filling with tears. Putting his hand on her shoulder, he spoke to her with a less severe tone than before.

"Okay, I got carried away about not talking to you, but you'll have to tie your own hair ribbon in the mornings. You're not so little any more, you know."

And telling her not to think about crying, he embraced her tenderly. The little girl nuzzled her face up against her brother's chest, her shoulders trembling, as she sorrowfully repeated:

"I've gone and frightened them again. I'm a very naughty girl. I wanted to do the best I possibly could, but I've gone and frightened them."

Galina came over to the children, squatted down beside them and began stroking Dasha's head. The girl threw her arms around her mother's neck and sobbed quietly.

"How does she do it, Kostia? How?" Ivan Nikiforovich asked his son as he slowly came to himself.

"The same way that she moves the hands of the clock, Papa," replied Kostia.

"But the clock is right here, while the missiles are a long ways away, and their location is classified as 'top secret'."

"Papa, it doesn't matter to Dasha where they're located. All she needs to see is the outward appearance of the object."

"But the explosions... In order to set them off, the circuits have to be connected. Quite a few circuits at that. There are safety mechanisms, codes..."

"But Papa, Dasha's able to go through all the circuits until a connection is made. Before, it took her a long time to do that, maybe fifteen minutes, but lately she's got it down to a minute and a half."

"Before?!"

"Yes, Papa, only not with missiles. That was the way we played. After she started moving the clock hands forward, I showed her my old electric car I used to love riding in when I was little. You see, Papa, I opened the bonnet and asked her to connect the headlamp wires together, since it was hard for me to get at them myself. She did it. And when she asked to take it for a drive, I told her she was still too young and wouldn't be able to brake properly, or even switch on the motor. But then when she kept insisting, I gave in. I explained how to switch the motor on, but Dasha did it all her own way.

"I tell you, Papa, Dasha simply sat down behind the wheel and took off without switching on anything. She thought she

was switching it on, but I could see that she wasn't doing anything with her hands. Or rather, she was switching it on, but she did it mentally. Besides, Papa, she's made friends with microbes. They obey her."

"With *microbes*?! What microbes?"

"With the ones that are very prolific, that live everywhere, all around us and inside us. We can't see them, but they're there. D'you remember, Papa, over on the edge of our domain, in the forest, there used to be the remains of two metallic posts sticking out of the ground? They belonged to an old high-voltage electricity line."

"I remember them. What of them?"

"They were rusty, resting on concrete foundations. One day when Dasha and I went mushroom-picking, she noticed these remains, said what a bad thing they were, that they weren't allowing the berries and mushrooms to grow on that spot. Then she said: "You should eat them up very, very fast!"

"And...?"

"And a couple of days later those rusty remains and the concrete foundations were gone. There was only bare earth there, without grass, at least for now. The microbes had eaten the metal and the concrete."

"But why — oh why, Kostia, didn't you tell me earlier about everything that was going on with Dasha?"

"I was afraid, Papa."

"Afraid of what?"

"I was reading up on history... In the recent past people with unusual abilities have been subject to forced isolation. I wanted to tell you and Mama all about it, but I couldn't find the right words so that you'd understand and believe..."

"Kostia, you know we always believe you. Besides, you could show us. Or rather, ask Dasha to demonstrate her ability, only with something harmless."

"That's not what I was afraid of, Papa. Of course she could show you." Kostia fell silent, and when he spoke again, his voice was emotional. "Papa, I love you and Mama... And even though I'm strict with Dashenka sometimes, I love her very much, too. She is kind. Dasha is good to everything around her. She wouldn't even hurt a little bug. Nor would they hurt her. She went up to a bee-hive one day, sat right down by the hive entrance and watched. She watched how they flew. The bees... A lot of bees crawled over her arms and legs and even over her cheeks, but they didn't sting her. She held out her hand to the bees buzzing around her — they landed on it and left something there. Afterward she licked the palm of her hand and laughed. She's kind, Papa."

"Calm yourself, Kostia. Don't worry. Let's calmly examine what's going on here. Yes, we have to think about it calmly... Dasha is still a child. She's blown up several state-of-the-art missile complexes. She could start a world war. A terrible war. But even without a war... Say she looked through some pictures showing not only enemy missiles, but our own... Say she started detonating all the missiles in all the countries that have them, the world would be on the verge of a global catastrophe! Hundreds of millions of human lives could be lost!

"I too love our little Dasha. But millions!... I need some advice. We must find a way out. But for now — I simply don't know... Dashenka needs to be isolated somehow. Somehow... Yeah... Maybe she needs to be put to sleep for a while. Maybe... But what's the solution? How can we possibly find a way out?"

"Papa, Papa... Hold on. Maybe... maybe it's possible to eliminate all the deadly missiles she doesn't like from the whole face of the Earth?"

"Eliminate? But... We'd need a multilateral agreement. From all the military blocs. Yeah... But there's no way we can get one quickly. If we can get one at all. In the meantime..."

Ivan Nikiforovich gave a sudden start and rushed over to his computer, where the monitor still showed the image of a missile, which Dasha was prevented from destroying. He switched off the monitor, then sat down at his communications computer and began to transmit the following text:

To: Headquarters.

The following memo should be transmitted at once to all military blocs and international news media. The series of missile complex explosions was caused by bacteria capable of connecting circuits. These bacteria are controllable. It will be necessary to destroy all images of any live ammunition. All images!!! From the most minute bullet to the most modern missile complex. The location of the explodable object is immaterial to the controller of the bacteria, who only needs to see its shape in an image.

Ivan Nikiforovich looked at Dasha, who by this time was smiling and having a lively conversation with her Mama. He then added the following text:

The location of the installation controlling the explosions is unknown.

Finally, Ivan Nikiforovich encoded the transmission and despatched it to headquarters.

The next morning there was an emergency meeting of Russia's Security Council. A security detachment was posted to stand guard around the community where Ivan Nikiforovich's domain was situated. The security personnel dressed as road-repair workers, so as not to draw attention to themselves. They pretended to be 'building' a five-kilometre-long road around the perimeter of the community (working on all five kilometres at once), maintaining round-the-clock shifts.

Video cameras were set up in Ivan Nikiforovich's domain which followed every move of little Dasha's life. The video images were transmitted to a central monitoring station resembling a launch-site mission control. The video monitors were manned in shifts by dozens of specialists — including psychologists and military personnel — ready to issue the required orders in case of an emergency situation. The psychologists used special communications devices to give a constant stream of recommendations to Dasha's parents on how to distract her, whatever way they could, and keep her from falling into a state of contemplation again.

The Russian government put out an international statement — which many people thought strange — to the effect that in Russia there were forces capable of blowing up any type of live ammunition, no matter where it was located in the world. These forces, it said, were not entirely under the control of the Russian government, although negotiations were underway.

The extraordinary nature of this statement called for some kind of confirmation to back it up. At an international council meeting it was decided to prepare a series of unusual-looking projectiles, mounted in square casings. Each country participating in the experiment took twenty such projectiles and hid them in various places on their respective territories.

"Why did they make the projectiles with square casings? Why couldn't they have just used ordinary ones?" I asked Anastasia.

"They were afraid, Vladimir, that not only all the existing projectiles in the world might explode, but that all the bullets in police and army pistols might get blown up as well, wherever there were guns with live ammunition."

"Yes, of course... And how did the square-projectile experiment go?"

Calling his daughter into his study, Ivan Nikiforovich showed her a photo of a square projectile and asked her to blow them up.

Dasha took a look at the photo and said:

"I love you very much, Papochka, but there is no way I can do what you ask."

"Why?" asked Ivan Nikiforovich in amazement.

"Because it won't work with me."

"What d'you mean, Dashenka? It worked before — you blew up a whole series of modern missiles, and now it won't work?"

"You know, back then I was really upset, Papochka. I didn't want you to go away, or to spend so many hours in front of your computer. When you're at your computer, you don't talk with anyone and you're not doing anything that's interesting. But *now*... well, you're with us all the time. You've become very good, Papochka, and I can't make any more explosions."

At this point Ivan Nikiforovich realised that Dasha was unable to blow up the square projectiles because she didn't understand the purpose of the explosion — what it was for. Ivan Nikiforovich started nervously pacing back and forth, feverishly searching for possible solutions and trying to convince Dasha to do something. But even as he was talking to his daughter, it seemed as though he were mainly reasoning it out for himself.

"It won't work... No, it won't... Pity. Wars have been around for thousands of years. While wars have ended between some countries, others have begun fighting. Millions of people have perished, and they are still perishing today. Tremendous resources are being wasted on armaments... And here finally is an opportunity to stop this endless disaster scenario, but alas..." Ivan Nikiforovich looked at Dasha sitting in the chair.

His daughter's face was composed. She watched with interest as he walked about the room, constantly talking. But she was not fascinated by what he was actually saying. She did not have a full comprehension of what wars meant, what resources her father was talking about and who was wasting them.

She was immersed in her own thoughts: *Why is Papa so agitated, walking back and forth amidst these computers which don't show any affection and don't give us any energy? Why doesn't he want to go out into the garden, where the trees are in bloom and the birds are singing, where every blade of grass and every branch of a tree caresses the whole body with something invisible? That's where Mama and Kostia are right now. I only wish Papa would finish his boring conversation and the two of us could go together to the garden. Mama and Kostia will be so happy to see us. Mama will smile, and Kostia promised yesterday he would tell me about how to touch a far-away star by putting your hand on a stone or a flower. Kostia always keeps his promises...*

"Dashenka, are you bored listening to me? You don't understand what I've been saying? You're thinking about something else?"

"I've been thinking, Papochka: why are we here, and not in the garden, where they're waiting for us?"

Ivan Nikiforovich realised that he had to speak to his daughter sincerely and in specific terms. So he took a different tack.

"Dashenka, when you blew up the missiles by looking at their image, they wanted you to test that ability once more. Or rather, to show the whole world Russia's ability to destroy all the ammunition on the planet. Then there won't be any point in making it any more. It would be senseless and dangerous. As for the ammunition already existing, the people themselves will destroy it. A global disarmament will begin. The square projectiles were made especially so that you could

show your ability without killing anyone. Blow them up, Dashenka!”

“I can’t do that any more, Papochka.”

“Why? Earlier you could, now you can’t?”

“I promised myself I would never blow up anything again. And now that I’ve made that promise, I don’t have the ability to do it any more.”

“You can’t? But why did you make such a promise to yourself?”

“Kostia showed me some pictures from a book of his — pictures of parts of bodies strewn all over after an explosion. He showed me how people are frightened by explosions, how trees fall and die from explosions — and so I promised myself —”

“Dashenka, does that mean you’ll never be able to now? Just once more... Just once. You see these square projectiles...”

Ivan Nikiforovich again held out the photo of a square projectile for his daughter to see.

“They were specially made for this experiment and are hidden away in secluded places in various countries. There are no people around, or anywhere near them. Everyone’s waiting to see whether they’ll explode or not. Blow them up, daughter dear! That won’t be breaking your promise. Nobody will perish. On the contrary...”

Dasha again looked at the photo indifferently and calmly replied:

“Even if I go back on my promise, these projectiles still won’t explode, Papochka.”

“But why not?”

“Because you’ve been talking for so very long, Papochka. When I first looked at the photo, I couldn’t stand these horrid things right off. They’re ugly, and now —”

“Now what? Dashenka — what?”

“Please forgive me, Papochka, but you went on talking for so long after you showed me the picture, that by now they’ve been almost all eaten up.”

“Eaten up? What’s been eaten up?”

“Those square projectiles. They’re almost all eaten up. As soon as they realised I couldn’t stand the projectiles, they got into action and began to eat them up very fast.”

“Who are *they*?”

“You know, the ‘little ones’. They are everywhere around us and inside us. They are good. Kostia calls them bacteria, or micro-organisms, but I’ve got my own name for them, a better name — I call them my ‘little ones’, my ‘goodies’. They like that name better. I play with them sometimes. People pay hardly any attention to them, but they always try to do good for everyone. When Man is joyful — they feel good too from the joyful energy; when Man is angry or hurts something living — a lot of them perish. Others rush in to replace them. But sometimes the others don’t manage to replace the ones that have died — and Man’s body becomes ill.”

“But you are here, Dashenka. And the projectiles are far away in various countries, hidden underground. How is it possible for — well, for those ‘little ones’ of yours in other lands — to find out so quickly about what you desire?”

“You see, they tell everything to each other very fast along a chain, a lot faster than the electrons run in your computer.”

“Computer... Communications... That’s it... I’ll check it all now — video cameras have been set up around all the projectiles on our territory. It’ll just take a moment.”

Ivan Nikiforovich turned to his communications monitor, which was showing a picture of a square projectile. Or rather, what remained of a projectile. The casing was rusty and full of holes, while the warhead was lying to one side, significantly reduced in size. Ivan Nikiforovich switched to another camera, and then another, but the same thing was happening to all the projectiles. Now the screen showed an image of a man in military uniform.

“Hello, Ivan Nikiforovich. You’ve seen it all yourself by now.”

“What conclusions has the Council come to?” asked Ivan Nikiforovich.

“The Council members have divided into groups and are currently in consultation. Our security forces are trying to work out supplementary measures to ensure the object’s safety.”

“I’ll thank you not to call my daughter an object.”

“You’re nervous, Ivan Nikiforovich. That is not permissible under the circumstances. In ten minutes you’ll be getting a visit from a panel of experts, comprising prominent specialists — psychologists, biologists, radio-electronic engineers. They’re already on their way. I want you to set up an interview for them with your daughter. Prepare her ahead of time.”

“What opinion is the majority of the Council inclined to favour?”

“At the moment they are leaning toward totally isolating your family within the confines of your domain. You need to immediately remove all technical pictures from your daughter’s sight. Stay close to her and try to follow her every move.”

Upon arriving at Ivan Nikiforovich’s domain, the panel of experts sent by the Russian Security Council engaged little Dasha in a lengthy conversation. After the child had been patiently answering all the adults’ questions for about an hour and a half, everyone, including the observers following the interview on the huge video monitors at the Security Council’s communications centre, were suddenly thrown into a state of utter bewilderment when the door of Ivan Nikiforovich’s study opened and in walked Dasha’s brother Kostia, carrying the cuckoo clock which was now cuckooing incessantly. Kostia put the clock down on the table. The hands showed eleven o’clock, but no sooner had the mechanical bird given the requisite number of cuckoos than the big hand on the

clock quickly traced a full circle around the clock face and the cuckooing began all over again. Those present were amazed at this strange operation of the clock, alternating their silent gaze between the clock and Dasha.

"Oh!" all at once Dasha exclaimed. "I quite forgot. I have to go on a very important errand. That's my friend Verunka⁴ turning the clock hands. That was our arrangement, just in case I forgot. I have to go."

Two guards blocked the door of the study.

"What might you have forgotten, Dashenka?" Ivan Nikiforovich asked his daughter.

"I might have forgotten to go to the domain where my friend Verunka lives and stroke her little flower and water it. And it really misses being caressed. It loves people to look at it tenderly."

"But it's not *your* flower," observed Ivan Nikiforovich. "Why can't your friend stroke it herself? Her own flower?"

"Papochka, you see, Verunka's gone visiting with her parents?"

"Where's she gone visiting to?"

"Somewhere in Siberia."

From all around the room whispered exclamations could be heard:

"She's not alone!"

"What kind of abilities does her friend have?!"

"She's not alone!"

"How many of them are there?!"

"How can we tell who they are?!"

"We need to take measures immediately regarding every child like that!"

But all the exclaiming ceased directly an elderly grey-haired gentleman rose from his seat at the side of the room.

⁴*Verunka* (pronounced: *ve-ROON-ka*) — diminutive of the name *Vera*.

This man had the most senior title and position of all, and not just in relation to those present in Ivan Nikiforovich's study. He was the chairman of Russia's Security Council. Everyone turned to him in reverent silence.

The elderly fellow looked at Dasha sitting in her little wooden chair, and a tear rolled down his cheek. Then he slowly went over to Dasha and knelt down on one knee in front of her, holding out his hand to her. Dasha rose and took a step to one side. Holding the frilled hem of her dress, she made a curtsy, and put her little hand in his huge palm.

The elderly man looked at her for some time. Then, bowing his head, he kissed Dasha's hand in respect, saying:

"Please forgive us, little goddess!"

"My name is Dasha," the girl answered.

"Yes, of course, your name is Dasha. Tell us, Dasha, what will prevail on our Earth?"

The little girl looked into the elderly man's face in surprise, bent closer to him and with the palm of her hand carefully wiped away the tear from his cheek, then touched his moustache with her finger. Then she turned to her brother and said:

"Kostienka, you also promised to help me talk with the lilies on Verunka's pond. Remember you promised?"

"I do remember," Kostia replied.

"Then let's go."

"Let's go."

In the doorway, having already passed by the guards which had stepped aside as she approached, Dasha turned in the direction of the elderly fellow still standing on one knee, smiled at him and stated confidently:

"On the Earth shall prevail... *Good shall prevail!*"

Six hours later, speaking before an expanded session of Russia's Security Council, the elderly chairman said:

“Everything in the world is relative. Relative to our generation, those in the new generation may seem to us to be like gods. It is not up to them to align themselves with us, but for us to align ourselves with them. The entire military might of the planet with its unique technological achievements has proved itself powerless before a single little girl of the new generation. And our job, our duty, our obligation to the new generation is simply to clear away the garbage. We must make every effort to rid the Earth of any kind of armaments. Our technological achievements and discoveries, embodied in the most modern and, it seemed to us, unique military complexes, proved nothing more than useless scrap in the face of the new generation. And we must clear it away.”

CHAPTER TEN



The disarmament race

An international congress was held, with delegates from the security councils of the military blocs of various countries and continents, to work out a plan for the emergency conversion of military hardware and ammunition. Scientists from different parts of the world exchanged their expertise. Psychologists kept appearing in the media in an effort to head off panic among a population possessing a considerable variety of firearms. Panic had broken out after news of the Russian phenomenon had been leaked to the media, and the facts had become somewhat distorted.

A number of Western news sources were reporting that Russia had launched an emergency programme to convert all the ammunition on its territory, and at a designated hour would be blowing up the ammunition reserves held by other nations, destroying a large part of their population in the process. People began disposing of their firearms and ammunition in rivers, or burying them in wasteland sites, since the official conversion centres could not keep up with the demand.

Heavy fines were levied for unauthorised conversion. And even the fact that independent 'brokerage firms' started charging huge sums for each bullet or shell they accepted did not deter the flood of people wishing to escape from something that threatened the lives of whole families. People living in cities situated in the proximity of military bases demanded the authorities immediately get rid of all military facilities. But the arms industry, which had now been re-oriented toward the conversion of the very products it had

previously manufactured, was working to the limits of its capacity.

In many Western countries the press began circulating a flurry of rumours to the effect that Russia was threatening the world with disaster. The world was not in a position to free itself from its accumulation of armaments so quickly, and even though conversion plants were operating at full tilt, it was impossible for them to destroy in a few months a stock of arms that had been accumulating over decades.

Accusations were made that the Russian government had known for some time about the existence of children with unusual abilities, and that it had long been preparing for the conversion of deadly weapons. To back up this claim, it was noted that the Russian government had been buying up and dismantling ecologically unsound enterprises — not just on its own soil but in neighbouring countries as well. And that if Russia could become the first to rid its territory of explosive armaments, it would also be able to destroy nations that were lagging behind in the disarmament race.

All sorts of destructive scenarios of an impending world disaster and its consequences were deliberately exaggerated in the media. This was quite advantageous for companies involved in conversion, escalating the price of their services. Anyone handing in bullets from a handgun, for example, was obliged to pay twenty dollars for each bullet. Unauthorised burial or disposal of a weapon was treated as a criminal act. Another source of panic was the lack of proposals for any real defence against the abilities which had come to light in certain Russian children.

The Russian President then took what seemed to all to be a desperate and ill-conceived action: he decided to go live before the world's TV cameras in the company of children with extraordinary abilities. And on the appointed day and hour practically the whole planet gathered in front of their TV sets to hear what the Russian President had to say.

In advance of the broadcast many factories stopped, stores closed, streets emptied — all eyes were focused on Russia. The President wanted to calm people's fears and show the whole world that the newly-emerging generation of young Russians were not bloodthirsty monsters, but kind, ordinary children, whom there was no reason to fear.

To appear even more convincing, the President asked his advisers to invite thirty children with extraordinary abilities to the Kremlin, proposing to remain alone with these children in his office during the broadcast. All this was carried out as he requested.

"And what did the Russian President have to say to the world?" I asked Anastasia.

"If you like, you can watch this scene for yourself and listen to what he said, Vladimir."

"I'd like that very much."

"So take a look and see."

The Russian President stood on a small podium next to his desk. On either side of the podium sat children of varying ages, from about three to ten years old. On the opposite side of the room were arrayed a group of correspondents and a flock of TV cameras. The President began speaking.

"Ladies and gentlemen! My fellow-citizens! I have specially invited these children to meet you. As you can see, I am with them here alone, with no bodyguards or psychologists or parents. These children are not monsters, as some Western media are attempting to portray them. You can see for yourselves that these are just ordinary children. There are no signs of aggressiveness in their faces or actions. Some of their abilities we regard as unusual. But are they really? It is quite possible that the abilities which have begun to reveal themselves in the rising generation are entirely normal for

the human individual. Our own creations, on the other hand, may turn out to be inimical to human existence. The human commonwealth has created a communications system and military potential capable of fomenting global disaster.

"Peaceful negotiations between states possessing the greatest military potential have gone on for centuries, yet the arms race has still not ceased. Today we have a real opportunity to do away with this endless destructive process. Today the countries in the most advantageous position are those that do not have a concentration of deadly weapons on their territories.

"We tend to think of such a situation as unnatural. But let us ponder the question of why, on the other hand, the production of life-destroying weapons which now threaten whole nations, has ever seemed natural to the human commonwealth, and why such a conviction is so deeply rooted in our consciousness.

"The children of the new generation have changed our priorities, causing us to take steps in the opposite direction — namely, *disarmament*. The fear and panic and feverish activity surrounding this process are largely due to a misrepresentation of the facts. The Russian government has been accused of knowing for a long time about the extraordinary abilities of children in our country. Such accusations are unfounded. Up until now a huge military potential has been present on Russian soil, and we, like many other countries, are doing the best we can to effect its conversion.

"The Russian government has been accused of not taking sufficient measures to identify all children with extraordinary abilities and to isolate them — in other words, to force them into a state of narcosis until the disarmament process is complete. But that is a step the Russian government is not about to undertake. The children of Russia are equal citizens of our country.

"And let us not overlook the question of why people might desire to isolate those who reject murderous weapons instead of those who manufacture them! The Russian government *is*

taking measures to prevent spontaneous emotional outbursts in the children that might possibly transmit a signal and blow up any kind of armaments they didn't like.

"All Russian television channels have completely banned films showing murderous weapons. All toy guns have been destroyed. Parents are constantly minding their children in a bid to head off any negative reactions. Russia —"

The President broke off his speech abruptly. A tow-headed boy of about five rose from his seat and approached one of the videocamera tripods. At first he just examined the screws on the tripod, but when he touched them with his hand, the camera-operator stepped back in fright and hid behind the row of correspondents. The President rushed over to the boy, took him by the hand and led him to the chair where he had been meekly sitting before, admonishing him along the way:

"Would you please sit there quietly until I finish."

But he could not continue with his speech. Two boys, about three or four years of age, were now standing at the communications console, fiddling with the equipment. The children who had been sitting quietly right from the start of the President's speech were now wandering all over the office, each one looking into whatever they liked. Only the older children — and they were few in number — still sat quietly in their seats, their eyes focused on the correspondents and the TV cameras.

One of them was a little girl with ribbons in her braids. I realised right off who it was. It was Dasha, the one who had blown up the missile complexes. She was not behaving childishly, but attentively and intelligently sizing up the situation, observing the reaction of the correspondents.

People all over the world with their eyes glued to their TV sets caught a glimpse of the rather distraught face of the Russian President. He surveyed the children now dispersed around the room. Seeing two boys fiddling with the government communications console, he glanced over at the door,

on the other side of which his assistants, along with the parents of the invited children, were waiting, but he did not call on anyone for help. Excusing himself for the interruption, he rushed over to the boys who were already in the process of pulling one of the telephones off the desk, seized them one under each arm and told them:

"Look, these are not toys!"

One of the boys looked over and saw his chum hanging from the President's other arm and burst out laughing. The second boy managed to reach out and give a tug on the President's necktie, uttering the word *Toys!*

"That's what you think, but they are not toys," the President responded.

"Toys!" the smiling lad cheerfully repeated.

The President noticed several other youngsters, evidently attracted by the sounds and the flashing coloured lights, approach the console and start fingering the telephone receivers. After setting the two fidgeters down on the floor, he rushed over to the console, pressed one of the buttons and said:

"Cut all communications to my office immediately."

Next he quickly laid out on his desk a number of blank sheets of paper. On each one he put a pencil or pen, turned to the children clustering around the desk and said:

"Here you are. You can draw whatever you like. Start drawing, and later we'll decide all together who's come up with the best picture."

All the children gathered around the desk and began taking paper and pen or pencil in hand. To those who were not tall enough to reach the desk, the President offered chairs, either seating or standing the littlest ones on the chairs.

Satisfied that he had succeeded in occupying the children's attention with drawing, the President once more went over to the podium, smiled to the television viewers, took a deep breath, and was about to go on with his speech. But to no

avail. A little boy came up to him and began tugging on his trousers.

“What is it? What do you want?”

“Pee...” said the boy.

“What?”

“Pee...”

“Pee, pee? You mean you want to go to the bathroom?” And once more the President’s gaze turned toward the door leading out of his office.

The door opened, and immediately two of his assistants or bodyguards rushed toward him. One of the men, who had a sombre and rather tense expression on his face, bent down and took the little boy’s hand. But the boy, still clinging to the President’s trouser leg, wriggled free, shaking his hand loose from the grip of the sombre-looking man attempting to take him out of the office. He held up his hand to the other men approaching — a gesture of protest which caught them completely off guard. Once more the boy raised his head, looking up to the President from below. Tugging on his trouser-leg, he repeated the word *pee* and began to crouch down just a little.

“This isn’t the right time for your ‘pee’,” said the President. “Not only that, but you’re being pernickety too.”

At that point the President picked up the boy in his arms, excused himself to the media representatives and headed out of the office, saying in passing: “We’ll be right back.”

In hundreds of millions of homes people watched as the TV cameras switched back and forth between the children playing, drawing and chatting with each other — and, more often than not, the now-deserted presidential podium.

And then little Dasha rose from her seat. Dragging a chair over to the podium, she climbed up on it, looked at the correspondents and then directly into the lenses of the TV cameras focused on her. She straightened the ribbons in her braids and began to speak.

"My name is Dasha. And our Uncle President — he's a good chap. He'll be back in a moment. He'll come back and tell you everything. He's just a little anxious right now. But he'll be able to tell everyone how life is going to be good everywhere you look on the Earth. And that nobody need be afraid of us. My brother Kostia told me how people are afraid of us children because I blew up some big new missiles. But it wasn't that I wanted to blow them up. I just wanted my Papa not to go away for such a long time and for him not to think so much about these missiles. Or look at them so much. He should look at Mama instead. She's much better than any missile. And she likes it when Papa looks at her and talks with her. But when he goes away for a long time or looks at the missiles, Mama's sad. And I don't want Mama to be sad.

"Kostia, my brother, is very clever and intelligent, and Kostienka told me that I've frightened a lot of people. I shan't blow up anything else. It's quite boring, really. There are other things to do that are much more important and interesting. They bring joy to everyone.

"You take care of dismantling the missiles yourselves. See to it that nobody ever blows them up. And please don't be afraid of us.

"Do come visit us. All of you. We'll give you living water to drink. My Mama told me how people here used to live. They kept so very busy building all kinds of plants and factories and got so carried away that before they knew it there was no more living water. The water had become dirty. And water was something you could only buy in bottles in stores. But the water in the bottles was dead, suffocated, and people began to get sick. That was how it used to be, but there's no way I can imagine how people could possibly dirty the water that they themselves drank. But Papa said that even now on the Earth there are whole countries where there is no clean living water, and that people in these countries are dying from painful diseases. And there are no tasty apples or berries in

these countries — everything living is sick, and the people eat sick things and feel wretched.

“Do come visit us, all of you come. And we’ll treat you to healthy apples and tomatoes and pears and berries. When you’ve tried them and go back home, you’ll say to yourselves: ‘Don’t do dirty things, it’s better to live clean!’ Then later when everything’s clean in your country, we’ll come visit you and bring you presents.”

The President, who by this time had come back, still holding the little boy in his arms, stood in the doorway and listened to Dasha’s speech. When she finished, he walked over to the podium. With the little one still comfortably nestled in his arms, he echoed Dasha’s words:

“Yes, of course... Do come, really, we have treatments for the body here. But that’s not the main thing. We all need to gain a better understanding of ourselves and our purpose. We really have to understand that. Otherwise we’ll be swept off the face of the Earth like garbage. We’ve got to get together and clear away all this dirt we ourselves have brought forth.

“Thank you all for your attention.”

The scene in the President’s office faded. And Anastasia’s voice continued:

“It is difficult to say whether it was the President’s or Dasha’s speech that had the greater effect on the viewers watching this live broadcast from Russia. But people were no longer inclined to believe the rumours that had been spread about Russia’s aggressiveness. People wanted to live, and live a happy life — they believed that a happy life was possible. After the live broadcast from the Kremlin the numbers of people wanting to visit Russia or even live there increased dramatically. And upon coming back home from Russia these visitors could no longer live the way they did before. A new conscious awareness was sparked in each individual, like the first ray of the Sun at the dawn of a new day.”

CHAPTER ELEVEN



Science and pseudo-science

“Anastasia, how have Russians managed to cope with such a huge influx of visitors? It must have been quite a challenge for them. I can just imagine living with your family in your kin’s domain with a whole bunch of gawkers staring at you from the other side of the fence.”

“The tourists and foreigners coming to Russia for treatment, Vladimir, have been housed in the cities, in the flats vacated by Russians. They get produce from the domains delivered to them, but tourists are not allowed to go to the domains themselves. Only a few have managed to visit the places where the New Russians reside. Psychologists are constantly reminding the owners of the domains that whatever hospitality they show to visitors — especially visitors from what used to be considered highly developed countries — can lead to a nervous breakdown. The psychologists are correct. About forty percent of foreigners who did visit the domains returned home only to fall into a state of depression bordering on suicide.”

“How so? Why? You yourself said, Anastasia, that everything in the domains is perfect — the surrounding countryside, the food, the way family members help each other.”

“That is true, but for many foreign visitors what they saw turned out to be *too* perfect. Imagine if you can, Vladimir, an elderly person who has lived most of their life in a large city. Someone who has tried as hard as they could to earn as much as they could — just to be, so they thought, no worse off than others. In return for this money they received a roof over

their heads, clothing to wear, a car to drive and food to eat. And here is this person sitting in their furnished flat with a car in the garage and food in the fridge."

"Well, I am imagining it, and so far everything seems normal. What next?"

"What next?", Vladimir, is a question you should be able to answer yourself."

"Next... Well, maybe this person will take a trip somewhere, maybe they'll buy some new furniture or a new car."

"And then?"

"And then? I haven't the foggiest!"

"And then this person dies. He dies forever, or at least for millions of Earth years. His second self, his Soul, cannot regain the earthly plane of being. It cannot because over the course of his earthly existence he created nothing good for the Earth. Each of us realises this intuitively, and that is why people are so terrified of death. When a majority of people have the same aspirations and a similar way of life, they have the impression that they can and should live only the way everybody else does.

"But here Man has seen a totally different way of life on the Earth. He has seen in fact an earthly Paradise — the Space of Love — which can be created by Man's own hand in the Divine image, and this makes him look upon his own life as already gone by and spent in hell, and this Man dies in torment, and his sufferings last millions of years."

"But why doesn't everybody fall into this state of depression after seeing the Russians' new way of life?"

"There are some who realise intuitively that even in their advanced years, if they put their weakening hand to creating a Space of Love on the Earth, the Creator will prolong their life. And after straightening up and with a smile brightening their face, they go and give a hand to younger people."

“Still, Anastasia, it doesn’t seem right that people who come to Russia from so far away aren’t able to at least spend a little time walking down the streets of the new Russian communities and breathing the clean air.”

“Even the tourists who stay in the cities have the opportunity to feel the fresh breath of the Earth and drink health-giving water. The cities are caressed by breezes which infuse them with cleanliness, ethers and pollen from the luxuriant greenery of the domains. And when they go on out-of-town excursions, tourists can observe these oases of Paradise — only from a respectful distance so as not to disturb the families living there. Take a look and see how it all happens.”

And once again I glimpsed another scene from the future. I saw the highway which runs between the city of Vladimir and another town named Suzdal¹ thirty kilometres away — a highway I had travelled a number of times before. Earlier I had only caught the rare glimpse of tourist motorcoaches taking visitors to see Suzdal’s ancient cathedrals and monasteries. Most of the cars on the road had borne local licence plates. But now the highway was quite different. Beautiful motorcoaches rolled along a roadway that was twice the width of the old one. Electric vehicles, no doubt — I couldn’t detect any exhaust gases or motor noise, only the quiet hum of the tyres. The coaches were filled with tourists of various nationalities. Many were observing their surroundings through field glasses.

About a kilometre from the main road, beyond a motley host of treetops, I could make out the roofs of detached houses. That was where the Russians’ family domains were situated, each surrounded by an evenly planted hedge, or ‘living fence’. On either side of the road, approximately two kilometres apart, were located nice-looking two-storey buildings

¹*Vladimir, Suzdal* — see footnote 1 in Chapter 6: “A garden for eternity”.

housing shops and dining salons.² Each of these was fronted by a small asphalt lot where an electric vehicle could park if there was a space free. The electric motorcoaches spewed forth a stream of tourists, who were impatient to taste the local delicacies on the spot or to buy some to take home.

All the shops and cafés sold food products grown in the domains. They also had hand-made Russian shirts, towels, woodcarvings and many other things made by skilled craft-people. Anastasia explained that visitors were eager to buy these handicrafts because they knew that a shirt embroidered by the kind hands of a happy woman is immensely more valuable than something off a mechanised conveyor belt.

If you looked down from above at what was behind the strip of forest visible from the highway, you would be able to glimpse shady allées and domains outlined by living fences. The strip of forest surrounded a community containing about ninety family estates. About a kilometre distant, across open fields, was another community surrounded by a strip of forest, and so on for the next thirty kilometres or so.

Even though they were the same size, the domain plots were far from uniform in appearance. Some were dominated by orchard trees, others featured wild-growing trees — slender pines, loosely spreading cedars, oaks and birches.

Each domain invariably had a pond or a swimming pool. The houses, surrounded by flower beds, were also quite different from one another — some were large two-storey detached houses, others were smaller bungalows. They had been built in various styles — both flat and sloping roofs were to be seen. Some of the little houses were all white, resembling the huts found in Ukrainian villages.

² *dining salons* — the Russian word here is *trapeznye* (pronounced: TRAH-pezh-nib-yeh), originally designating refectories in monasteries, but more recently used in reference to ornately decorated halls (often with arched ceilings) where large groups of people can gather to enjoy traditional Russian meals.

I saw no motorcars on the lanes running between the domains. Nor, for that matter, could I detect any special activity or work being done in the domains themselves. I had the impression that all this extraordinary beauty was the creation of Someone on high, and that all people needed to do was to delight in His creation.

In the middle of each community there were beautiful large two-storey structures. Around them scurried a host of active children at play. That meant that schools or clubs had been built in the centre of the settlements.

"You see there, Anastasia, in the centre of the community, where there's a school or a club, there's some kind of visible life, but in the domains themselves it looks pretty much like Dullsville. If their owners have managed to arrange the plantings so that there is no need to fertilise or to battle with pests and weeds, what is there left for them to do? In any case, I think that Man actually finds greater joy in intensive labour, creativity and inventiveness, but there's none of that here."

"Vladimir, right here in these splendid domains people are involved with the very things you mention, and their deeds are meaningful. It demands a significantly higher level of intelligence, mindfulness and inspiration than the work of artists and inventors in the world you are accustomed to."

"But if they are all artists and inventors, then where are the results of their work?"

"Vladimir, do you consider an artist someone who takes brush in hand and paints a beautiful landscape on a sheet of canvas?"

"Of course I do. People will look at his picture and, if they like it, they will either buy it or put it on display in an art gallery."

"Then why would you not consider as an artist someone who has taken, instead of a canvas, a hectare of land, and used it to create an equally beautiful or even a more beautiful

landscape? After all, in order to create a beautiful landscape out of living materials, the creator needs more than artistic imagination and taste — he also needs a knowledge of the properties of a great many living materials. In both instances it is the task of what has been created to call forth positive emotions in the viewer, and to delight the eye.

“But in contrast to a picture painted on canvas, a living picture has a variety of functions besides. It cleanses the air, it produces beneficial ethers for Man and feeds his body. A living picture changes the nuances of its colours, and it can be constantly perfected. It is connected to the Universe by invisible threads. It is incomparably more meaningful than something painted on canvas, and so the artist who creates it will be that much the greater.”

“Yes, of course, I really can’t disagree with that. But tell me, why do you consider the owners of these domains to be inventors and scientists to boot? Do they have any relation to science at all?”

“They have a relation to science too.”

“What kind of relation, for example?”

“For example, do you, Vladimir, not consider as a scientist someone who is involved in plant selection and genetic engineering?”

“Of course. Everybody thinks of them as scientists, they work in scientific research institutes. They come up with new varieties of fruits and vegetables, and other plants as well.”

“Yes, of course, they come up with these, but what is important is the *result* of their work, its significance for humanity.”

“Well, the result is that varieties of vegetables and potatoes are brought forth that are frost-resistant and that will not be eaten by the Colorado beetle. In highly developed countries they have managed to grow a living being from a simple cell. Now they are working on cultivating various organs for transplanting into patients — kidneys, for example.”

"Yes, that is true. But have you not wondered, Vladimir, why in these highly developed countries there are also appearing more and more types of diseases? Why is it that these same countries have the highest cancer rates of all? Why do they need an increasing number of drugs for treatment? Why do an ever-increasing number of people suffer from infertility?"

"Well, why?"

"Because many of those you call scientists are not rational beings at all. Their human essence is paralysed, and the forces of destruction work through their merely external human form.

"Think about it, Vladimir: these so-called scientists have begun to fundamentally change the plants existing in Nature, thereby also changing the fruits they bring forth. They have begun changing them without first determining what purpose these fruits have. After all, in Nature, as in the Universe, everything is so closely interconnected.

"Let us take your car, for example. Suppose a mechanic were to remove or alter some part — a filter, let us say — the car might go for a while, but what would soon happen?"

"The fuel-feed system would go out of whack, and the motor would choke."

"In other words, every part of a motorcar has its function, and before touching a part, it is necessary to determine its function."

"Of course! You don't have to be a mechanic to see that."

"But Nature, after all, is also a perfect mechanism, and nobody has yet fully fathomed it. Every part of this great living mechanism has its purpose and is closely interconnected with the whole structure of the Universe. A change in properties or the removal of a single part inevitably affects the work of the whole mechanism of Nature.

"Nature has many protective devices. First, it will signal an impermissible action. If that does not work, Nature will be obliged to destroy the 'mechanic' who fails in his calling. Man

uses the fruits of Nature for food, and if he begins to feed himself with mutant fruits, he will be gradually transformed into a mutant himself. Such an adulteration is inevitable, given the consumption of adulterated produce.

"This is already coming about. Man is already experiencing a weakening of his immune system, his mind and feelings. He is beginning to lose the abilities unique to him alone, and is being transformed into an easily manipulable bio-robot. He is losing his independence. The appearance of new diseases only confirms this — it is a sign that Man has tried undertaking an impermissible action."

"Well, let's say you're right, Anastasia. I myself don't think much of these hybrid plants. There was a lot of hoopla about them at first, but now quite a few national governments, including our own, have started mandating special labelling of genetically modified produce sold in stores. And many people try to avoid buying these mutant products. But they say there's no way to avoid them altogether, at least for the time being — there's too many of them. There's not enough real produce, and it's so much more expensive."

"There, you see, that is because the forces of destruction have managed to lure humanity into a state of economic dependency. They have managed to convince Man that if he does not consume their products, he will die of starvation. But that is not true, Vladimir. Just the opposite: Man will die if he does eat them."

"Maybe, Anastasia, but not everyone will die. Many already know about this and won't eat mutant products."

"How do you, for example, Vladimir, manage to tell the difference?"

"I don't eat imported vegetables, for one thing. What local residents sell at the markets from their own household plots is a lot tastier."

"And where do they get their seeds?"

"What d'you mean, where do they get them? They buy them. There's a lot of firms dealing in seeds now. They sell them in pretty coloured packaging."

"So, does that mean that people buy seeds according to the information on the package, without knowing for absolute certain how accurate that information is?"

"You mean to say that even the seeds they buy may be mutant?"

"Yes. For example, on the Earth today there are only nine apple trees left bringing forth original fruit. The apple is one of the most healthful and delicious of all God's creations for Man. But it was one of the first to be subjected to genetic manipulation. Even the Old Testament warns us against grafting. But people went ahead stubbornly and did it, and as a result the apples disappeared. What you now find in orchards or grocery stores does not correspond to the Divine fruit. Those that violate and destroy the original purity of God's creation you call scientists. But what can we call those who are *restoring* the functioning of all the parts of Nature's mechanism?"

"They're scientists too, but more literate, no doubt, more knowledgeable."

"The Russian families living in the domains which you see here are the same ones who are restoring that which was ruined before."

"And where did they acquire greater knowledge than the geneticists and the biologists involved in genetic selection?"

"This knowledge has existed in every Man right from the beginning. The goal, thought and conscious awareness of their purpose afford each of these the opportunity to reveal itself."

"Wow! So it turns out that the people living in the domains are both artists and scientists. Who then are *we* — I mean, the people living on the planet today?"

"Everyone can supply their own definition if they manage to free their thought for at least nine days."

CHAPTER TWELVE



Do we have freedom of thought?

“What do you mean — *to free their thought*? Everybody has freedom of thought.”

“In the context of your technocratic society, Vladimir, Man’s thought is enslaved by the limits and conventions of this world. In fact, the technocratic world can only exist when the freedom of Man’s thought is nullified and the energy of his thought is absorbed by it.”

“Something’s not clear to me here. Every Man over his lifetime can do a lot of thinking about a lot of different things. There are limits on freedom of speech, for example. There are countries in which there is greater freedom of expression, in other countries less, but everyone is free to *think* whatever they wish.”

“That is an illusion, Vladimir. The majority of people are compelled to think about one and the same thing their whole lives. This is easier to see if you take the topics a typical Man of your world thinks about and analyse them in terms of distinct time segments, adding up the time he spends thinking about each particular subject. By this simple method you can determine the prevailing thought in contemporary human society.”

“Interesting. Let’s try determining this prevailing thought together, you and I.”

“Very well. Then tell me, what would you consider Man’s average life expectancy today?”

“Is that important?”

“Not all that important, given the uniformity of Man’s

thinking, but we need some sort of figure for our subsequent calculations."

"Okay. In our time let's say a Man lives eighty years."

"So, a Man is born. Or, to put it more accurately, he has attained the material plane of his being."

"Let's just say he is born — it's easier to understand."

"All right. Even as an infant he is looking at the world, which is waiting for him to get to know it. Clothing, housing and food are provided for him by his parents. But the parents also attempt, either consciously or subconsciously, through their behaviour, to impart to him their thoughts and the way they see the world around them. The visible process of getting to know what life is all about lasts approximately eighteen years, and over the whole course of these years the technocratic world attempts to impress the young Man's thought with its own importance. Then, over the remaining sixty-two years of his life, let us assume that Man himself can control the tendencies of his own thought."

"Indeed he can. But you were saying there's something trying to enslave his thought."

"Yes, I did say that. So let us try and calculate how much time he is free to think for himself."

"Okay, let's."

"For a certain number of hours each day Man sleeps or rests. How many hours a day does he spend on sleep?"

"Eight, as a rule."

"We took 62 years of Man's life as a basis. If you multiply that by eight hours per day, taking leap years into account, you find that Man sleeps for 587,928 hours of his life. Thus, sleeping 8 hours a day equates to 22 years of constant sleep. Now we subtract these 22 years from the 62 years of his life and we have 40 years when he is awake.

"Now, at some point during their waking hours most people are involved with the preparation of food. How

much time do you think Man spends on cooking and eating food?"

"It happens that women generally do the cooking, while men are obliged to spend more time earning the money to pay for groceries."

"And how many hours would you say, Vladimir, go into the preparation and consumption of food every day?"

"Well, if you take into account the time spent on buying groceries, preparing breakfast, lunch and dinner, that's probably about three hours — on a weekday, that is. Only not everyone in the family is involved in the cooking. The rest of us... well, we eat, and maybe help do the grocery shopping, or wash the dishes, so that I'd say about two and a half hours, on average."

"In fact it is more, but let us take your figure, two-and-a-half hours per day. Multiply that by the number of days a Man lives and it comes to 61,242.5 hours, or 25,517 days, or 7 years. Subtract this number from the 40 and there are 33 left."

"Now, in order to be able to obtain food, clothing and housing, a Man dwelling in the technocratic world is obliged to perform one of the functions essential to this world — namely, *work*. And I should like to draw your attention, Vladimir, to this fact: Man is obliged to work or engage in some business not because he really likes it but for the sake of the technocratic world itself, otherwise Man will be deprived of what is vitally important to him. How much time do most people spend each day on work?"

"In our country it's eight hours, with another two hours or so spent getting to and from work, but every week they get a couple of days off."

"So now try to calculate how many equivalent years of his life does a Man spend on work which is rarely satisfying?"

"It would take me quite a while to figure out without a calculator — you tell me."

"All told, for the thirty years of so-called work activity he spends ten years constantly working for someone — or, rather, for the technocratic world. And now from those 33 years of life we have to subtract another 10, leaving us 23.

"Now, what else does a Man do every day over the course of his life?"

"He watches TV."

"For how many hours a day?"

"No less than three."

"These three hours amount to 8 years of constant sitting in front of a television screen. If we take them away from the 23 remaining, we are left with 15. But even this time is not free for activities native to Man alone. Man's thought is subject to inertia. It cannot make a sudden switch from one thing to another. Some time is spent processing and making sense of information received. All told, the average Man spends only 15 to 20 minutes of his life reflecting on the mystery of creation. Some do not think about it at all, while others spend years contemplating it. Anyone can figure it out if he looks back over the years of his life. Each individual is unique — he is more important than all the galaxies taken together, for he is capable of creating them. But each Man is a particle of the human commonwealth, which may be regarded in its entirety as a single organism, a single essence. And once humanity has fallen into the trap of technocratic dependence, this great essence of the Universe becomes closed within itself, it loses genuine freedom and becomes dependent, at the same time activating the mechanism of self-destruction.

"Another way of life, quite distinct from your world's everyday norm, is lived by people in the communities of the future. Their thought is both free and humane — it has merged into a single aspiration, and is leading humanity out of its dead end. The galaxies quiver in joyful anticipation when they see the human dream merging into a single whole. Creation will

soon witness a new birth and a new co-creation. Their human thought will materialise a beautiful new planet.”

“Wow! How grandiloquently you describe these community dwellers! But outwardly they’re just ordinary people.”

“Even their outward appearance is distinctive. It is imbued with the radiance of great energy. Look more closely — here come a grandmother and her grandson riding along...”

CHAPTER THIRTEEN



Equestrienne from the future

I saw a wagon emerging from the settlement, or rather a carriage with a folding top, drawn by a sorrel mare. On the carriage's plush seat sat an elderly woman, with baskets of apples and vegetables at her feet. Up in front a shirtless boy about seven years old held the reins, but did not appear to be controlling the horse. No doubt they had been along this route many times before and the horse was simply trotting leisurely along a familiar route.

The boy turned to the elderly woman and said something to her. His grandmother smiled and began to sing. The boy started singing along with her, picking up on the refrain. As for the tourists in their electric motorcoach passing by on the parallel highway about a kilometre distant, there was no way they could catch the sound of their song.

Practically the whole coach had their field glasses trained on the carriage and its passengers. They watched the spectacle unfold with bated breath, as though they had seen a miracle or an interplanetary alien, and again the thought came to me that there was something not quite right here: people had come from such a long ways away and couldn't even carry on a normal conversation with the local residents, but were limited to observing them from a distance. And the two occupants of the carriage weren't even looking their way.

One of the tourist coaches slowed down to keep pace with the horse's trot. The coach was filled with children visiting from abroad, excitedly waving their hands at the little boy

and his grandmother riding in the handsome carriage, but not once was there even a glance in return.

All at once a young equestrienne emerged from one of the gates of the settlement, which were beautifully enwreathed with living vegetation. Her chestnut-coloured racehorse maintained a heated gallop in a bid to catch up to the carriage, and was soon prancing daintily alongside. The elderly woman smiled, listening as the young equestrienne spoke to her.

Even though the boy may not have been too happy at having their duet interrupted, his voice could not help but betray an inner joy as he said:

“Oh, Mamochka, you’re a regular jumping jack! You can’t stay still for a moment!”

The young woman laughed, reached into her canvas saddle bag and took out a *pirozhok*,¹ handing it to the little boy. He took a bite of it and then offered it to the elderly woman, saying:

“Here you are, Granny, try it — it’s still warm!”

The boy gave a tug on the reins and stopped the carriage. He leant down and with both hands picked up a basket of yummy-looking apples. He held it out to the woman rider with the words: “Please, Mama, take these to *them*,” nodding in the direction of the touring coach with the visiting children on board.

Grasping the heavy basket of apples easily with one hand, with the other hand she gave her prancing steed a pat on its neck, and galloped off toward the children’s motorcoach. Several other tourist coaches in the meantime had pulled up beside it, all eyes fixed on the young woman rider galloping toward them over the fields clutching the basket of apples with one hand.

¹*pirozhok* (plural: *pirozhki*) — a small Russian pastry with a filling, akin to a Ukrainian pierogie. See footnote 2 in Book 2, Chapter 11: “A sharp about-turn”.

Dashing up to the children who had now spewed forth out of the coach, she reined in her steed, and without leaving the saddle, deftly bent down and placed the apple basket on the ground in front of the excited children.

After managing to give a dark-haired little boy a pat on the head, she waved a greeting to all and headed off on her steed right down the middle of the dual motorway. The driver of the children's coach was talking on his two-way radio:

"She's galloping right down the median strip! She's marvellous!"

Many of the touring coaches along the motorway pulled over to the side and stopped. People quickly got out and spread themselves along the roadside, watching the beautiful young equestrienne galloping along at full speed. No shouts, but rather whispers of excitement emanated from many people's lips. And here was really something to be excited about. Sparks flying from his hooves, the steed flew along unhindered in his heated gallop. His rider carried no whip in her hand, or even a switch, yet the steed kept quickening his step, his hooves barely touching the asphalt, his mane streaming from the brisk headwind. No doubt he was extremely proud of his rider and wanted to prove worthy of this beautiful woman on his back.

Indeed, she was exceptionally beautiful in appearance. Of course one could get excited about her perfect facial contours, her light-brown braid and thick eyelashes. Of course, beneath her white hand-embroidered blouse and flowered skirt with white camomiles one could easily picture a shapely supple waist on this girl with such a magnificent figure, whose smooth, feminine lines seemed to frame some sort of irrepressible energy. The blush playing on her cheeks gave but a glimpse of the majesty and boundless possibilities of this unfathomable energy. The young equestrienne's unusually healthy-looking appearance (she looked like a girl in her late teens!) quite distinguished her from that of the people standing by the side of the road. She sat upright on her frisky steed

with not a trace of tension in her body. She wasn't holding on to the pommel of her saddle, or even the reins. And her legs were thrown over one side of the horse's rump without a stirrup on either foot.

As she rode along with her eyelids lowered, she gracefully wove her wind-tossed hair into a tight braid. And she had only to raise her eyelids to inflame one of the crowd of people with some kind of invisible but captivating fire. Whoever caught her gaze felt himself straighten up inside and stand tall.

It seemed that these people could feel the light and energy emanating from the equestrienne and were trying to let it at least partially fill their being. She understood their desire, and generously shared what she had, galloping on and just being beautiful.

All of a sudden an excited Italian man ran out across the motorway right in front of the oncoming steed. He waved his arms wildly to each side, crying out in excitement: *Rossiya! I love you, Rossiya!*² The young rider was completely unmoved by her steed rearing up on its hind legs and prancing on the spot. With one hand simply holding on to the pommel of her saddle, she used the other to pluck a flower of the garland adorning her hair and toss it down to the Italian. Catching his gift, he pressed it tenderly to his chest like a valuable treasure, constantly repeating: *Mamma mia! Mamma mia!*

But the beautiful equestrienne was no longer paying attention to the impetuous Italian. She had only to touch the reins and the horse broke into a lightly prancing walk, and headed over to the people standing on the roadside. As the crowd parted, the young equestrienne gave a sprightly leap down from her steed, coming face to face with a woman of European appearance who was holding a baby girl fast asleep in her arms.

²*Rossiya* (pronounced: *ros-SEE-ya*) — the Russian name for *Russia*, which is similar in a number of European languages.

The mother was slouching a little, her face was pale and eyes fatigued, and she seemed to have a hard time holding her baby still without waking her. The equestrienne gave the woman a big smile, and the two mothers' glances met.

It was not difficult to notice the difference in the two women's mental states. The mother with the baby had a depressed look, which gave her the appearance of a fading flower in comparison with the young woman who had just approached her — a woman whose countenance suggested an irrepressible explosion of blossoms from thousands of gardens.

The two women looked each other in the eye without a word between them. And then all at once, as though startled by a new conscious awareness of something, the woman holding the sleeping baby straightened up, and her face broke into a broad smile. With a graceful, very feminine movement of her hands, the Russian woman took the beautiful garland from her own head and placed it on the head of the mother holding the baby, though they still didn't say a single word to each other.

Once more the beautiful equestrienne deftly mounted her steed which had been standing meekly at her side, and headed off. For some reason the people all gave her a round of applause. The now-smiling slender woman, whose baby daughter had by this time awakened with a smile of her own on her little face, kept watching as the figure of her new-found friend receded into the distance. As for the impetuous Italian, he was running after her holding an expensive watch he had taken off his wrist, calling out to her: *A souvenir, mamma mia!* But by this time the beautiful rider was already far away.

The adventuresome racehorse turned off the highway in front of a patio decked out with long tables, where another group of tourists was sitting, drinking *kvass*³ and berry drinks. They were

³*kvass* — a fermented beverage made from rye, barley or other natural products.

also sampling other delicacies waiters kept bringing to them out of a building replete with beautiful Russian carvings.⁴

Another building was in the finishing stages of construction next door. Two people were attaching to one of the windows of the new building — probably a shop or dining salon — a beautiful carved wooden *nalichnik*. Upon hearing the hoofbeats, one of the men turned in the direction of the approaching rider, said something to his fellow-worker and jumped down from the scaffolding. Reining in her horse, the impetuous equestrienne sprang down to the ground and, quickly unfastening her canvas bag from the saddle, ran over to the man and gently handed it to him.

“*Pirozhki*... With apple filling, just the way you like them. They’re still warm.”

“You’re my little jumping jack, Ekaterinka,” the man said tenderly. Whereupon he reached into the bag, took out a *pirozhok* and bit into it. His face writhed with pleasure.

The tourists sitting at the tables stopped their eating and drinking, admiring the young lovers. There stood the pair face to face — the man working on the building and the beautiful young equestrienne just dismounted from her fiery steed — as though they were not already married with children, but a courting couple fervently in love. And here was this beautiful woman, who had just ridden fifteen kilometres, who seemed so invincible and as free as the wind under the excited gaze of the tourists, calmly standing in front of her beloved, first

⁴*Russian carvings* — these might include sacred solar symbols, such as a horse at the front of the roof finial, believed to protect the house and its occupants from evil. Such carvings are found on many a Russian *terem* (mansion) or *izba* (hut). Some of these carvings are featured on a decorated board known as a *nalichnik* (see footnote 3 in Book 3, Chapter 10: “Work out your own happiness”).

⁵*Ekaterinka* — like *Ekaterinushka*, a diminutive of the Russian name *Ekaterina* (pron. *ye-ka-te-REE-na*) equivalent to *Catherine* in English.

looking him in the eye, then lowering her eyelids in embarrassment. All at once the man stopped eating and said:

"Ekaterinushka, look, a wet spot has broken out on your blouse — that means it's time to feed Vanechka."⁶

She covered the little wet spot on her milk-filled breast with the palm of her hand and answered, somewhat embarrassed:

"I'll manage it. He's still sleeping. I'll take care of everything."

"Better hurry. I'll be home soon, too. We're just finishing up here. D'you like what we've done?"

She took a look at the windows framed by the decorative carved *nalichniks*.

"Yes. Very much. But there's something else I wanted to tell you."

"Go on."

She came up close to her husband and stood on tiptoe as if to whisper something in his ear. He leaned over to listen, but she just gave him a quick kiss on his cheek. Then, without even turning around, she sprang into the saddle of her steed standing alongside her, her happy trilling laughter mingling with the hoofbeats. Then it was off to home she galloped — this time not along the asphalt motorway, but across the grasses of the open fields. As before, the tourists could not take their eyes off her so long as she remained in sight.

What was so special about this young woman — a mother with two young children — riding across the open fields on her adventuresome steed? Yes, she was beautiful. Yes, one could feel her overflowing energy. Yes, she was kind. But why couldn't anyone take their eyes off her as she rode away?

Perhaps it was more than just a woman riding a horse across a field. Perhaps it was Happiness incarnate hurrying home to feed an infant and later welcome her beloved husband? And people couldn't help but admire Happiness hurrying back to her home.

⁶*Vanechka* — a diminutive of the Russian name *Ivan* (corresponding to the English name *John*).

CHAPTER FOURTEEN



City on the Neva

“And have such changes been taking place in St. Petersburg too, as well as in Moscow?” I asked Anastasia.

“Events happened somewhat differently in the city on the Neva,” she replied. “There it was the children who, even before the adults, felt the need of doing something themselves about creating a different kind of future. The children took it upon themselves to start changing the city, without waiting for a decree from the authorities.”

“Wow! Children again! And how did it all start?”

At the corner where the Nevsky Prospekt² crosses the Fontanka³ embankment some workers had dug a trench. An eleven-year-old boy accidentally fell into it and injured his

¹*Neva* (pron. *ni-VAH*) — the river that flows through the city of *St. Petersburg* into the Gulf of Bosnia and the Baltic Sea. The city was founded on the swampy delta of the Neva River by Emperor Peter the Great in 1703 as Russia's new capital and ‘window on the West’. Partial to Western (especially Germanic) cultures, he gave the city a German-style name after his own patron saint. In 1914, at the onset of the First World War, the name was russified to *Petrograd*. The Bolsheviks who came to power with the 1917 revolution immediately moved the seat of government back to Moscow, and after Lenin's death in 1924 renamed the former capital in his honour. During World War II *Leningrad* endured a 900-day siege and blockade by the Nazis but was never captured. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, a vote by the city's residents in 1991 restored its original name.

²*Nevsky Prospekt* (Nevsky Avenue) — the principal thoroughfare of St. Petersburg, stretching more than four kilometres from the Admiralty to the Alexander Nevsky Monastery. Named after Grand Prince Alexander Nevsky (1220–1263) who defended the territory against attacks by Swedish

leg. While he was recuperating, he spent a long time sitting at the window of his flat at No 25, Fontanka Embankment. But his apartment windows looked out not onto the river, but onto an interior courtyard. The view included a shabby brick wall and the rusty spots covering the roof of the house it was attached to.

One day the boy asked his father:

"Papa, isn't our city supposed to be the best in the country?"

"Of course," the father replied, "it's one of the best in the world!"

"And why is it the best?"

"What d'you mean, *why*? It's got a lot of different kinds of monuments and museums, and the architecture in the city centre is world-famous."

"But we live in the city centre too, and all we can see from our windows is a shabby wall and the rusty roof of the building next door."

"A wall... Well, yes, we didn't do so well with the view."

"Are we the only ones?"

"Maybe a few others, but anyway..."

armed forces and German knights, the street dates back almost to the founding of the city itself. It was designed by French architect Alexandre LeBlond under commission from Peter the Great, and over the years has figured prominently in the writings of major Russian authors, including perhaps its most famous resident, Dostoevsky. Today, lined by cathedrals, museums and hundreds of shops and apartment houses with neo-classical façades, the Nevsky still forms the axis of the city's business and cultural centre.

³*Fontanka* — one of the several channels of the Neva River flowing through the delta on which the city of St. Petersburg is built. Embankments on both sides give it more the appearance of a canal (the city boasts about fifty canals and a hundred islands). Nevsky Prospekt crosses the Fontanka on the architecturally unique Anichkov Bridge (built in 1715) — each of its four corners is adorned with a bronze sculpture of a horse, all executed by Russian artist Piotr Klodt (1805–1867) in the mid-nineteenth-century.

The boy took a snapshot of the view from his apartment windows and when he was able to go to school again, he showed the photo to his chums.

Then all the children in his class took snapshots from their windows and compared the photos. The overall picture was not very pretty. The boy and his chums went to see the editors of one of the local papers and asked the same question he had earlier asked his father:

“Why is our city supposed to be more beautiful than others?”

They tried explaining to him about Alexander’s Column⁴ and the Hermitage;⁵ they talked about the Kazan Cathedral⁶ and the legendary Nevsky Prospekt...

⁴*Alexander’s Column* (Russian: *Aleksandriyski stolp*) — a prominent column in the centre of Palace Square behind the Tsar’s Winter Palace, erected in 1834. Auguste Ricard de Montferrand, a Russian architect of French descent, was commissioned by Tsar Nicholas I to design this monument commemorating his predecessor (and elder brother) Alexander I’s victory over Napoleon during the War of 1812. Atop the column is a sculptural representation of an angel with Alexander’s face, designed by Boris Ivanovich Orlovsky (real surname: Smirnov; 1796–1837). At 47.5 metres, the pink granite column is the tallest structure of its kind in the world, eclipsing both the Colonne de Vendôme (44 m) in Paris and the Trojan Column (38 m) in Rome.

⁵*The Hermitage* (Russian: *Ermitazh*) — one of the major art museums in the world, begun in 1764 by Empress Catherine the Great, who wanted a place to display (for family and invited guests) her own large private collection. The Hermitage comprises a series of five ornate buildings erected over a number of years along the banks of the Neva River, including the Tsars’ Winter Palace, designed by Bartholomeo Rastrelli (1700–1771). Following the 1917 revolution, the whole complex was proclaimed public property and today draws millions of visitors each year.

⁶*Kazan Cathedral* (Russian: *Kazansky sobor*) — a large cathedral on Nevsky Prospekt, bordered on either side by double rows of columns in semi-circular formation. Built in the early 1800s by Russian architect Andrei Voronikhin (1759–1814), it is the burial place of Russian field marshal Mikhail Kutuzov who led the Russian army in its successful repelling of the Napoleonic invasion. During the Soviet period the cathedral was turned into the State Museum of Religion and Atheism, but is now once again under the jurisdiction of the Russian Orthodox Church.

"What makes the Nevsky so hot?" the boy enquired. "I think it looks like a stone trench with flaking edges."

They tried explaining to him about the architectural merits of the thoroughfare, about the sculptural mouldings on the building façades. About how the city at the moment didn't have enough funds to restore all the houses at once, but soon there would be money available, and then everybody would see how beautiful the Nevsky really was.

"But what's so beautiful about a stone trench, even if the façades are spruced up? Besides, it'll only get shabby again before long and they'll only have to refill the holes and fix up the parts that have fallen down."

The boy and his chums went around to various editorial offices, showing them their now considerable collection of photos and asking the same question over and over again. At first the journalists were irritated at his persistence. On one occasion a reporter with a youth newspaper told him:

"Oh, it's you again?! And now you're dragging your henchmen along with you — you've got more and more of them, it seems, all the time. You may not like the city, the view from the windows, but can't you do at least something about it yourselves? There's enough criticising going on without you kids adding your two cents' worth. Go back to your homes and stop interfering with our work!"

This admonition was overheard by a veteran journalist, who after seeing the group of children make their way out of the newspaper offices, spoke thoughtfully to the young reporter:

"You know, their audacity reminds me of a particular fairy tale."

"A fairy tale? Which one?" the reporter enquired.

"*The Emperor has no clothes!* Remember those words in the story?"

After that the boys stopped bothering the editors with questions and showing the huge collection of pictures they

carried around in a backpack. The school year ended, and come September another began. And it didn't take long for the news to spread through the newspaper offices: *the boy and his chums are back again*. The veteran journalist exclaimed to his colleagues at the journalists' club for the umpteenth time:

"He's back... Yes, indeed... And just think, he finally managed to get a hearing. And he wasn't alone. They all sat quietly waiting together in the reception room for about three hours. I agreed to see them. I warned them to talk quickly, as I had set aside only two minutes to hear what they had to say. They came in and spread out a huge sheet of drafting paper across my desk. I looked at their masterpiece and was dumbfounded. I kept looking, not being able to take my eyes away, or even to say a word. Two minutes must have gone by, for I heard the boy say to everyone:

"It's time for us to leave. We've outstayed our welcome."⁷

"What's that?" I called after them, just as they were on their way out the door. He turned around, and I felt the look of another age descend upon me. Yes, indeed... There's a lot we still have to think through, make sense of... Yes, indeed!"

"Well, did he say anything?" asked a colleague.

Others, too, became restless and asked:

"Don't keep us in suspense — did he say he was coming back?"

Whereupon the veteran editor replied:

"He turned around and answered my question like this:

"That's *our* Nevsky you've got in front of you. For now it's only on paper. But eventually the whole city will be that way. And then the door closed."

⁷ *We've outstayed our welcome* — the original Russian phrase (*Vremia zdes' uzhe ne nashe*) can also be interpreted to mean: "The age you live in here is no longer the age *we* live in'.

For the umpteenth time the journalists bent over to examine the design, and marvelled at its amazing beauty.

The design showed the houses along Nevsky Prospekt no longer one right smack up against the other, forming a continuous stone wall. Some of the old buildings were still there, but every other building had been taken down. In place of the razed houses there were now marvellous green and fragrant oases. Birds were shown nesting in the many birches, pines and cedars, and it seemed as though one could hear their song just from looking at the drawing. The people sitting on benches beneath shady trees were surrounded by beautiful flower-beds as well as raspberry and currant bushes. These green oases jutted out a little into the street, and the Nevsky no longer looked like a stone trench, but a splendid living green allée.

The building façades had a multitude of mirrors built into them. The thousands of splashes of sunlight reflected in the mirrors played with the passers-by, caressed the petals of the flowers and played in the streams of the little fountains set up in each green oasis. People were shown drinking water along with the splashes of sunlight and smiling...

"Anastasia," I asked, "did the boy ever show up again?"

"What boy?"

"You know, the one who kept pestering the editors with his question."

"The 'boy' was gone for good. He became a great architect. Together with his like-minded chums he created splendid cities of the future. Cities and villages, in which happy people began to live. But his first marvellous creation was the city he designed on the Neva."



"Anastasia, in what year will Russia's marvellous future appear?"

"You can determine the year for yourself, Vladimir."

"What d'you mean, for myself? Is time subject to Man's will?"

"What Man *does* in his time is definitely subject to his will. Everything created by a dream already exists in space. The dreams of many human souls — your readers — will turn the Divine dream into material reality. What you have seen may come about in three hundred years, or it could come right now, this instant."

"Right this instant? But you can't build a house in an instant, and a garden won't grow up even in a year."

"But if you, right where you are living at the moment, even if it is just a tiny flat, plant a seed in a little clay pot of earth, from which may grow a shoot of a family tree, this tree will eventually grow to maturity in your future family domain..."

"You yourself are talking about what *will be* — that's not the same thing as *right now*. In other words, a dream cannot materialise itself in a single instant."

"What do you mean, it cannot? After all, that material seed you plant — that is precisely the beginning of the dream's coming true. The shoot interacts with the whole Universe, it materialises your dream, and you will be enfolded by splendid bright energies, you will stand before the Father as the embodiment of His dream."

"Interesting, indeed. That means we should get started, right away?"

"Of course."

"Only where can I find the right words to get people to understand?!"

"The words will be found if you can be sincere and true to yourself in front of people."

"I don't know how, but I shall act. Your dream has sparked something in my soul, Anastasia. And I very much want to make the future I have seen come true."

CHAPTER FIFTEEN



Making it come true

First of all I had to determine whether there were any people willing to get involved in the building of an eco-community and then to work in it. I asked the Anastasia Foundation for Culture and Assistance to Creativity, based in Vladimir,¹ to circulate information on the building of an eco-village according to Anastasia's design. A scant two months later, one hundred and thirty-nine people had responded, declaring their interest in building the future community — including Russians who had emigrated abroad. Once this book is out, telling about the future of Russia and giving information on Russians' new lifestyle, that number may well rise a hundred or a thousandfold, and be spread over a number of regions of the country. Hence the organisational work of building the communities should be able to start in different regions at the same time. In regard to this, the Anastasia Foundation, which as an information clearing-house has reviewed the existing laws on the subject and suggested that any readers sharing Anastasia's views proceed as follows:

First: Start with your own region by organising a spearhead group that could eventually be given legal status in accord with prevailing legislation.

Some regions, possibly, already have readers' clubs or community organisations bringing Anastasia's readers together,

¹*Vladimir* — here referring to the name of the city of Vladimir (see footnote 1 in Chapter 6: "A garden for eternity").

which could get the project off the ground there. But if you don't happen to know of anything like that in your region, you can get in touch with the Anastasia Foundation, which receives a lot of correspondence on this and can provide you with addresses. Overall, I have a lot of faith in entrepreneurs. They have more experience in organisational matters and so, even if community organisations are already set up in some areas, you should still try and get in touch with entrepreneurs.

You should appoint an authorised representative, at least temporarily or on a trial basis — someone who can act on your behalf in dealing with the authorities (submitting applications for land allotments, calling meetings when required, etc.). Provide a small honorarium for your chairperson. The representative's role can be filled either by an actual person or a corporate body.

In the latter case you might want to appoint, for example, a well-known construction company, which could subsequently enjoy priority rights in the awarding of contracts for erecting single-family houses, as well as infrastructure buildings. Such a major contract will be extremely profitable for the construction company, and so it may agree to take on the job of applying for land-use permits and compiling budget estimates.

Second: Submit a formal application to your region's local public authorities — and directly to the official at the top — for a single allotment of land with an area of no less than 150 hectares. The size of the allotment will depend on how many interested participants you have, as well as what kind of local resources are available.

You will need to consider that in the future your community will be home to quite a few families, and so it should include a school, club and medical facility, and these are best supported by a significant number of people. Small communities may not be in a position to create the required infrastructure.

Third: In applying for an allotment, you should contact land surveyors, architects and builders to draft blueprints for the settlement. Another important reason for this is that you will need to find out the depth of the water table under the allotment, with a view to drilling wells to supply each house with running water, to determine what depth house foundations should be as well as the feasibility of constructing a small pond in each domain. Drawing up a good overall plan for the community is also important in determining the location of the future school and play areas, as well as where the access roads should go.

The Anastasia Foundation has already commissioned competent specialists to work out a model plan, and if it is completed before you launch your spearhead group, you can consult with the Foundation — it will cost you less. But then you will have to adapt the model to your own locale, introduce your own modifications and share them with other spearhead groups. Successful proposals which have the greatest appeal will be adopted by other groups, and eventually we shall jointly put together a master design.

Fourth: After completing the design for the settlement — and this is something not only specialists but also future residents can participate in — you will receive a detailed set of schematics, including an overall plan highlighting the individual plots of at least one hectare each. Every participant should be formally assigned a plot of land, perhaps by drawing straws. Land use entitlement should be formalised with an appropriate legal document, drawn up in the name of the individual owner rather than the organisation, as was the case in the Auroville community in India.

And so here you are standing on your own plot, on your very own hectare of land. This is your kin's domain, the place

where your descendants will be born and will live. They will fondly remember its founder, their family patriarch, and they may even rebuke him for certain mistakes in planning out the place.

Right at the moment the design of everything to be situated on the assigned plot is completely up to you. Where will you place your family tree — an oak or cedar, for example — which will keep on growing for as long as 550 years, and may be looked upon by the ninth generation of your descendants as they remember you?

Where will you decide to dig a pond, plant an orchard and a small grove of woodland trees, build your house and set up your flower beds? What kind of living fence will you create around the perimeter of your kin's domain? Maybe the one Anastasia described, or maybe it will come out even more fanciful and functional than the one depicted in my previous book. It can be started even now, even before you get the official documents, even before a spearhead group is organised among the people who share your vision. You can start the building process in your thoughts, pondering what will go in each corner of your future kin's domain.

You should remember that the house you build, even one of fairly solid construction, will last about a hundred years and then fall into disrepair. The living structures you set up, on the other hand, will only become better and stronger, thriving more and more as the ages pass. They will convey your living thoughts to your descendants for centuries, and perhaps even for millennia to come.

You can start building right away, and not just in your thoughts. Even now you can plant the seeds of your future majestic family trees in a clay pot on the windowsill. Of course you can also buy grown saplings ready for transplant at a specialised nursery, or dig up young shoots in the forest without damaging the growth around, especially in places

where the forest growth needs thinning out. That is possible, of course, but I think Anastasia is correct here — it's better to grow the sapling on your own, especially when it comes to your future family tree. A sapling from a commercial nursery is like a baby from an orphanage. Besides, you need to grow not only one sapling, but several different ones. And before planting the seed in the pot of earth, you need to infuse the little seed with information about yourself.

I realise that support on a national level may be needed to overcome bureaucratic obstacles in certain regions. Or if not support, then at least an absence of opposition. Appropriate changes in legislative policies are required.

Instead of waiting around idly for this to happen all by itself, waiting for at least one of our existing political bodies to mature into a state where it will support such a project, the Anastasia Foundation, at my request, has worked out a draft constitution for a new political party, a party of land-users. This germinating social movement has been called *Co-creation* (*Sotvorenie*). Its platform, which still has to be discussed and finalised, comes down to one central theme (as I see it): *The state should grant to every willing family one hectare of land for lifetime use, for the purpose of establishing their own family domain.*

This movement is still young, and nobody is really in control of it at the moment, but I think that in time we shall see literate politicians coming on board who are capable of working out a relationship to the new movement on the level of federal policy-making. For the time being the Co-creation Party functions mainly as an information clearing-house. A legal department will get started as soon as sufficient funds become available. For now the party's administrative affairs are being handled by the Anastasia Foundation for Culture and Assistance to Creativity.

The regional spearhead groups set up to organise new communities will be quite successful after they gain the support

of the local public authorities. This should happen once the authorities see the substantive benefits which will accrue to their region. And these can be pinpointed right now. They do exist and they are indeed substantive. Try to get a discussion of the project going in the local press and see if you can get specialists — ecologists, economists and sociologists — to weigh in on the specific influences the project will have on your region.

In an effort to do my part to help — at least in some way — in getting land allotted for the purpose of setting up kin's domains, I have decided to publish in this book an open letter to the President of Russia.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN



Open letter

To Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin,
President of the Russian Federation

From Vladimir Nikolaevich Megré,
Citizen of the Russian Federation

Dear Vladimir Vladimirovich!

We live in a generation which must be very lucky indeed. We have before us a real opportunity to begin building a prosperous, flourishing state thoroughly protected from external aggressors, internal conflicts and crime. A state in which happy families will live in prosperity. Our generation has the opportunity of not only building a splendid country, but of actually living in it, provided there is enough good will among the legislative powers that be to grant to every willing family one hectare of land for the purpose of establishing thereon its own kin's domain. This simple action will suffice to call forth an impulse to creative endeavour on the part of the majority of people at various levels of society.

The land should be granted free of charge, for lifetime use, with the right of inheritance. The produce grown on these kin's domains should not be subject to any form of taxation.

You will agree, Vladimir Vladimirovich, that an abnormal, illogical state of affairs has now come about: every Russian is supposed to have a Motherland, but nobody can show exactly

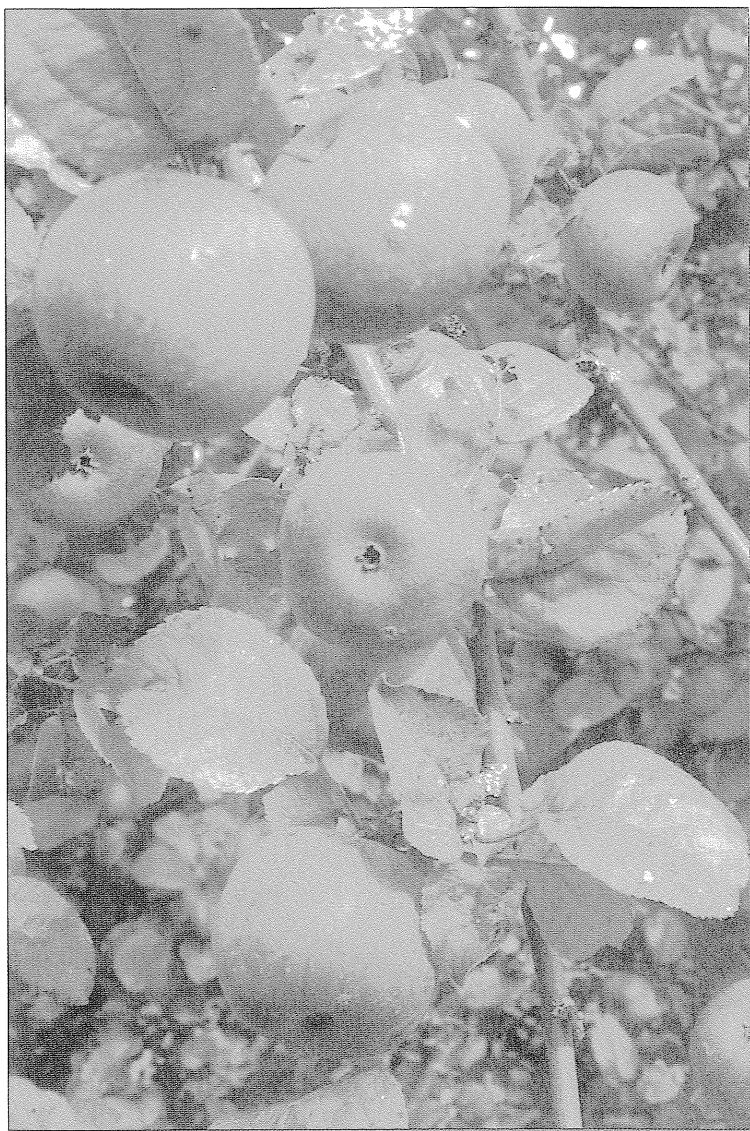
where his piece of this Motherland is. If every family receives one and transforms it into a flourishing corner of Paradise, Russia as a whole will become a magnificent land.

Current policies on national development do not inspire people into creativity, since it is not clear where or to what kind of future they are leading. The forging of a democratic, economically developed state on the Western model has been rejected — intuitively, perhaps — by the majority of the population. And I think this is all to the good. Common sense makes us ask ourselves: Why should any of us in particular, or we as a nation, waste our efforts on building a state which will only be racked by drugs, prostitution and gangsterism? All those things are part of Western society.

We used to think that the so-called developed societies enjoyed an abundance of food products, but now it is clear that this abundance has been achieved at the expense of applying all sorts of chemical additives and poisonous chemicals to the soil, as well as genetic engineering. We have seen that imported food products have nowhere near the taste quality of our own. In Germany, for example, people gladly buy potatoes brought in from Russia.

In a number of countries the government has become concerned over this situation and mandated special labelling of genetically modified produce. Scientists, too, are becoming more and more concerned. America and Germany are among those countries that have the highest per-capita cancer rates in the world. Do *we* have to go down the same path?

I don't think it is a path that inspires very many people. But our country has come to tolerate the promotion of foreign goods and the Western way of life. We have become resigned to the appearance in our midst of more and more diseases, to the fact that we can now drink water only out of bottles we buy at the store and that the population of Russia is decreasing by 750,000 souls a year. It's all just like in the West.



“They hadn’t been dug around — they were just growing there amidst the grasses, they hadn’t been sprayed for insects, but these old apple trees were bearing fruit, and their fruit showed no sign of worm infestation.”

— *Chapter 6: “A garden for eternity”*



“In the distance I could see tall trees growing densely together. They appeared to cover about a hectare of ground. This place seemed simply like a green isle of forest, all surrounded by fields and meadows.”

“Just imagine: there inside were ancient apple trees with gnarled trunks, spreading their branches out into space. Branches literally dripping with fruit.”





“As we drew closer, I could see in amongst the dense grove of two-hundred-year-old oak trees and bushes an entrance leading to a woodland oasis inside.”



"Twenty-three Siberian cedars, planted... two hundred years ago, still stood there all in a row, like soldiers protecting this splendid orchard from freezing winds and harmful pests. There had been more of them, but one by one they perished."

"Last year that one of them began falling, but came to rest against the top of the one next to it in the row. I looked at the sharply leaning tree trunk, whose top was intertwined with that of its neighbour. Their branches had grown together, and the falling tree was still living."



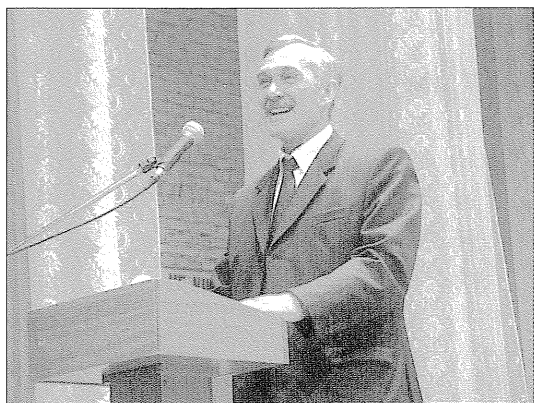


“Your descendants, my fine Russian fellow, are growing up in another land, while in Russia, in your kin’s domain, the leaves of the trees in your orchard are rustling in the breeze, and every year your old apple trees are bringing forth fruit — no doubt in the hope that your descendants will return to taste the best apples in the whole wide world. Yet your descendants are still not coming.”



Vladimir Megré arriving at the Ringing Cedars of Russia movement conference held in the city of Vladimir on 5 June 2004.

The photo above and all apple-orchard photos © 2004 by Alexey Kondaurov, Nizhny Novgorod, Russia. Used by permission.

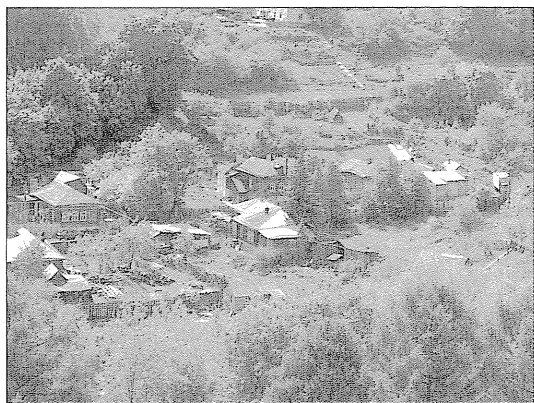


Vladimir Megré addressing the audience at the Ringing Cedars of Russia movement conference held in the city of Vladimir on 5 June 2004.

Photo © 2004 Anastasia Foundation.

The conference brought together over 400 delegates from 150 eco-villages from all over Russia and beyond.

Photo © 2004 Anastasia Foundation.



The city of Vladimir's downtown still harbours hundreds of private homes surrounded by vegetable and fruit gardens.

Photo © 2006 by Leonid Sharashkin.



Above: Two birds by Andrey and Natalia Patokin, © 2006 Leonid Sharashkin. This watercolour was inspired by Andrey and Natalia's trip to the dolmens and the reading of Vladimir Megré's *Co-creation*.

True to Anastasia's promise, books in the Ringing Cedars Series have produced a powerful creative outburst on the part of the readers. Thousands of people started to write poetry, compose songs, make paintings as well as changed their lifestyle and proceeded to designing and establishing their kin's domains.

After all, the birthrate has fallen in highly developed countries too. We are trying our hardest to be like them. But I have been hearing from people who live in these countries, hearing about their hopes — their hopes that Russia is searching for and will inevitably find its own path of development, and show the whole world a happier way of life.

Mr President, you, no doubt, have received various proposals for the future development of our country. If this new proposal appears questionable in comparison with others you have seen, I would ask you to test it on an experimental basis in regions where the respective governors can discern in it a grain of common sense.

You will find further details of this proposal in the series of books entitled *The Ringing Cedars of Russia*, of which I happen to be the author. I would not imagine that you have had the time to read them personally, caught up as you are in attending to a flood of affairs of state. Still, there are certain appropriate administrative bodies which are aware of these books and have already rendered their verdict.

They conclude that these books have engendered a new religion in Russia, which is “spreading like wildfire” — an opinion that is also being circulated in the press in a number of publications. Their conclusion came as a complete surprise to me. While I *have* expressed my feelings about God in these books, I never thought of creating any kind of new religion. I simply wrote books about an extraordinary and beautiful recluse living in the Siberian taiga and the fervent dream she entertains about what is splendid and beautiful in life.

One could say that the enthusiastic reaction on the part of people of different social backgrounds and the popularity of these books both in Russia and abroad bear some resemblance to a religious phenomenon. But I think this is quite a different story here. The ideas, philosophy and topical awareness of this Siberian recluse, not to mention the language in

which she expresses herself, have all deeply stirred people's hearts.

It will probably be quite a while before scientists reach a unanimous conclusion on who Anastasia is and what is the full significance of the books containing her sayings, or how one should interpret the public reaction to them. Let them keep on trying to figure it out. I am only concerned lest their theoretical analyses overshadow the concrete proposals made by Anastasia.

Vladimir Vladimirovich, so that you may be personally persuaded of the effectiveness of Anastasia's proposals regarding the land, I invite you to authorise an experiment, regardless of who either Anastasia or Vladimir Megré may be, which will put some of her less significant statements to the test.

First: I suggest that your public officials will not be unduly burdened if asked to commission an appropriate scientific research institute to do a simple analysis of the effectiveness of Anastasia's proposal on cleansing the air in major cities from harmful dust pollution. The gist of this proposal was set forth back in my first book.¹

Second: I recommend you authorise an analysis of Siberian cedar nut oil as a general remedial agent. Both data from ancient sources and modern research by scientists at the University of Tomsk² confirm Anastasia's statement that this natural product, provided it is obtained through a specific technological method, is one of the most effective remedies in the world for the cure of a broad range of diseases. You will not find anywhere else on the globe a vaster array of plantings than in Siberia, which is home to the nut-bearing cedar.

¹See Book 1, Chapter 17: "The brain — a supercomputer".

²*Tomsk* — a city of a half-million residents in southwest Siberia, founded during the reign of Tsar Boris Godunov in 1604. The university was established in 1880.

The Russian federal budget could realise substantial profits from putting this product on the international market, as well as from its use within our own country. We need to have a state policy on the exploitation of Siberian flora. A policy aimed not at the establishment of large-scale industrial enterprises but at the unfolding of a network of small businesses involving people actually living in the remote regions of Siberia. The implementation of such a policy does not require a huge outlay of capital, only a legislative decision allowing the local residents to acquire land in the taiga on a long-term lease basis.

Moreover, Vladimir Vladimirovich, life inevitably confirms even the statements of Anastasia's that seem less plausible at first glance. Personally, I am absolutely convinced of our country's splendid future. It is only a question of whether those living today will accelerate its coming or slow it down. I sincerely wish you, Vladimir Vladimirovich, along with all of us alive today, the opportunity of being the creators of this splendid future!

Respectfully,

Vladimir Megré

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN



Questions and answers

Anastasia's design intrigued me. I wanted to think and talk about it on a daily basis. I wanted to stand up for it at all costs, defend it against ridicule and dispel the doubts of the sceptics. I talked about it at the readers' conferences held in the city of Gelendzhik¹ and at the Central Letters Club² in Moscow. The majority of the participants at these conferences (there were more than two thousand in all, hailing from various countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States,³ as well as from further afield) either supported this design or at least expressed an interest. But in this chapter I shall reproduce some of the basic questions and comments by the doubters, along with my responses to them, based on Anastasia's statements and my own convictions, as well as information I have managed to glean from other sources.

Question. In today's world no nation's economy can survive independent of the global economic system. Today's

¹*Gelendzhik* — see footnote 2 in Book 1, Chapter 30: "Author's message to readers". On one of the readers' conferences in Gelendzhik, see Book 4, Chapter 34: "Anomalies at Gelendzhik".

²*Central Letters Club* — in Russian: *Tsentral'nyi Dom literatorov* (literally: Central House of Literati).

³*Commonwealth of Independent States* — an organisation of countries comprising most of the former members of the Soviet Union. It was formally launched at a conference in Alma-Ata (Kazakhstan) on 21 December 1991, following the official dissolution of the USSR at a conference in Minsk (Belarus) earlier the same month.

economic processes point to the need to create large industrial structures, the need for specialised knowledge of today's markets and how they are set up, as well as the major directions of capital flow. It does not appear that you have training in economics. Your proposal involves emphasising small-scale commodity production, which may take away from more important things and ruin the national economy.

Answer: It is true that I have had no training in economics. But as to your point that large conglomerates are of prime importance to the nation's economy, I am in complete agreement with you. I think you will also agree that a large factory, say, is economically viable for the nation only when it operates to produce goods in high demand. When a large enterprise shuts down — and such cases are not infrequent in our country, or in others — it inevitably means losses.

The state is obliged to pay workers unemployment benefits. Hundreds of thousands are forced to eke out a wretched existence on the strength of this paltry allowance. They don't know what to do, they're so used to relying on their production-line job to feed themselves and their families. Given these conditions, they could make better use of their new free time working intensively on their own plots of land.

One's family domain is not just to provide a home base to spend one's leisure time in. It can also serve as a profitable workplace, more profitable, even, than in many enterprises, even major ones. In terms of the larger picture — on the national level, that is — the state may be seen as not only made up of industrial and financial conglomerates, both large and small, but its very building-blocks consist precisely of these family nuclei.

For any family the domain can serve as a home base — an insurance policy against any possible form of nationwide economic disaster. I don't see anything wrong with each family being offered the opportunity to provide independently for its own poverty-free existence.

I also believe that personal freedom is impossible without economic freedom. A working family, even one living in a modern city apartment, cannot be free, dependent as it is on an employer who determines one's salary, on utility companies with the power to supply or withhold heat, water and electricity, on the availability of groceries and on the prices of food products and consumer services. The family is slave to all of these, and the children in such a family are born into a slave mentality.

Question. Russia is an industrially developed country and a mighty nuclear power. And only as such will it be able to guarantee the security of its citizens. If all its residents do nothing but work the land, the country will be transformed into a purely agrarian state and thus become defenceless against external aggressors.

Answer. I don't think everybody's necessarily going to agree to work on their plots of land right off the bat. It'll be a gradual process, and the situation will unfold naturally, in an orderly manner. National power depends not only on possessing a sufficient number of nuclear warheads, but also on the overall economic state of affairs, including sufficiency and quality of food products. And when a state does not have sufficient food production to feed its people, it is then obliged to sell off not only its natural resources but its armaments as well, thereby strengthening the position of any potential aggressor.

The proposed design has the power to strengthen the economic position of the state as a whole, and as such offers the opportunity not only for more effective scientific and industrial development but also a more efficient combat-ready army.

In the near future, however, when this way of life has been adopted on a massive scale, I think — indeed, I am quite convinced — that it will provoke considerable interest among

many citizens of other countries, including countries we don't currently get along with. And people in those nations too will want to reshape their lifestyle the same way many Russians have done. The adoption of this design in a variety of countries will signal the start of a whole new era of peaceful co-existence among peoples.

Question. The implementation of the proposal is feasible, of course, in the more trouble-free regions of Russia. But isn't it naïve to think of implementing it in an inherently crime-prone republic such as Chechnya?⁴

Answer: A significant lowering of social tensions, especially in the so-called 'hot spots', along with complete cessation of conflict through the help of the proposed project I see as something not only *not naïve*, but absolutely realistic. If you take the northern Caucasus, for example, and its most troubled region, Chechnya, it has recently become clear (and this has been reported in the press) that the basic conflict is centred around the struggle of a small group of people for control of the republic's oil reserves, as well as for money and power. This situation is typical of most of the 'hot spots' today — indeed, of most of the conflicts the world has known throughout the ages. That still leaves the question of why such a large part of the population, especially men, has been drawn into the Chechen conflict.

⁴*Chechnya* (pronounced *chich-NYAH*) — a small, predominantly Muslim republic of about 800,000 people in the Northern Caucasus area of the Russian Federation. With its capital at Grozny, Chechnya is situated to the north of Georgia (a former Soviet republic, now an independent country). Chechnya was forcibly annexed by the Russian Empire in 1859, and throughout history, a part of the Chechen population has fiercely resisted Russian rule. The Chechens' striving for independence has been constantly suppressed by the Russian Federation, and in the mid-1990s this led to a military conflict which has not been settled to the present day (mid-2006).

Chechnya used to have hundreds of illegal oil-refining operations, belonging to a small group of people. Tens of thousands of people from among the local population worked in these enterprises. When the government tried to restore law and order these people lost their jobs, leaving their families without any means of support. The principal aim of this class of people in joining the militants was to try and protect their jobs and the welfare of their families, minimal though it was. Besides, their participation in the rebel forces wasn't exactly volunteer work — they ended up earning quite a bit more than the unemployment benefit they had been getting. Consequently, for the majority of the ordinary fighters, taking part in the armed gangs was simply a job — no different from being a policeman or a Russian army officer, only better paid. As a result, many of these foot-soldiers don't see much in the way of hope for their families' welfare if military operations were to cease.

How can we possibly do away with unemployment in Chechnya if we can't completely do away with it in even a single region closer to home, especially one that is comparatively well off? Let's say the Government pours colossal resources into Chechnya and starts setting up all sorts of enterprises there to guarantee a job for everybody who wants one. But then another problem arises — the size of the pay packet offered. Say you offer a special raise for the Chechen population, then all of Russia will be working to support the Chechens, since the only way the raise can be implemented is on the backs of the Russian taxpayers as a whole. Even then, not all the money will reach its intended target, since the problem of getting allocated funds through to those who actually need them has not been resolved. In sum, we'd be faced with the same situation we have today, only with a significant increase in expenditures.

The Chechen Republic is a region favourable to agricultural production. Now let's suppose a law granting land for family

domains is already in effect. Suppose that the state is able to protect these family domains from any kind of encroachment. So a Chechen family receives land for its kin's domain where everything they produce belongs exclusively to them and their future descendants, guaranteeing them a poverty-free existence and a life not ruled by bombs, and not as outlaws, but in their own splendid corner of the Earth — a piece of their Motherland which they have established themselves. I am certain that such a family will not oppose a government which has given them an opportunity like that — on the contrary, they will defend such a government more zealously than they now oppose it. They will defend such a government as passionately as they would defend their family nest. They will counter any attempt by agitators to separate Chechnya from such a government, or any attempt at racial discrimination.

I am convinced that if the government launched a campaign on a sufficiently large scale, introducing settlements like that into Chechen territory, even on an experimental basis, the 'hot spot' we call Chechnya will be transformed into not only one of the most stable regions of Russia, but one of the major centres of spirituality on the Earth. We shall see a complete hundred-and-eighty-degree turn. When Anastasia spoke of ways to eliminate crime, I too had a hard time believing what she said. But eventually, life inevitably kept bearing out the truth of her words. And as far as the Chechen Republic is concerned...

At the readers' conference in Gelendzhik there were more than a thousand people from all parts of Russia and the Commonwealth of Independent States. I was especially struck by the fact that a delegation had come from Chechnya. Nobody had invited them specially to the conference; the Chechens came all on their own. Later I spoke with several of them personally.

At the moment we are talking about Chechnya, but are other parts of our country free of crime? It's there all right,

and in just about every form you can imagine. One of the causes of crime is unemployment, and the fact that people are released from prison with no opportunity to rebuild their lives in our society. Anastasia's project is capable of solving this problem.

Question. If you give a hectare of land to everybody in Russia who wants one, there won't be enough land to go round. Especially for the rising generation.

Answer. At the present time we are faced with a question even more acute — namely, that there are not enough people to work the land. And I'm not talking just about wasteland and land unsuitable for farming, but arable land as well. As to the rising generation, it is unfortunately the case that every year more Russians are dying than are being born. According to Goskomstat (the government statistics agency), the Russian population is showing an annual attrition rate of 750,000 people. So the current concern is over whether there will be a rising generation at all.

At first I too was under the misconception that a family, or even a single person, living, let's say, in a flat in a five-storey apartment block, takes up less land than a family or person with a private house and a garden plot. But, as it turns out, it's not that way at all. Any person, no matter what floor he lives on, consumes as food all sorts of things that grow on the land. To get those growing things delivered to him, roads, trucks, warehouses and stores are required, and all of these take up land-space too. So at any given moment every individual is being supported by his own plot of land. It supports him regardless of whether the individual has abandoned it or even thinks about it at all.

Naturally I wasn't able to give a full answer to this question right off, as I didn't have immediate access to all the figures, but I looked them up later and can now include them here.

Russia's land: The total land mass of the Russian Federation comprises nearly 1,710 million hectares, of which only 667.7 million hectares are fit for agricultural production. Figures for the beginning of 1996 show 222 million hectares used for farming at the time, or 13% of Russia's total land resources. Of these, 130.2 million hectares (7.6% of the total) were classified as arable land.

At the present time Russia's population comprises 147 million people. Hence the 'problem' of allocating a hectare of land to any family wishing to have one simply doesn't exist, according to the statistics. Moreover, the real problem is quite the opposite: the population of our country is shrinking drastically. And here's what the analysts have to say in regard to the general state of the Russian population: if current trends continue, between 2000 and 2045 the number of children under 15 years of age will be cut in half, while the number of senior citizens will increase by 50%. The capacity of the population to reproduce itself will be pretty much exhausted.

Oh yes, and one more problem: the *quality* of the arable lands of our country.

Large areas of the nation are witnessing topsoil erosion. Specialists are of the opinion that these processes have already reached a critical stage at the regional and inter-regional levels. In all of Russia's agricultural zones erosion (or the threat of erosion) has affected 117 million hectares (or 63% of all agricultural lands). Over the last 50 years the rate of erosion has increased by a factor of 30; the rise has been especially steep since the onset of the 1990s. According to the UN's Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) experts, Russia is among the top ten countries of the world in terms of erosion rates, and by 2002 erosion will affect as much as 75% of our farmland. I could go on and cite even more detailed statistics about our country's land — they're all pretty miserable. I shall include them at the end of this book.

Now, after becoming familiar with the statistics cited above, I can confidently state that Anastasia's project is capable of stopping the drunken orgy our nation is indulging in with its land resources. To this day it is the only effective and feasible project in existence. It envisages the restoration of the soil's fertility through natural processes. It does not require additional capital outlays on the government's part, and yet with one fell swoop solves the problems of ecology, refugees and unemployment, and completely eliminates the problems we today are creating for our children by our attitude to the land.

Perhaps there is somewhere in Nature a more effective and feasible project. In that case, let it be brought forward. At the moment, all some agencies are doing is demanding more money for the restoration of agricultural production by outmoded means. The government does not have the money they require. But the saddest scenario would be for such plans to be realised by borrowing money abroad and having chemical fertilisers poked into the soil to its further detriment, since we do not have sufficient quantities of manure to go round.

That money will have to be repaid with interest, the condition of the land will deteriorate even further, and the whole problem will fall on the shoulders of the rising generation. I shall do all I can to promote Anastasia's project. Of course, government officials will hardly accept a recluse from the taiga as an authority, and I am no specialist in agriculture, and so it will be a challenge for me to prove its effectiveness before our worldly-wise politicians, but nevertheless I shall keep on trying with all the means at my disposal.

I will be most grateful to those readers who are familiar with the intrigues of the workings of our government if they can explain in a more professional language the effectiveness of Anastasia's project to our high-ranking government officials. Perhaps this book will find its way, too, into the hands of government agencies empowered to undertake such

measures, and so I am appealing to them once more with a declaration on behalf of all willing participants. I don't know how many willing participants there are, but I am certain that their numbers are in the millions. On their behalf I make the following request, namely, that the Russian government...

...settle the land question on a legislative basis and grant each willing family in our nation one hectare of land free of charge, affording the opportunity to each willing family to establish its own kin's domain, dignify it and lovingly care for its own piece of the Motherland, thereby making the Motherland as a whole beautiful and happy — the Motherland, after all, consists of little pieces.

Question. In many regions of our country the ecological situation is extremely complex. One could even call it disastrous today. Wouldn't it be better to first direct our efforts toward the improvement of ecological conditions in general — as many ecological organisations are doing at the moment — before turning our attention to individual domains?

Answer. You yourself say that there are a lot of organisations focusing on the ecological situation, but it is getting worse. Doesn't this mean that simply focusing attention on it is not enough here, since the situation is continuing to deteriorate and even reaching disastrous proportions?

Let us imagine a beautiful garden, with all different kinds of trees growing in just one splendidly laid out domain. Just one little corner of Paradise! Only one hectare in size. Of course that's not sufficient for a global change, either for a country or the planet. But now let us imagine a million of such little corners and we shall see the whole Earth as a flourishing garden of Paradise. But still, it is up to each one of us in particular to start by setting up our own little corner. Perhaps then we shall be able to go from being totally focused on the subject to being totally involved in concrete actions.

Question. Do you believe that an unemployed family can get rich with the help of a single hectare of their own land? If you believe that, then tell me why today's rural areas are at a standstill? People in these rural areas have land but they're still going hungry.

Answer. Let's consider this phenomenon together, but first I want to add a few more questions to the one you asked.

Why do millions of people say that for them four or five hundred square metres of a dacha plot has been a significant help to them in financial terms, significantly increasing the amount of food available to them, and yet rural residents with 1500 to 2500 square metres call themselves poor and starving?

Why? In addition to other factors, doesn't the state of our well-being also depend on our level of conscious awareness? The majority of the rural population thinks that you can have a good life only in the cities, and that's why you've got so many young people leaving the rural areas altogether.

I think our own recent propaganda is at least partially to blame. I'm sure you remember those glowing articles in the Soviet press in the fifties and sixties — who were the heroes back then? Miners, lumberjacks, machine operators, aeroplane pilots, sailors...

Even paintings of cityscapes invariably featured a host of smoking chimneys from industrial giants. There was occasionally a condescending reference to the collective farmer, but a Man tending his own garden plot was always negatively portrayed. They even tried building city-type apartment blocks in rural areas, thereby depriving people of their own back yard and made them work only on so-called communal land. Just as with the Auroville community in India — you could live on the land and cultivate it, but you still couldn't have any land to call your own — all of which leads to some pretty sad results.

You hear constant talk from both politicians and the media of the widespread poverty in the Russian countryside today, just as in the majority of the population at large. There's so much talk about it that everybody *en masse* ends up convinced that if you live in the countryside you must be poor. There are hardly any examples cited indicating that your well-being largely depends on *you*.

It must be in somebody's interests to keep rehearsing the scenario: *Don't rely on yourself — I am the only one that can make you happy*. That's what you hear from a lot of religious leaders, as well as a lot of politicians gathering their own circle of voters around them. If you want to be poor and destitute, you can go right on believing them. I want to talk about not how to be poor, but how to be rich. When someone asks me if it is possible to live above the poverty line with one's own parcel of land, I answer: *Yes!* And here's a concrete example.

In 1999 an acquaintance of mine, a Moscow entrepreneur who had read *Anastasia*, invited me over for a visit. He intrigued me when he said that he could prepare a table almost identical to the one Anastasia had set before me in the taiga. When I arrived, his dining table was still empty. We sat down and chatted, and Andrey (that was the entrepreneur's name) kept looking at the clock, apologising for someone he was expecting being held up.

Before long his chauffeur arrived with two large baskets. The table was soon spread with tomatoes, cucumbers, bread and much else besides. The room was filled with tempting aromas. In a few minutes the women in Andrey's household had laid out a splendid table. No Pepsi-cola to drink, but some marvellous, fragrant Russian *kvass*.⁵ Instead of French cognac there was home-made wine — on top of it all infused with

⁵*kvass* — a fermented beverage made from rye, barley or other natural ingredients.

some sort of herbs. The tomatoes and cucumbers were not as splendid as the ones Anastasia had in the taiga, but they were far tastier than what you could get at the supermarket or even at farmers' markets.

"Where did you get all this from?" I asked Andrey in astonishment, and this is what he told me.

At some point on their way back to Moscow from Riazan,⁶ Andrey's chauffeur had stopped the jeep at a small roadside market. They bought a litre-jar of pickles and a jar of tomatoes. Turning in to a small café, they decided to have a decent meal. They opened the jars they had bought and took a taste.

After lunch Andrey told his driver to turn around and go back to the roadside market. He bought from the elderly woman behind the table everything she had, and offered to give her a ride home in his jeep. The woman lived all alone in a rather old-looking cottage with a small vegetable garden. Her lot was situated in a wee village about fifteen kilometres from the main road. Andrey's enterprising mind was already working quickly and here is how things unfolded.

Andrey purchased a house in the country with 2000 square metres of land, on the edge of a forest, about 120 kilometres from Moscow in an ecologically clean zone. He registered the house in the name of this woman, presented her with the documents and a contract obligating him to pay her a monthly amount of 300 US dollars, while the woman in turn was to give the produce from her garden to his family, except for what she ate herself.

The woman's name was Nadezhda Ivanovna,⁷ she was 61 years old. And she really didn't understand documents or believe in them. Then Andrey took her to the local rural

⁶*Riazan* — a city (whose history dates back to the late 11th century) on the Oka River about 200 km south-east of Moscow, with a population of slightly more than a half million.

council and asked the chairman to read her the documents and assure her that they were in order from a legal standpoint. The rural council chairman read over the documents and said to the woman:

“What have you got to lose, Ivanna? Nobody’s asking you to give up that tumble-down hut of yours. So if you don’t like it, you can always come back.” Nadezhda Ivanovna was finally persuaded to accept the offer.

For the past three years she’s been living in a well-built house. Andrey hired workers to dig her a well and put in a heating system with a hot water furnace. They also dug and outfitted a vegetable cellar. They put a fence around the whole property, brought in all the furnishings she needed, along with a goat, some chickens and animal feed. As well as a lot of other things needed to set up a home.

Nadezhda Ivanovna’s daughter and wee granddaughter came to live with her. Since Andrey has read what Anastasia had to say about vegetable-growing, he cultivates seedlings himself, but only with seeds he obtained from Nadezhda Ivanovna. Each summer Andrey’s father, a retired restaurant manager, takes the seedlings out to her home and gladly helps the women with the garden work.

This arrangement has provided both Nadezhda Ivanovna and her daughter with work and a place to live. Andrey and his family (his wife, their two children and his father) are supplied all summer long with fresh fruits and vegetables which are really eco-clean, along with marvellous marinated produce during the winter. And all year long they have access to health-giving herbs whenever they need them.

⁷*Ivanovna* (pron. ee-VAHN-av-na) — a patronymic derived from her father’s name *Ivan* (not a surname). In informal circumstances older people can be addressed by the patronymic alone, and the full form *Ivanovna* is nearly always shortened to something like *Ivanna*.

Maybe somebody will say that the example I have cited is an exception. Nothing of the sort! Ten years back, when I was president of the Interregional Association of Siberian Entrepreneurs, many of its members tried to set up their own household plots, either for their companies or just for their families. Today you can find such services advertised in the papers. Only there is one *but* — it is very hard to find any capable workers, or rather, anyone who is competent to do what Nadezhda Ivanovna did. And since such people are so hard to find, let's recall for ourselves what attitude *we* should cultivate toward the land. Let's share our experiences of how to be rich and happy on our own land, and not how to be poor.

Question. Vladimir Nikolaevich, I'm an entrepreneur. I too happen to know that many well-off people use the services of rural residents who are experts at cultivating and preserving agricultural produce, which is definitely superior in taste quality to what comes out of large-scale enterprises. But if everybody follows the same path, that will mean a saturation of the market, and then how is a family going to survive on income just from its own hectare of land, if it turns out that nobody needs the tomatoes and cucumbers they grow?

Answer. The land yields not just tomatoes and cucumbers, but much more besides. However, even if half the total number of Russian families have their own domains, they still won't be able to satisfy the demand for their produce over the next twenty to thirty years, since the demand will come not just from Russians but from many people abroad, especially in the rich, developed countries. The reason is that agricultural producers in most countries have got so caught up in the business of artificial selection and chemical treatment of crops that the original form of these crops has simply got lost — and I'm not just referring to how they look but to the fulness of their content. The example of cucumbers and

tomatoes, though, gives everyone a chance to be convinced independently of the following:

Go into any average supermarket — or, better still, into an up-scale supermarket (there are quite a few these days in our big cities) — and you will see very beautiful imported tomatoes and cucumbers, priced from 30 roubles⁸ per kilogram. They are uniform in size and a treat for the eyes, and sometimes they're sold with the little green stems left on. But there's no aroma and no taste. They're *mutants*! They're an illusion, a mock-up, only an external reminder of what ought to be there. Most of the world today feeds on such mutants. This is not my discovery — it's something people are concerned about in many of what we call the developed countries of the world.

A decree was passed in Germany, for example, mandating product labelling to include information about the presence of artificial additives, and people who can afford to are boycotting these products. Products grown in eco-clean regions, using only limited quantities of chemical fertiliser, cost a lot dearer in the West. Only the current Western agricultural system does not permit farmers to grow produce that is ecologically clean through and through. Farmers in Western countries are obliged to use not only hired labour but all sorts of technology besides, including weed-destroying chemicals and chemical fertilisers, in their efforts to maximise their profit margins.

Let's say a Western farmer, and there are some of these already, wants to grow eco-clean produce, and even take what Anastasia said into account. You may remember she said that it wasn't necessary to destroy all the weeds, since they

⁸ 30 roubles — at the time this book was written, 30 roubles in Russia was worth more than 4 US dollars in terms of buying power — a price far greater than that fetched by domestically grown produce.

too perform significant functions. But let's say a farmer still wants to grow this kind of produce, if only for his family and friends. Right off he's faced with a challenging problem: *seeds*. Artificial selection has done its work — the original varieties have long since disappeared in the West. And there are few of them left even in Russia. Especially after imported seed stock was allowed on the Russian market.

If people use their own seed stocks, the variety of vegetables will gradually see a restoration of their original properties — drawing from the soil everything needed by Man — but a complete restoration will take decades. In Russia, possibly thanks to both poverty and the abundance of small private plots, many people are using their own seeds, and this turns out to be their greatest asset, the effects of which will soon be multiplied a hundredfold in monetary terms.

We're talking about seeds, about the necessity of growing crops in eco-clean zones and the avoidance of chemical fertilisers — all this is very good, something they're talking about in a lot of countries... But that's it — only talk. There's still a very real shortage of healthful and tasty agricultural produce in the world, especially in the developed countries. But that's not all! The processing and preserving are of the utmost importance.

In spite of all the efforts of our technocratic world, our highly equipped technological complexes are unable to match many Russian grandmothers in their production of marinated tomatoes, cucumbers and cabbages of superior taste quality. What's the secret? Apart from the many pearls of wisdom, few people realise that once the tomatoes or cucumbers are plucked from the beds they have been growing in, no more than fifteen minutes should go by before they are sealed in preserving jars. The shorter this period the better. This is what preserves the marvellous aroma, the ethers and the aura. The same applies to the additives — dill, for example.

Water is extremely important. What good can we possibly derive from using chlorinated, dead water? We can boil it, steam the jars, but there are people who take spring water and add huckleberries, among other things... Would you like to try it yourselves? Just take a tumbler, fill it a third full of huckleberries, then fill it up with spring water, and you will be able to enjoy drinking this water even six months later.

You will also notice the strikingly distinctive, superior quality of the fruits and vegetables preserved for the winter, one jar at a time, by these many Russian 'crackerjacks'. These products' pre-eminence in quality of taste over produce from even the most well-known food companies in the world is something each one of us can confirm for ourselves by simply comparing the two.

Now let's say a family living in its domain has canned a thousand litre-jars of tomatoes and cucumbers. The result is first-class produce, surpassing all others in many respects. In terms of taste quality and eco-clean production there is none like it anywhere on the planet. This produce becomes a highly desirable commodity for the tables of many consumers in various countries of the world, including American billionaires and tourists at Cyprus' famed hotel resorts. And it will say on the labels: *From Ivanov's domain*, *From Petrov's domain*, *From Sidorov's domain*,⁹ etc.

Of course entrepreneurs won't be interested in selling just a thousand litre-jars. But let's say there are three hundred family domains in a community, they would end up with three hundred thousand jars, and *that* would get a major business firm's attention. I would imagine that initially a jar would cost the same as one currently in the supermarket, somewhere around a dollar, but once people actually taste it, the price will go up, maybe as much as dozens of times.

⁹*Ivanov* (pron. ee-va-NOFF), *Petrov* (pe-TROFF), *Sidorov* (SEE-da-raff) — three common Russian surnames.

I mentioned cucumbers and tomatoes just as an example. There's a whole lot of things that a domain can produce — for example, wines, liqueurs, sweet berry wines — from currants, raspberries, blackberries, sweet rowanberries — and so much else besides. Each person can make up their own 'bouquet', improving it more and more as time goes on. And no super-expensive elite wines will be able to compete with them. There aren't any wine-making materials anywhere in the world like those you can get in Russia. Besides, wines can be prepared using herbs according to ancient recipes, and can be made healthful and vitamin-enriched.

Anastasia says that soon the hand-embroidered Russian *kosovorotka*¹⁰ will be considered the most fashionable garment in the world. So this is another line to think along. During the winter months families can prepare hand-made wood-carvings.

It all comes down to the folk saying: *If you want to be happy, be it.* You could also say: *If you want to be rich, be it.* The main thing is: not to program yourself for poverty. You should attune your expectations to wealth. It makes a lot more sense to think about how to become wealthy, and not to constantly tell yourself it's impossible.

Question. Anastasia maintains that it is a lot easier for young couples to hold on to their love for each other in a domain such as you describe than in a typical apartment. Please tell me whether you have discussed this point with psychologists or people who research family problems, and if so, what do they have to say about this, and what makes it happen?

Answer. I haven't talked about this with any academics. Just what precisely makes the love last longer is not something

¹⁰*kosovorotka* (lit. 'skewed-collar') — a Russian men's shirt with an off-centre buttoned opening near the top and embroidered collar, cuffs and hem.

that frightfully interests me. The main thing is that it hangs in there. The fact that it happens is something you could possibly confirm for yourself after thinking it over. Consider where you would like to see your own son or daughter living — in a city flat, which is like a sack made of stone, or in a house surrounded with a magnificent garden?

Consider what you would like to feed your daughter, or son, or grandchildren — tinned goods or fresh, ecologically clean produce? And in the long term, do you want to see your children living healthy lives or living off the local pharmacy? Ask any young woman who, other things being equal, she would prefer to marry — someone who had set up his life and his future family nest in a concrete apartment block or in a house with a splendid garden? I think the majority would choose the latter.

Comment. The regeneration of any country can begin only on the basis of its spiritual rebirth. Certain members of our government, including the President, have realised this and started talking about spirituality. Anastasia is considered by a majority of readers to be a highly spiritual individual, living according to the laws of God the Creator. She speaks of spiritual values, while here you are leading people astray, calling them in particular to get involved in business on their own plots of land, thereby leading them away from spirituality.

Response. In the long term, I think that nobody will ever be able to lead mankind away from true values. It's good that our leaders today are talking about spirituality. As for Anastasia's sayings, even though I didn't always understand them myself at first, yet later they would still spill over into some kind of concrete reality. Concrete reality is more meaningful to me than philosophical musings, and so here I am talking about concrete things, which I consider most important on the spiritual plane as well. The world probably has a great many concepts of spirituality and God.

After talking with Anastasia and trying to make sense out of what happened, such concepts started coming together for me too. For me God is a person. A good, smart and life-affirming person. A person aspiring to a happy existence for people, His children, to all alike and to each Man in particular. God is the Father, loving and caring for each one of us. Yet to each Man He has given complete freedom of choice. God is the wisest person, striving every moment to do only good for His children. And His Sun comes up each day, the grass and the flowers grow. Trees grow, clouds sail by and water gurgles, ready at any moment to quench any Man's thirst.

And I don't believe, and nothing can ever make me believe, that our wise Father could ever think spirituality is something to be attained only by incessant talk about it without specific concrete actions.

Ever since the so-called Iron Curtain fell, our country has been flooded with hordes of all sorts of people passing themselves off as religious preachers, and quite a few home-grown ones have popped up as well. All trying to tell us what God the Father wants of us. Some say we need to eat a special way, others teach us the best words to use in addressing God. Still others — the Krishnaites, for example, maintain that you have to jump up and down and chant mantras from morning 'til night. For me, all that's balderdash. I can imagine no way of paining God more than through antics like that — all that jumping up and down and wailing. Any loving parent tries to see to it that his son or daughter carries on his father's work, taking part in conjoint creations with him.

God's first-hand creations are all around us. And what can be a higher manifestation of our love for God than a caring attitude to them, or building our lives, our own well-being and that of our children with the help of these Divine creations?

All these antics and meditations have not made us any happier — either our country as a whole or any of its citizens

individually. And the reason they have not made us happier is that they are leading us in exactly the opposite direction — away from truth, away from God. Their efforts have been intense and constant, tossing out all sorts of new variations in their antics as truth. Doctrines come and go. Some of them which have been around for ages now only provoke mirth, while others pop up for a few years and then disappear without a trace like a flash in the pan, leaving only a trail of dirt, garbage and ruined lives in their wake.

To my question as to why we are constantly compelled to listen to various rantings about God from all sorts of preachers, and why God does not speak His own words to us directly, Anastasia replied:

“Words? The peoples of the Earth have so many words with different meanings. There are so many diverse languages and dialects. And yet there is one language for all. One language for all Divine callings. It is woven together out of the rustlings of the leaves, the songs of the birds and the roar of the waves. The Divine language has fragrance and colour. Through this language God responds to each one’s request and gives a prayerful response to prayer.”¹¹

God talks with us every moment, but is it not our spiritual apathy that makes us unwilling to hear Him? *All I have to do*, comes the thought, *is chant a mantra or jump up and down and heavenly manna will fall my way which will make me happy and choose me as ruler over all*. Presto — no sooner said than done! And here *we* have to spend years setting up our Paradise, waiting until our trees grow and bear their fruit and our flowers blossom... Yet if we don’t do that we are not only rejecting God, we are actually insulting Him — degrading Him with our antics and pompous verbalisations.

¹¹Quoted from Book 4, Chapter 11: “Three prayers”.

Of course you can refuse to listen to Anastasia, and especially to me. But ultimately, at some point you will walk into a springtime forest or garden, where you will stand still and listen to your heart. Many people's hearts will most certainly hear the Father's voice. As to the question of what God can do in the face of the energies of annihilation holding sway on the Earth, to say nothing of so many people taking His name in vain even as they strive to gain personal power over others, the Father (according to Anastasia) has replied:

"I shall come up as the dawn at the inception of the on-coming day. By caressing all creations on the Earth without exception, the rays of the Sun will help My daughters and sons understand that each one in their own soul can hold conversation with My Soul."¹²

He believed — and still believes — in us, affirming:

"There is one main defence against all the many and varied causes leading one into dire straits, against all the barriers that a lie can throw up in one's face — namely, the fact that My daughters and sons aspire to the conscious awareness of truth. A lie inevitably has its limits, but truth is limitless — it will impart itself as a conscious awareness to the hearts of My daughters and sons."

So, there is no excuse for tardiness in retrieving from one's heart the conscious awareness of God's son — not of a slave or some half-crazed bio-robot jumping up and down to the jingling of a bell.

But how much can one ask of the Father — "Give me!" "Grant me!" "Set me free!"? Isn't it time we ourselves did something pleasing for our Father? And what *could* be pleasing or bring joy to Him? In response to a question like this, Anastasia once referred to a simple test we can make use of

¹²This and the following quotation are taken (with slight variations) from Book 4, Chapter 6: "First encounter".

to verify the authenticity of the many religious concepts and tendencies we are faced with. She described it this way:

“When your heart is stirred by something someone says, claiming to speak in the Father’s name, take a look at how the preacher lives his own life, and then imagine what the world would be like if everybody started to live that way.”

This simple test can help verify a lot of things. I tried imagining what mankind would be like if everybody to a man started chanting mantras from morning ’til night the way the Krishnaites do, and the immediate result was the end of the world. Now imagine how it would be if every Man on the Earth started growing his own garden. The Earth, naturally, would be transformed into a blossoming garden of Paradise.

As an entrepreneur — all right, a former entrepreneur, but still one at heart — I like specifics, and perhaps that’s why I consider ‘spiritual’ someone who can take actions which will be beneficial to the Earth, his family, his parents and, consequently, God. If someone who calls himself spiritual cannot happify either himself or the woman of his heart, or his family or children, then that is a false spirituality.

Question. Anastasia spoke of a fundamentally different approach to education for children, and a new school. Is this something feasible only in the kind of community she has designed, or in our major urban centres too? What does Shchetinin¹³ think about this? Back in your first book you quoted Anastasia as saying she considers raising children a top priority and was always trying to bring up the subject,

¹³*Mikhail Petrovich Shchetinin* — a well-known Russian educator who founded an alternative school at Tekos in the Caucasus based on ideas similar to Anastasia’s. For a description of the school — where pupils cover the 11-year Russian school curriculum in only two years — see Book 3, Chapter 17: “Put your vision of happiness into practice” and Chapter 18: “Academician Shchetinin”.

whereas you seem to be constantly avoiding it — it almost never comes up in your books. Why?

Answer: Mikhail Petrovich Shchetin in set up his boarding school in the forest. As soon as the foundation is laid for the first community consisting of families' own domains, we shall have to ask Mikhail Petrovich to work out a special programme for the future school. And if he cannot teach in it himself, I shall ask him to at least send his best pupils to it, and select appropriate instructors from among those currently teaching.

I don't think setting up a school like that in today's urban centres is really feasible. Anastasia's sayings aside, let's just think back to our own schooldays. You hear one thing at school, another in the street and still something else at home. While you are trying to figure out where the truth lies, trying to get a complete picture of the world, half your life goes by. I think we have to try and start living a normal life ourselves before trying to educate our children. And once we have got a life set up that's worthy of human existence, then we can take care of our children in partnership with the school, working in harmony, complementing each other.

Anastasia, indeed, often speaks about bringing up children, but she doesn't talk about anything resembling a system scheduled according to days, hours and minutes. And quite often what she says is not all that clear. She says, for example, that a child's education begins with your own education, with setting up a happy existence for yourself, with your own attempts to get in touch with God's thoughts. And one of the principal points in this education is precisely the setting up of a splendid kin's domain.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN



The philosophy of life

I visited this man three times in all. He lives in a prestigious dacha community not far from Moscow. His two sons, who hold some sort of fairly high positions in the government hierarchy, built their ageing father a large two-storey mansion and hired a housekeeper to look after both the house and their father. At best they come to see their father once a year on his birthday.

His name is Nikolai Fiodorovich,¹ and he's already in his seventies. His legs ache, and so almost the whole time he sits in his imported wheel-chair. His huge mansion is designed in the best European style, with half the ground floor taken up by his study with its multitudes of shelves home to a considerable collection of books in a variety of languages. Most of these books are on philosophy, in expensive leather bindings.

Before his retirement, Nikolai Fiodorovich taught philosophy at a prestigious Moscow university, and has several academic degrees. In his more senior years he settled into this mansion, and spends almost all his time in his study, reading and reflecting.

I got to know him thanks to the persistence of his housekeeper Galina, who came to one of my readers' conferences. I am grateful to her for introducing us.

¹*Fiodorovich* — a patronymic derived from the Russian name *Fedor* (also spelt *Fiodor* in English, which is closer to the actual pronunciation). Similarly, the feminine patronymic *Nikiforovna* (to be encountered presently) is derived from *Nikifor*.

Nikolai Fiodorovich had read the books about Anastasia, and he was a most interesting chap to talk with. In spite of his academic degrees, this old fellow could explain in simple, straightforward terms things that had not always been clear to me in Anastasia's sayings, as well as reveal new aspects he had discovered in them.

After the publication of my third book, *The Space of Love*, the office of the Anastasia Foundation forwarded several letters to me written by the leaders of various religious denominations, aggressively denouncing Anastasia, calling her a fool and a scoundrel. One of them even wrote a long letter replete with obscene language.

I was at a loss to understand why Anastasia had suddenly started provoking such unmitigated aggression among certain religious leaders, and so I decided to send some of these letters along to Nikolai Fiodorovich for his opinion. Two months later his housekeeper Galina came to see me, having looked me up at my hotel. She was very distraught and pleaded with me to come see Nikolai Fiodorovich right away, as she was concerned about his health. It was hard to resist Galina's insistence.

Galina had a gorgeous, solid physique. Not fat, she was simply a large and physically strong Russian woman in her early forties. She had spent her whole life in some Ukrainian village, driving trucks and tractors and looking after cows. She was an excellent cook with a good knowledge of herbs, and was extremely neat. Whenever she got excited she would lapse into her thick Ukrainian accent.²

²*Ukrainian accent* — a 'softer' and more relaxed pronunciation by comparison with the terser manner of speaking in north and central Russia (not unlike the difference between the American Southern drawl and the more clipped Canadian speech). In Ukrainian (and some south Russian dialects), the name *Galina* would sound more like *Halina*.

I have no idea how Nikolai Fiodorovich's sons happened to find her and set her up as a nursemaid to their father, but it was curious to see this ageing intellectual, a philosophy professor, talking with a country woman of limited educational background. Galina had been allocated a room of her own in the mansion. It would have been fine for her simply to look after the household affairs — she did this quite well — but she couldn't help listening to what Nikolai Fiodorovich and I were saying to each other. She would invariably think up something that needed doing in our presence and start dusting a particular spot over and over again, all the while commenting aloud on what she was hearing, as though talking to herself.

This time Galina had come to collect me in the Niva,³ which Nikolai Fiodorovich's sons had purchased so she could go grocery-shopping in the town when necessary, or drive into the woods to gather herbs, or fetch medicines for their father. I dropped what I was working on and went with her. Driving through the streets of Moscow, Galina was very quiet — she looked tense behind the wheel, and I even noticed drops of sweat on her face — until we got past the outer ring road. Once she found herself on a familiar route, she breathed a noticeable sigh of relief. Now she was much more relaxed behind the wheel and started quickly telling me about all her concerns in her mixture of Ukrainian and Russian.

“He was sure quiet back then. The man would sit the whole livelong day jest quietly in his wheel-chair, readin' books and thinkin' to hisself. I'd make up hominy grits or oatmeal for 'im every morning, I'd feed him and I could then go to the market or mebbe into the woods to get some herbs — for his health, ya know. I could go with a clear conscience, see, knowing he'd

³*Niva* — a Russian make of four-wheel-drive sports utility vehicle, produced since 1977 by the Volga Automobile Factory in Toliatti, which also makes the Zhiguli — see footnote 1 in Book 4, Chapter 22: “Other worlds”.

be sittin' in that chair of his thinkin' his thoughts or readin' a book.

"But now it's all different. I brought him the letters you sent. He read 'em. Jest two days after that he says to me: 'Take some money, Galina Nikiforovna, go an' buy some of those Anastasia books, an' then go to the market, no need to hurry home. Stay there at the market an' watch the people. As soon as you see somebody who looks sad or sick, give 'em a book. I did this once, even twice, but there was no way he'd quiet down. 'Don't worry about my dinner, Galina Nikiforovna,' says he, 'I'll make do myself, if I get hungry.' But I still always made it home in time for dinner.

"But the other day when I got home from the market I went into his book room as usual to give 'im some herbal tea. An' hey, his chair's empty, and if he ain't lying there face down on the carpet! I rush over to the telephone and grab the receiver to dial the doctor's number, jest like his sons told me to. They even gave me a special number, not the one everybody uses. So I call up and cry 'Help!' into the telephone. An' jest then he lifts his head an' says to me: 'Cancel the call, Galina Nikiforovna, I'm okay... I'm jest doin' some exercises... push-ups.' So I dash over to him, pick him plumb up off the floor and set him back in his chair. How'd he ever get hisself up off the floor with those achin' legs of his?

"What kind of exercise is it,' I says to him, 'when someone jest lays on the floor?' And he replies: 'I'd already done my exercises an' was jest restin'. No need for you to worry yer little head over.'

"The next day he'd gotten out of his chair again onto the floor to do his exercises. So I went out and bought him some dumb-bells — not dumb-bells, exactly — something called an *ex-pan-der*. With handles and elastic bands — you can hook up jest one band to make it easier, four when you've got a bit more strength. I bought him this expander, see, but he still keeps

tryin' to get up out of his chair, jest like a kid who don't know any better. His heart ain't any too young. An' seein' it ain't too young, he shouldn't try things too heavy all at once, he has to do it one step at a time. But he's just like a foolish child.

"It's pretty near five years I've been workin' for him now, an' nothin' like this ever happened before. An' I haven't a clue myself as to what's goin' on in my heart. You have a talk with him, tell him to at least go easy on his exercises if he likes 'em so much. Tell him to go easy."

When I entered Nikolai Fiodorovich's spacious study, the hearth was cheerily ablaze. The old philosophy professor was not sitting in his wheel-chair as usual, but at his large desk, writing or sketching out something. Even his outward appearance told me that something was different about him. He was not wearing his customary dressing-gown, but sported a proper shirt and tie. He greeted me with more vigour than usual, quickly invited me to take a seat and, bypassing the traditional "How-are-you's", started in talking. Nikolai Fiodorovich spoke fervently, passionately:

"Do you know, Vladimir, what marvellous times are coming upon our Earth? I don't want to die — I want to live on this kind of Earth. I read the letters with all those obscenities directed at Anastasia. Thank you for passing them along to me. In many respects it was a real eye-opener. They call Anastasia a taiga recluse, an enchantress, a sorceress, whereas in fact she is a warrior *par excellence*. Indeed, just think about it, Anastasia is a warrior *par excellence* for the forces of light. Her significance and greatness are something that will be appreciated by future generations.

"The human consciousness, mind and feelings expressed in the sagas, folk tales and legends that have been passed down to us were incapable of even imagining the greatness of this warrior. Only please don't be surprised, Vladimir, don't get

touchy as you usually do about Anastasia. Yes, she is Man... she is a woman endowed with all — and I mean *all* — of human nature, with all the feminine weaknesses and virtues, designed to be a mother, but at the same time she is also a great warrior! Right this moment!

“I shall try to express myself not quite so abstrusely. It all comes down to the philosophical concept. You see, Vladimir, on the shelves of my study there are a great many books. These are philosophical works of thinkers of different times and from different parts of the globe.”

Pointing to his bookshelves, Nikolai Fiodorovich listed them off one by one.

“That’s ancient rhetoric, talking about the living, animated body of the cosmos. Next to that is what’s been written about Socrates — he himself didn’t write anything. Over to the right you see Lucretius, Plutarch and Marcus Aurelius. A little lower down are five epic poems of Nizami Ganjavi.⁴ Further along there are Arani,⁵ Descartes, Franklin, Kant, Laplace,⁶ Hegel and Stendhal.⁷ All of these men attempted to learn the central essence of things, to fathom the laws of the Universe. It was people such as these Durant⁸ was referring to when he wrote:

⁴*Nizami Ganjavi* (also spelt *Giandzhevi*) (1141–1209) — one of the most celebrated historical Persian poets from the region of Azerbaidzhan. He was learned not only in Arabic and Persian literature, but also in a variety of academic disciplines, including mathematics, geometry, astronomy, medicine, Islamic law and theology, history, philosophy, music and the visual arts.

⁵*Dr Taghi Arani* (1904–1940) — Iranian Marxist intellectual, arrested and tortured for his communist sympathies.

⁶*Pierre-Simon Laplace* (1749–1827) — French mathematician who used mathematics to study the origin and stability of the solar system, an early contributor to the theory of probability.

⁷*Stendhal* (real name: Marie-Henri Beyle, 1783–1842) — French realist writer known for his detailed analyses of his characters’ psychological make-up.

“The history of philosophy is essentially an account of the efforts great men have made to avert social distintegration by building up natural moral sanctions to take the place of the supernatural sanctions which they themselves have destroyed.”

“Great thinkers,” Nikolai Fiodorovich continued, “have attempted, each in their own way, to get closer to the concept of the Absolute. Their philosophical concepts gave rise to religion-like philosophical tendencies which in turn passed into history. Eventually, having defied all the timid counter attempts, the dominant concept in our lifetime has turned out to be, to put it concisely, the concept of subjection to some kind of Supreme Mind. Its precise location is unimportant, be it in the infinite spaces of the Universe or localised in the essence of a particular human soul. Much *more* important is the fact that the concept of subjection or inclination dominates over everything else. After that come the particulars — subjection to a teacher, a mentor or a ritual.

“My collections also include Nostradamus’ prophecies. Taken as a whole, they constitute a philosophical concept, namely that man is perishable, corruptible and insignificant, and that he has a lot to learn. This concept is precisely what distorts and destroys the soul of Man. No one who adheres to this concept can be truly happy. Not a single person on the Earth can be happy as long as such a concept is dominant in Man’s consciousness.

“It weighs equally upon the philosopher and the one who has never gone near philosophy in his life. It weighs equally

⁸William (Will) James Durant (1885–1981) — American philosopher, historian and writer, of French-Canadian heritage. Two of his best-known works are the eleven-volume epic *The story of civilization* (1935–1975) and *The story of philosophy* (1962).

⁹Will Durant, *Philosophy and the social problem*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1928, p. 7.

upon the newborn and the aged. It weighs upon the foetus in the mother's womb. Many adherents of this concept are living today. They have been around at different times, and today their followers are proselytising human society with their beliefs in the frailty and insignificance of Man's essence. But no! Other times are upon us! Anastasia's words from God were like a flash of light to me. You wrote them down, Vladimir, I remember them. When Adam asked God:

"Where is the edge of the Universe? What will I do when I come to it? When I myself fill everything, and have created everything I have conceived?"¹⁰

"And God replied to His son, replied to us all:

"My son. The Universe itself is a thought, a thought from which was born a dream, which is partially visible as matter. When you approach the edge of all creation, your thought will reveal a new beginning and continuation. From obscurity will arise a new and resplendent birth of you, and it will reflect in itself your soul, your dreams, your whole aspirations. My son, you are infinite, you are eternal, within you are your dreams of creation.'

"What a perfect, philosophically comprehensive, precise and concise response that explains it all! It stands head and shoulders above all our philosophical definitions taken together. You can see for yourself, Vladimir, the vast collection of books on my library shelves, but the one Book which is worth far more than all the volumes ever published on philosophy taken together is missing. Many have seen this Book, but few are afforded the opportunity to read it. The language of this Book is not one that can be studied, but it can be felt."

"What language is that?"

¹⁰ Adam's questions and God's reply are quoted from Book 4, Chapter 8: "Birth".

"The language of God, Vladimir. May I remind you of how Anastasia described it:

"The peoples of the Earth have so many words with different meanings. There are so many diverse languages and dialects. And yet there is one language for all. One language for all Divine callings. It is woven together out of the rustlings of the leaves, the songs of the birds and the roar of the waves. The Divine language has fragrance and colour. Through this language God responds to each one's request and gives a prayerful response to prayer."¹¹

"Anastasia can feel and understand this language, but what about us?... How can it be that we have let it go unheeded for centuries? Think of the logic! Cold logic dictates that if God created the Earth and the Nature that lives all around us, then every blade of grass, every tree and cloud, the water and the stars can only be His materialised thoughts.

"But we simply pay no attention to them, we trample them, break them, disfigure them, all the while talking about our faith. What kind of faith is that? Who are we really worshipping?

"The parade of worldly rulers, no matter what grand temples they might have built, will be remembered only by the filth they have bequeathed to their descendants. Water will prove to be the criterion, the measure of all things. Every day that passes, water seethes with more and more contamination."¹² That's how Anastasia put it. That could only have been said by a consummate philosopher, and it behoves all of us to ponder that statement.

"Just think, Vladimir, anything we construct, even if it is for worship, is temporal, just like religion itself. Religions come

¹¹Quoted from Book 4, Chapter 11: "Three prayers".

¹²Quoted from Book 3, Chapter 24: "Who are you, Anastasia?" (only with a different sentence order).

and go, along with their temples and philosophies. Water has existed since the creation of the world, just as we have. After all, we too are composed, by and large, of water.”

“But Nikolai Fiodorovich, why do you think Anastasia’s definitions are the most accurate?”

“Because they are taken from that one Book that covers everything. And their logic, Vladimir, is the logic of philosophy. There’s one preceding statement, given in God’s name, in which God answers the question ‘What do you so fervently desire?’, and His answer is directed to every single entity in the Universe:

“Conjoint creation and joy for all from its contemplation.”¹³

“Just one brief sentence! Only a few words, that’s all! Just a few words to express God’s aspiration and desire. None of the great philosophers have been able to give a more precise and accurate definition. ‘One must perceive reality through one’s self,’ says Anastasia.¹⁴ So any parent who loves their children should determine whether this may not be what they are really dreaming about. Who among us, being the son or the daughter of God, would not desire conjoint creation with our children and joy from its contemplation?

“What consummate power and wisdom are contained in these philosophical definitions of Anastasia’s! They are absolutely crucial for mankind! They are effective. The hosts of doomsayers have lined themselves up against them. They will continue to manifest themselves — not just in the form of cursing Anastasia in correspondence, but in a variety of

¹³Quoted from Book 4, Chapter 2: “The beginning of creation”.

¹⁴An approximation of Anastasia’s words in Book 2, Chapter 8: “The cherry tree”: “To perceive what is really going on in the Universe one need only look into one’s self.” See also Anastasia’s grandfather’s advice in Book 4, Chapter 33: “School, or the lessons of the gods”: “Decide what’s real by yourself.”

ways. Many small-minded preachers will gather a fistful of followers around them and look as if they are preaching truth to people — people who are too lazy to think for themselves. Anastasia has already said about these:

“Woe unto you who call yourselves teachers of human souls! Cool the passions of your heart, and may everyone now know: the Creator has given all to each one right from the start. The Truth has been there right from the start in each one’s soul. And we need only refrain from hiding the Creator’s great creations under the murky domain of dogma and conventions, the murk of inventions for the sake of one’s own selfish interests.”¹⁵

“These are the people who will try to pounce on Anastasia. Because Anastasia is utterly destroying their philosophy. With her own philosophical concept she is actually forestalling the end of the world. And this is our reality today: we are witnessing and participating in the greatest deeds of all time. Here we are at the threshold of a new millennium, and we are entering upon a new reality. We are already living in this reality.”

“Wait, Nikolai Fiodorovich. I didn’t get what you said about reality and deeds. Let’s say one — or maybe two — philosophers said something. And Anastasia says it, too — what have reality and deeds got to do with it? It’s all just words. Philosophers talk, and life goes on unfolding in its own way.”

“The life of any human society has always been constructed, as it is today, under the influence of philosophical concepts. The Jewish philosophy was one way of life, the crusaders’ philosophy was another. Hitler had his own philosophy, and we under the Soviet régime had ours. Revolution, after all, is only one philosophical concept taking the place of

¹⁵These phrases are quoted (though not in the original order and with slight variations) from Book 3, Chapter 24: “Who are you, Anastasia?”.

another. But all that amounts to details determined by local conditions. What Anastasia has accomplished is much more global in scale. It has an impact on human society as a whole and on each member of society in particular. She said she would transport mankind across the dark forces' window of time.¹⁶ She has done this, Vladimir. She has set up a bridge over the abyss which everyone may cross, and each one is free to decide whether to go across it or not.

"I am a philosopher, Vladimir. I can now see this very clearly. What's more, I can feel it. Her philosophical concept shines like a clear ray of light on the threshold of a new millennium. And each one of us, at any given moment, acts this way or that depending on our individual philosophical convictions. If these change, then our actions change accordingly. As I was sitting in my study, for example, and reading through various philosophical works, I pitied all mankind, inevitably moving toward its doom. I wondered where I would be buried, and would my sons and grandchildren come to my funeral, or whether it would be too much trouble for them to come see their grandfather. I pitied all mankind, and thought of my own death. And then along came Anastasia, with an entirely different philosophical concept, and my actions took an about turn."

"How would you do things differently now, for example?"

"Well, I'll tell you. Now... Now when I get up in the morning I start acting in accord with my new philosophical concept."

Nikolai Fiodorovich got up, bracing his arms against the table. Then, holding on first to the chair, then a bookshelf, he managed to make his way on his aching legs over to one of the bookcases. He looked at the titles on each spine, then pulled out one book in an expensive leather binding and headed

¹⁶See Book 1, Chapter 27: "Across the dark forces' window of time".

over to the fireplace, leaning on various pieces of furniture as he went. Tossing the book into the blazing hearth, he explained:

"Those are the prophecies of Nostradamus about all sorts of cataclysms and the end of the world. D'you remember, Vladimir, Anastasia's words on this? You should remember them. She says:

"The dates you gave, Nostradamus, for fearful cataclysms on the Earth, were not predictions. You created them out of your own thought and persuaded people to accept their implementation. Now they are still hovering over the Earth, still frightening people with their sense of despair."¹⁷ This could only have been said by a consummate philosopher and thinker, one who understands that a prophecy is nothing more than an attempt to set a direction for future developments. The more people believe in universal doom, the greater will be the number of thoughts attempting to outline the image, and it will come to pass.

"It can come to pass simply because human thought is material and creates what is material. And whole sects immolate themselves in different parts of the world — that is, the ones who believe in doom immolate themselves, while the ones who have faith in the future live. And she is fearless in the face of despair. She completely destroys any notion of the end of the world when she declares:

"But now they will no longer come true. Let your thought join in fray with mine. I am Man! Anastasia I am. And I am stronger than you.' And again she says: 'All anger on Earth, leave your deeds and make haste to me, join fray with me, try your utmost.' And again: 'With my Ray I shall take but

¹⁷These and the following quotations concerning Nostradamus' prophecies are drawn (in fragmented order and with minor modifications) from Book 3, Chapter 24: "Who are you, Anastasia?"

a moment to burn up the murk of age-old dogma.' She alone has gone out to fight against the countless hordes. Against the millions who outline an image of mankind's total doom. And she doesn't want to involve *us* in this fight. She only wants us to be happy, and so she says in her prayer addressed to God:

*In your bright dream the coming ages all will live and share.
It shall be so! I wish it so! I am a daughter of Yours.
My Father, You are present everywhere.*¹⁸

"And she will get her wish. Her philosophy is extraordinarily potent. And the coming ages will indeed live in the Divine dream, in splendid gardens of Paradise.

"And she will not distract anyone with memories of herself. People will not build monuments to her nor reminisce about her when it is clear to everyone where true humanity lies. People will simply drink in the Divine nature, they won't be thinking about her. But flowers will bloom in various gardens, including one splendid flower named *Anastasia*.

"I am old, but I am willing to serve as her foot-soldier even today. You say, Vladimir, that philosophy is just a bunch of words. But these words, spoken somewhere in the far-off taiga, have been enthusiastically taken in by my heart, and here you have first-hand evidence of concrete material actions: it is not mankind that is perishing in the flames, but predictions of the doom of humanity. That is why the doomsayers are all stirred up and have set their forces in array. Anastasia has stirred up people who have built their philosophy on such a scenario and manipulated mankind for their own purposes with the threat of the 'inevitable' end of the world."

"Hasn't anyone before Anastasia come out against the notion of the end of the world?"

¹⁸Quoted from Book 4, Chapter 11: "Three prayers".

"There have been a few timid — but ultimately insignificant — attempts, but they've hardly received any attention. Nobody, but nobody, has spoken out as she has. Nobody's words have been accepted so readily and joyfully as hers, in any human heart. And not a single philosophical concept has ever taken hold of people this way. But hers has taken hold. It is burning up the murk of age-old dogma.

"How she does it — well, that's not for us to grasp at the moment. There is an extraordinary rhythm in her words, and a consummate logic, possibly something else. Possibly... No, undoubtedly! 'The Creator,' she says, 'has shone forth with some kind of new energy! An energy that tells us anew about something we see around us every day...' ¹⁹

"Undoubtedly a new energy has made its appearance in the Universe, and more and more people in our time are starting to possess it day by day. The fact is that decades and possibly even centuries, as a rule, are required to spread a significant philosophical concept. And here it's only taken *her* a few years... Amazing!

"You surmised, Vladimir, that her words were simply words. But her words are so strong that — you see these hands?" He raised one of his hands, looked at it and added: "Even these old hands of mine are materialising her words. And the whole prospect of the end of the world is burning up in flames. And life will go on. These hands can still help life go on. The hands of one of Anastasia's foot-soldiers."

Holding on to the furniture, Nikolai Fiodorovich made his way over to the table and picked up a pitcher of water. Bracing himself with one hand against the wall, he headed over to the window. It was a challenge, but he made it. On the windowsill stood a beautiful flower-pot, in which a green shoot, still very young, was sprouting up from the earth.

¹⁹Quoted from Book 4, Chapter 13: "To feel the deeds of all mankind".

"Look, my baby cedar's come up at last. And now my hands will water it, materialising the words that are close to my heart."

Bracing one hip against the windowsill, Nikolai Fiodorovich grasped the pitcher with both hands and said:

"The water isn't too cold for you, my dear?" After a moment's thought, he took a swallow of the water, held it in his mouth for a little while and then, resting his hands on the windowsill, let a thin stream of water spew from his mouth onto the earth beside the green shoot.

Galina was in the study during our conversation. She was always thinking up some excuse to be in his study. She would bring tea, or start dusting, all the while muttering quietly to herself, commenting on what she had heard and seen. These last actions of Nikolai Fiodorovich evoked a rather louder comment than usual:

"Now what's the point of that? Any decent person might wonder. Here he goes doin' tricks like that in 'is old age. He won't ride in his wheel-chair, he goes an' tortures his agein' legs, makin' 'em walk like that. An' somehow people ain't satisfied. Here it is nice an' warm an' comfy at home, but it ain't enough for them, jes' ain't enough!"

I remembered Galina being concerned about Nikolai Fiodorovich's health and asking me to warn him about something, only now I couldn't figure out what there was to warn him about, and I asked him:

"What have you thought up this time, Nikolai Fiodorovich?"

He was a bit emotional, but said distinctly:

"I have a big favour to request of you, Vladimir. I ask you only to respect an old man's wishes."

"Go ahead. I'll be happy to oblige if I can."

"I've heard say you're planning to get people together who want to start building an ecological settlement. You want to

see about having a hectare of land granted each family to set up a kin's domain."

"Yes, I do. The Anastasia Foundation has already submitted a proposal to several regional administrations about this. But there's been no decision on land grants as yet. They've offered a few small allotments, just for a handful of families each, but unless we have a minimum of a hundred and fifty families, we shan't be able to afford the cost of any infrastructure."

"They'll grant the land, Vladimir. Most definitely they'll grant it."

"That would be good. But what about this favour you want?"

"When they start handing out land for kin's domains, and they'll definitely be doing this all over Russia, I would ask you, Vladimir, not to forget about an old man. Please, don't forget to count me in. I too want to establish my own piece of the Motherland before I die."

Nikolai Fiodorovich started getting more and more excited, his words came quickly and with passion:

"To establish it for myself. For my children and grandchildren. See, I'm growing my own baby cedar in this pot, so I can plant the seedling in a piece of my Motherland with my own hands. I shan't be a burden to anyone. I'll set everything up on my own hectare of land, I'll put in a garden and plant a living fence. I'll be able to help my neighbours. I have some savings, and I keep receiving honoraria for various articles. My sons — whatever else you say about them, they never refuse any financial help. I'll build myself a little house there and I can help finance construction for my neighbours."

"Now that'll be a fine sight to see!" Galina was muttering even louder than before. "People don't stop to think of it — how you can plant a garden when your legs don't move. And here he is plannin' on helpin' his neighbours. Oh, if decent

folk could only hear that! What would decent folk think? Here his sons have built 'im a house like this — he should jest live and be happy, and thank his sons and God for it. But people jes' can't sit still. They've gotta keep thinkin' up things like that right into their old age. What might decent folk think about people like that?"

Nikolai Fiodorovich heard what Galina said, but didn't pay any attention to her, or at least pretended to ignore her, and went on:

"I realise, Vladimir, that my decision may be treated as excessive emotionalism, but that's not how it is. My decision is the fruit of extensive reflection. I may appear to enjoy a fine life, but that's only an appearance. I have a mansion fully equipped — practically a palace... I've got a housekeeper to take care of it... My sons have done pretty well for themselves... But you know, before learning about Anastasia I was as good as dead.

"Yes, Vladimir, dead. Look, I've been living here for over four years now. I spend most of my time in my study. I'm useful to no one, and there's literally nothing I can have an impact on. And the same fate awaits my sons and grandchildren. It's the fate of experiencing your death while you're still alive.

"They call Man dead, Vladimir, when he stops breathing, but that's not the case. Man dies the moment he stops being useful to others and is no longer in charge of anything.

"The neighbours' houses around here aren't quite so grand, but I don't have any friends among them. And my sons have asked me not to announce my name even to the neighbours. There are a lot of jealous types about, wondering whose house this is — a house that's practically a palace. Once they find out, they'll splash my name all over the media, enquiring how I managed to finance this set-up. They'll never believe it was my own hard-earned money. The way I sit here, I may as well

be in prison, or even dead. I just sit here in my study, never go upstairs — there's no reason for me to. Certainly I have a lot of philosophical publications to my name, but after finding out about Anastasia...

"I'll tell you right off, Vladimir — and please don't take what I say as a fantasy of old age — I'll prove to you what I'm about to say is true. You realise, Vladimir — right now, right this very moment, God's judgement is coming to pass."

"Judgement? But where and how? Why doesn't anybody know about this?"

"You realise, Vladimir, for so long we've imagined this judgement to be the coming of some kind of terrible Being from on high, with its terrible entourage. And this Supreme Being is supposed to tell each of us where we've been right and wrong. Then this Supreme Being is supposed to mete out punishment in due measure, sending whoever's being judged to either heaven or hell. How primitively we've pictured God's judgement!

"But God isn't some primitive creature. He can't judge that way. He has given Man eternal freedom, and any kind of judgement is a violation of one's person, it's a deprivation of freedom."

"Then what did you mean when you said something about God's judgement coming to pass right this very moment?"

"And I'll say it again: God's judgement is coming to pass right this very moment. Everyone is given the opportunity to judge himself.

"I realise now what Anastasia's done. Her philosophy, power and logic are speeding up the processes. Just think, Vladimir, many people will believe her, and bring the idea of these splendid Divine communities to fruition. Once they believe, they'll find themselves in a garden of Paradise. Others won't believe and will remain where they are now. Everything in the world is relative.

“At the moment we are not in a position to compare our life with any other, and so we think our lifestyle is tolerable. But when it is put side by side with another kind of life, when the unbelievers finally believe, they will see themselves in hell. Some people count themselves happy simply because they don’t know how unhappy they really are. God’s judgement is coming to pass right before our eyes, but it is strange to our way of thinking.

“This isn’t just *my* discovery. I know of this psychologist in Novosibirsk who’s undertaken a study of how various population groups react to Anastasia’s sayings — she’s said practically the same thing. I don’t know her personally — I’ve only read her conclusions in print, and they’re similar to my own.

“People in various cities and towns are feeling and realising the majesty of what’s been taking place. Professor Yeriomkin, whose poems have been published in the people’s collection,²⁰ is another one who’s described the Anastasia phenomenon in magnificent verse. I’d like to remind you, Vladimir, of these lines he dedicated to Anastasia:

*In you I have beheld a Man quite clearly,
Possibly from the end of another era,
Where, midst goddesses, my own grandchildren too
Will be an embodiment of you.*

“I memorised these beautiful lines. I want my grandchildren, too, to live among the goddesses, and therefore I want to provide this opportunity for them, I want to begin establishing for them a piece of our splendid Motherland. Just to

²⁰*people’s collection* — a reference to the 544-page volume of readers’ poetry, art and letters published in Russian under the title: *V luche Anastasii zvuchit dusha Rossii. Narodnaya kniga* (The soul of Russia sings in Anastasia’s ray. A people’s book).

buy a piece of property, even more than one hectare in size, is no problem for me, but it is important to me who my neighbours are. And so I want to set up my property in a circle of people who share my way of thinking. To set it up for my grandchildren. One of them will most certainly want to live there. And my sons will want to come and rest there in their father's garden from the bustle of daily life. At the moment they come and see me only on rare occasions. But they *will* come to the garden I shall set up. I shall ask that I be buried in this garden. My sons will come...

"I'm talking about my grandchildren, my sons, but above all I need to create something inherent in the essence of Man, otherwise... You see, Vladimir... All at once I have acquired the desire to live and be active. I can do it. I shall become a foot-soldier and enlist in Anastasia's cause."

"You can live jest as well right where you are. Why don't you jes' live out a good quiet life right here?" Galina enquired.

This time Nikolai Fiodorovich took it upon himself to reply. He turned to her and said:

"I can understand your concern, Galina Nikiforovna. You're afraid of losing your job and a roof over your head. Please don't worry — I'll help you build a little house nearby, you'll have your own little house and your own plot of land. You'll get married — you'll find the one meant just for you."

All at once Galina straightened up to her full height, threw her white rag down on the side-table — the rag she had been pretending to dust with all during our conversation — and placed her hands on her solidly built thighs. She looked as though she wanted to say something, but couldn't, as though her emotional state had cut short her breath. Then, mustering up her strength, she managed to pronounce quietly:

"Well mebbe I don't like the idea of bein' close to a neighbour like you... Anyways, I can build my own house, jest as soon as I get my land. When I was a kid I helped my father

build a log cabin. And I've saved up a pretty penny. Besides, workin' around here ain't so pleasant. Who is there to clean up for day after day upstairs? Nobody ever goes upstairs, yet here I am, cleanin' up like a damn fool after nobody. I don't want to live in a neighbourhood if the neighbours don't have their head screwed on right!"

Galina did a sharp about-turn and quickly headed off to her room. But presently the door of her room opened, and Galina re-appeared in the doorway, holding in her hands two little pots with green shoots just like those in Nikolai Fiodorovich's fancy pot. She walked over to the window and put her little pots down next to his on the windowsill. Then she returned to her room and brought out a large basket filled with a whole lot of little cloth bundles. She placed the basket at Nikolai Fiodorovich's feet and said:

"Them's seeds. Real ones, 'cause I gathered them meself all summer long and right through the fall. They're from real medicinal herbs. The ones they sow in the fields to sell at pharmacies, they ain't got the power of these here. Jes' scatter 'em with your own hand on your land — they'll multiply your health and strength — when they're growin', and when you make a herbal tea with 'em and drink it in the wintertime. 'Sides, that baby cedar of yours, it's gonna be lonely — well, there's some friends an' a brother for it."

Galina pointed to the windowsill, where the three pots with little shoots were now standing, and then walked slowly to the front door, calling over her shoulder:

"Good-bye, philosophers! Maybe you already know the philosophy of death. But as for the philosophy of life, you've still got a lot to learn."

As far as anyone could tell, Galina had been deeply offended by something, and she was walking away for good. Nikolai Fiodorovich took a step to follow her, but stumbled. He then tried to catch himself by reaching out for the back of a chair, but the

chair fell over. Nikolai Fiodorovich started to sway back and forth, flinging his arms out to the side. I jumped up to offer him a hand, but I was too late. Galina, who by this time had already reached the door of the room, turned at the noise of the falling chair and saw Nikolai Fiodorovich swaying back and forth.

Quick as a wink she was at his side. With her strong arms she managed to grasp the old man whose legs had already given way beneath him, and stood there holding him to her bosomy breast. Wriggling one hand free, she picked up Nikolai Fiodorovich by the legs and carried him like a child to his wheel-chair. She sat him down in it, then took hold of a plaid rug and began covering his legs, gently chastising him:

"Some soldier of Anastasia's you are! You ain't no soldier, jest a green recruit!"

Nikolai Fiodorovich put his hand in Galina's. Fixing his gaze on this drooping woman now sitting at his feet, he said, switching to the familiar form of address²¹ for the first time:

"Forgive me, Galya. I thought you were laughing at my aspirations, and here you are..."

"I'm the one laughing? You think I'm crazy?" Galina blurted out. "Every night I sit and think only soul thoughts. 'Bout how I'm gonna plant herbs — real medicinal herbs, 'bout how I'm gonna use 'em to feed this bright-eyed falcon²² here, to help

²¹*familiar form of address* — similar to using *tu* instead of *vous* in French (see footnote 1 in Book 1, Chapter 2: "Encounter"). The informal form of address is reciprocated by Galina in addressing Nikolai Fiodorovich.

²²*bright-eyed falcon* (Russian: *sokol yasny*) — a reference to a Russian folk-tale about a falcon named Finist. When Marya, the daughter of a rich merchant, is brought a falcon feather by her father at her request, she waves it in the air, whereupon a falcon appears and later turns into a handsome young man. The two fall in love. Injured, however, thanks to the trickery of Marya's wicked elder sisters, Finist flies off and eventually recovers, but Marya must set out on a long quest to find him, and rescue him from a palace where a sly princess has her own designs upon him. The tale ends, of course, with Marya and Finist marrying and living happily ever after.

'im get his strength back. I'll make some real soup from fresh cabbage that don't smell of chemicals. I'll give him some real cow's milk to drink, not that fancy pasteurised stuff. An' jest as soon as this ol' bright-eyed falcon gets hisself straightened out, mebbe I'll even bear him a child. Me, I wasn't laughin', not one little bit. I's just *sayin'* that to see how firm a decision he'd made, to see whether he might change it in midstream."

"It is firm, Galina, I'm not going to change it."

"Well, if that's how it is, then don't chase *me* out to the neighbourhood. Don't hand me over to some other suitor."

"I wasn't chasing you out, Galya. It's just that I had no idea you wanted to be with me some place other than this well-appointed mansion. I am happy to accede to your wishes, Galya. I am immeasurably grateful to you. I simply had no idea..."

"What's there here to have no idea about? What woman would turn away from such a determined soldier as yourself? Oh, I've read about Anastasia, how I've read about her!... Took me a long time, it did — had to read syllable by syllable, but still I got it right off. All us gals today need to become like Anastasia. So I've decided to be a little bit of Anastasia to you. All us gals need to become a little bit like Anastasia. She ain't got too many soldiers jes' yet, only a bunch of green recruits, still wet behind the ears. Us gals are gonna make 'em strong, an' make 'em well!"

"Thanks, Galya. That means, you, Galina Nikiforovna,²³ have read the books — and pondered them during your evenings?"

"For certain. I've read all the books on Anastasia an' thought about them during my evenings. Only please don't address me as a stranger any more. I've been meaning to ask you for a good long time now. Just call me Galya."

²³*Galya / Galina Nikiforovna* — Nikolai Fiodorovich's alternation of familiar and formal forms betrays his temporary uncertainty as to how he should address this woman.

"Okay, Galya. I was intrigued by what you said when you were offended — really intrigued. You said we already know the philosophy of death. But as for the philosophy of life, we've still got a lot to learn. What a concise formulation of two contrary philosophical tendencies. A succinct definition indeed: the philosophy of death and the philosophy of life. Simply amazing! Anastasia is the philosophy of life. Yes! Of course, of course! Just amazing!"

Stroking Galina's hand excitedly and tenderly, Nikolai Fiodorovich exclaimed:

"You're a philosopher, Galina — I had no idea!"

Then he said, turning to me:

"There's absolutely no doubt there is so much more we need to figure out, both from the philosophical point of view and through the help of esoteric definitions. I am trying to evaluate Anastasia as Man — a Man such as we must all become. But there are certain unexplainable abilities she has which prevent us from fully appreciating her as a Man like us.

"Vladimir, I remember your describing an episode in which she saved people at a distance from being tortured. She saved them, but she herself, if you recall, lost consciousness, went white all over and even the grass turned white around her.²⁴ What kind of device was operating here, to make both her and the grass turn white? I've never heard of anything like that before, even though I've tried asking esoterics about it. It's not something either philosophers or physicists — or esoterics — know anything about."

"Whaddya mean, they don't know 'bout it?" Galina burst into the conversation, still sitting on the floor at Nikolai Fiodorovich's feet. "An' what's there to think about, when we need to scratch their eyes out?"

²⁴This incident is described in Book 1, Chapter 28: "Strong people".

"Whose eyes, Galya? Do you have your own opinion on this phenomenon?" Nikolai Fiodorovich enquired in surprise.

Galina was only too ready and willing to provide an answer:

"It's as plain as the nose on your face! Jest as soon as a Man is attacked by somethin' rotten, by some sort of wretched news or threats, or cussed in anger, he goes all white. Turns pale, you know. He turns pale when he don't return that anger, but burns it up within 'imself — meaning he gets all shook up, and burns up the anger within 'imself, and this makes 'im go all white. You see lots of examples like that in life. Anastasia too can take this rot and burn it up within herself, and the ground goes all white, tryin' to help her, and as for me, well, I think you gotta scratch its eyes out — the eyes of any kind of rot, I mean."

"Wow! Really! Many people turn pale," Nikolai Fiodorovich exclaimed in surprise, fixing his gaze on Galina, and then added: "but Man truly turns pale when he does not reciprocate someone's insult, but tries to keep a stiff upper lip and hold it within. He burns it up within himself, as it turns out. Why, that's true! How simple it all turns out to be! Anastasia burns up within herself the energy of aggression aimed at her. If such energy were reciprocated, it would fail to dissipate in space but would go off and find some other target."

"Anastasia doesn't want anyone to be a target. Just think of all the filth that will be aimed at her! So much has been building up over centuries, and is being produced even now by the adherents of the philosophy of death. Who is strong enough to withstand such an onslaught? Tell me, who? Stay the course, Anastasia! Stay the course, noble warrior!"

"And stay the course she will," Galina chimed in. "We're gonna help her now. I've started givin' away your books down at the market, and the gals that have been readin' 'em now stand around on a street-corner in klatches. I gave 'em some cedar seeds too. They planted 'em. An' I told 'em about the

healin' herbs too. The gals say: 'We've gotta do somethin'!' Sure, we ain't gonna beat up our husbands, like one of 'em there on the corner suggested. But we better think about who we're gonna have a child with."

"What are you talking about, Galina?" Nikolai Fiodorovich asked in surprise. "Don't tell me you have your own activist group already?"

"No way! What kind of 'activist group' might that be? We jes' stand around on the street a bit an' chit-chat about life."

"And where did the idea of beating up on men come from? What arguments motivated that?"

"Whaddya mean, what arguments? How come our men don't come through for us? They want us to give 'em a child, so we give 'em a child, but then there ain't no nest for our young 'uns. An' if you can't make a nest, why ask for a child? What gal's gonna be happy with her man when her kid jes' wanders around aimlessly right before her very eyes?"

"Teacher's come to us twice already. Teacher says some sort of psych factor stops 'em from gettin' ahold of themselves — it's all because of some kinda loan they're waitin' for from some foundation overseas. It's a 'syndrome', she says. Lack of self-confidence. An' this psych syndrome digs up all sorts of reasons to avoid buildin' a nest.

"An' the teacher went an' told the gals that these loans have to be paid back in a certain number of years. Maybe twenty, maybe thirty, I don't remember. I only know, they need to pay back a little bit more than they've been given. So it's like a man today ends up sellin' his own kids?"

"Why would you make a comparison like that, Galina?"

"Whaddya mean, *why*? The men we've got today, they've been foolin' around, lookin' to borrow money. An' who will have to pay it back? For certain that'll be their kids — the kids that are still jes' young 'uns. Yeah, an' the kids who ain't even born yet. And our kids'll have to pay back even more than

their dads have borrowed! When the gals began graspin' this picture of the future, they started goin' crazy over concern for their kids — they felt like bashin' their men's snouts in. As for me, I thought we better not wait for help from anywhere, it's time we ourselves started helpin' these poor men of ours.

"I once tried a taste of that overseas sausage, an' my heart broke out in tears, an' I really wanted to send a piece of our Ukrainian bacon to whoever made that sausage, along with some of our own home-made sausage. Oh my dear God! People in those countries have no idea how sausage should taste!

"There's no point in takin' loans from people like that — that's bad money, it's no good at all, it'll bring us nothin' but harm. As for beatin' up, I told you only one gal proposed whippin' all them men, the other gals didn't go along. What's the point? So you can knock the last bit of sense out of 'em? Even so, the gals tell each other how miserable their men have made their lives. And I boast a bit, I say *my* man's come to 'is senses. He's already started makin' a nest."

"*Your* man? Who is he?"

"Whaddya mean, who is he? I've been tellin' 'em about *you*. How you've gone an' planted a baby cedar, how you sent me to buy you a draftin' board with a large ruler — the one on the table over there," Galina indicated, pointing to the drafting table next to Nikolai Fiodorovich's desk. "I told 'em how you asked me what trees are best to plant around the hectare, and made drawin's on sheets of paper at your desk, and sketched out a lovely community, where good people can live. You didn't have enough room on your sheets of paper, so you asked me to bring you bigger sheets, an' the board an' the ruler too.

"I told the gals 'bout that, an' we all went together to choose the drafting board. We chose the biggest and best we could find, an' it sure cost a lot. The gals said to me: 'Don't be stingy, Galina.' They helped me, an' I could see the envy in their eyes. The bitches were jealous that my child would be

born in a marvellous garden, in his own native ground, with good people all around. An' I ain't mad at them for bein' jealous — after all, everybody wants to be happy.

"They pooled their money together an' bought me a camera so's I could take a picture of your sketch. So I took the camera, an' they showed me what button to press and where I should look through to take a snap. Only I never got the courage to ask your permission so I never pressed the button."

"You did the right thing, Galina, not taking a photo of my design without permission. When I've finished, then perhaps I shall publish it as one proposal for the new settlement."

"That's gonna take you a long time, and the gals right now can't wait to see this lovely, beautiful future, at least to sneak a glimpse. You've managed to come up with a lovely drawin' on one of them large sheets."

"What makes you think I shan't soon complete it? Everything's almost all ready to be published — I have the plans, and colour drawings too."

"That's what I said — you already have a beautiful picture. For certain it shouldn't be published for people to use, but you could still show it to the gals — the ones I meet with — an' I'll just say it's not quite right yet."

Nikolai Fiodorovich quickly wheeled himself over to the drafting table. I followed. There on the table lay plans, done in coloured pencil, of several domains of the new settlement. The drawings showed little houses, and gardens, and a living fence made out of various kinds of trees, and ponds too... The overall impression was a fine, beautiful arrangement of everything.

"Where did you notice a mistake or an inaccuracy?" enquired Nikolai Fiodorovich of Galina, who had by now joined us at the drafting table.

"You didn't put any Sun in the picture. An' once you get the Sun in, you have to put in shadows too. An' if you're goin' to put in the shadows, you'll see that you can't plant any tall trees

along the eastern fence — they'll give too much shade on the plant beds. The trees should be planted on the other side."

"Really? Maybe you're right... I wish you'd told me earlier. But this is only a draft so far... Anyway, Galina, did you say you're going to have a child?"

"Well, it's like this. You keep on doin' your exercises for now. But once you stand on your own native ground, you'll crawl out of your catacombs. An' I'll feed you with what grows in your native soil, an' give you a healin' tea to drink. An' spring'll come, you'll see, an' everythin' on that native ground's gonna come alive, and bloom. An' you'll feel your own strength again. *That's* when I'm gonna have my child."

Once again Galina sat down on the carpet at Nikolai Fiodorovich's feet and put her hands on one of his arms resting on the side of his wheel-chair. Even though she wasn't exactly a spring chicken, Galina had a strong, powerful and attractive body — she could even be called tender and beautiful. Their conversation became more and more friendly in tone, as though they were immersing themselves in some kind of philosophy of life, while I stood around slightly stupefied, feeling like a third leg. So I managed to get a word in edgewise:

"Excuse me, Nikolai Fiodorovich. It's time for me to be going. I don't want to be late for the plane."

"I'll have some pies ready for you in a flash," said Galina, getting up. "An' some preserves for your trip — I'll get you back to Moscow in a jiff."

Nikolai Fiodorovich slowly got up from his chair. Bracing himself with one hand against the table, he extended the other to me in a gesture of farewell. His handshake was firm, it no longer felt like that of an old man.

"Give my greetings to Anastasia, Vladimir. And please let her know that the philosophy of life will definitely triumph here. Our thanks to her!"

"I'll tell her."

CHAPTER NINETEEN



Who controls coincidences?

Right from the very first appearance of the Anastasia book there have been quite a number of articles written by various scholars on the 'Anastasia phenomenon'. Many of them included references to me. Whenever I heard or read unflattering remarks about myself, even if they temporarily upset me, it wasn't for long — maybe a day or two, a week at the most. My insides would get stirred up a bit, but then it was history. But this time...

At a meeting in Moscow one of my readers handed me an audiocassette. He said it was a recording of a talk given at an academic conference by the leader of a scholarly research group which was studying the 'Anastasia phenomenon'.

I listened to the cassette a few days later. What I heard was beyond belief. Its message (once it had sunk in) not only knocked me off the rails, it seemed it was going to do me in for good. Really do me in — especially in my own self-esteem. Before listening to it, I was planning to head off again to the taiga to see Anastasia and my son, but after hearing it I put my plans on hold. Here's what I heard (slightly abbreviated):

My respected colleagues, I should like to present you with some of the conclusions and arguments worked out by a research group I head on the basis of over three years' investigating the phenomenon we shall call *Anastasia*.

In my report I shall use the name *Anastasia* not just for the sake of convenience, but because the subject of our investigation has presented itself under that name. This does not rule out the possibility of giving it a more specific and

characteristic definition in the future. It is difficult to do that at the moment, since I am persuaded that we are dealing with 'something' that surpasses the boundaries of traditional academic disciplines and possibly modern science on the whole.

We began by defining three research questions: (a) the truthfulness of the events described by the author Vladimir Megré in his books, (b) Megré's books themselves and (c) public reaction to Megré's books.

By the end of the first six months it was clear that the truthfulness or untruthfulness of the events described in the book was an irrelevant question. The wild emotional reaction of most readers who have had contact with Megré's books has nothing to do with whether the events described are real or not. Public reaction is determined by a different set of factors entirely. However, the time and resources and intellectual potential we spent pursuing this question led to what is, in my opinion, a rather interesting conclusion — namely, that the tendency of individuals, including sociologists and academic circles in general, to cast doubt on Anastasia's existence is in fact a contributing factor to the very phenomenon we are studying.

It is this very hoopla surrounding the question *Does she or doesn't she exist?* that has enabled the phenomenon to penetrate unhindered into all levels of society today. The denial of the existence of Anastasia has actually served to neutralise any opposition to her designs. If she doesn't exist, after all, then it follows that there is no object to study, nothing to oppose. On the other hand, the public reaction to Anastasia's sayings attests to the vital necessity of research to determine her significance and intellectual capabilities.

As to the truthfulness of the events set forth in the books, we can state the following:

In describing these events, the author not only presents himself under his own name, but does not shield anyone else connected with these events. He makes no effort to change

the real names of people or places, or to cover up embarrassing facts about himself.

For example, the episode described in the first book — where Megré, in the presence of the captain, flirts with the local country girls visiting the ship during a pleasure cruise¹ — has been fully documented as fact. Crew members have also confirmed the presence that evening of a quiet and taciturn young woman with a kerchief tied around her head. Megré showed this woman around the ship, then spent some time alone with her in his cabin. From the book we learn that this was the first appearance of the Siberian recluse Anastasia on Megré's lead ship, the one that served as his headquarters. It was the entrepreneur's first encounter with the Siberian recluse, and their first conversation together.

The chronology of many of the events described in the book has been confirmed by documents and eyewitness accounts. Not only that, but other situations even more extraordinary have come to light which the author for one reason or another did not describe in his books. A notable case in point is Megré's stay in a Novosibirsk city hospital, where medical records indicate the progress of his illness, medical test results, the prolongation of his illness, *and* his remarkable recovery.

We have determined that his recovery immediately followed the doctors' application of cedar oil which was left at the hospital by an unidentified woman!

I shan't deny that, carried away as we were in our pursuit of the truth of the events described in the book and with access to criminological facilities, for example, we were in a position to prove or disprove a great deal. We were halted in this pursuit, however, by the public's wild and extraordinary reaction to Megré's books, or, more specifically, to Anastasia's sayings therein recorded. The details of Megré's intimate relations

¹See Book I, Chapter 24: "A strange girl".

were not a drawing card for most people — they were excited instead by Anastasia's monologues.

Even our initial investigations of this reaction — and especially its latest manifestations — clearly indicated that 'something' calling itself Anastasia is exercising an unmistakable influence on today's society.

Her sphere of influence continues to increase in size even today. And we need to pay greater attention to even the most improbable arguments — try to discern them and follow them up. In all probability, the phenomenon known as Anastasia possesses powers and abilities which our mind and consciousness are not in a position to fully make sense of.

In Megré's very first book, in the chapter entitled "Across the dark forces' window of time", the phenomenon predicts not only the appearance of the book, but also how and by what means she will capture people's minds and consciousness. In her monologue Anastasia affirms that she has collected from various ages the best combinations of sounds to be found in the Universe, and that they will have a positive influence on people. She affirms that this action is quite simple:

"As you can see, it is simply a matter of translating the combinations of signs from the depth of eternity and infinity of the Universe — exact in sense, meaning and purpose."²

Our group as a whole reached a unanimous conclusion: this particular saying is an invention. This conclusion was based on the following logical and (as we believed) irrefutable argument: Even if certain unusual combinations do exist in the book, then they cannot exercise any influence over the reader, since there is no instrument to reproduce them. The book cannot utter sounds, and consequently cannot convey to our hearing the 'sounds of the Universe' said to have been collected by Anastasia.

Later, however, Anastasia did give the following answer:

²Quoted from Book I, Chapter 27: "Across the dark forces' window of time".

"You are right, a book does not make sounds. But it can serve as a score, like a musical score. The reader will involuntarily utter within himself any sounds he reads. Thus the hidden combinations in the text will resonate in the reader's soul in their pristine form, with no distortion. They are bearers of Truth and healing. And they will fill the soul with inspiration. No artificial instrument is capable of reproducing what resonates in the soul."³

In his third book, *The Space of Love*, Megré sets forth Anastasia's dialogue with the scholars. But for some unknown reason he abbreviates it. Or, if we assume that the phenomenon itself participated in the book's appearance, then it is possible that it deliberately omitted the continuation of Anastasia's response to the scholars. What for? Possibly to leave the unbelievers in their state of inaction? The fact remains that proofs of Anastasia's incredible declaration do exist.

Here is the continuation of Anastasia's dialogue with the scholars. To her adversary's statement that the blending within Man of certain sounds not part of human speech has never been anywhere established as fact,⁴ Anastasia replied as follows:

"It has been established. And I can give you an example."

"But it must be an example everybody can relate to."

"Fine. Ludwig van Beethoven."

"What about him?"

"His *Ode to Joy*. That was the name he gave to his Ninth Symphony. It was written for a symphony orchestra and mass choirs."

"Okay, but how can that prove your statement about the evocation of sounds within the reader's mind? Sounds that nobody's ever heard?"

³Quoted from Book 3, Chapter 4: "Chords of the Universe".

⁴See Book 3, Chapter 4: "Chords of the Universe".

“Sounds evoked within the mind of the reader of a book are heard by the reader alone.”

“There, you see? By the reader alone. That means there’s no proof. And your example with Beethoven’s symphony isn’t convincing.”

“At the time he wrote his Ninth Symphony, *Ode to Joy*, Ludwig van Beethoven was deaf,” responded Anastasia.

This fact is attested by Beethoven’s biographers. Not only that, but the deaf composer himself conducted the first performance of his symphony.

In the light of this particular historical fact, Anastasia’s next saying no longer raised any doubts:

“Every letter or combination of letters from any text, being uttered, can be transformed into sound. A page of text can be compared to a page from a musical score. It is simply a question of who is able to set forth the note-letters and how. Will they comprise a great symphony or simply audible chaos? And another question: does everyone have an instrument of sufficiently high quality within themselves to reproduce the full orchestration?”

The researchers in our group subsequently came to the following conclusion:

Anastasia’s sayings in respect to the derivatives of explosion,⁵ transportation by creating a vacuum, purification of the air, agro-technical methods, the significance of cedar oil in the treatment of many diseases, the energy of Man-produced thought, as well as many other phenomena, deserve the most meticulous study by scientific circles.

⁵*derivatives of explosion* — see Anastasia’s declaration to Vladimir in Book 1, Chapter 16: “Flying saucers? Nothing extraordinary”: “The functioning of all your machines, every single one of them, is based on the energy of explosion.”

In arriving at this conclusion, our group does not make any claim to be the first to discover it. Scholars in Novosibirsk came to it at the same time or even a little ahead of us, as may be seen in a presentation by the leader of the Novosibirsk Scholars' Circle, Sergei Speransky.⁶ In a published paper entitled "It's more useful to believe", the Novosibirsk psychologist Nina Zhutikova came up with the following conclusion on the basis of her sociological research:

"One's relationship to Anastasia is not dependent on the presence or absence of academic degrees, but very much depends on a Man's character, his scale of values, on his conscious and subconscious mindset — i.e., on a Man's personality and all its elements; it depends on whether this Man wants Anastasia to be real or not; it depends on how open a Man's consciousness is, on the degree that it is ready to accept amazing phenomena that go beyond the bounds of commonality. What is revealed to us and how — this depends on the characteristics of our time and corresponds to the level of our own self-awareness."

Possibly the Novosibirsk researches could have gone even farther than ours, but the Siberian branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences declined to finance them. Today our group, having received a commission — and consequently prearranged funding, — is already in a position to state with confidence and the support of evidence the following fact:

Our civilisation has witnessed a phenomenon never before subject to scientific measurement nor, consequently, to scientific definition. Our research must attract not only representatives of modern scientific disciplines — especially physicists and psychologists — but esoterics too. The processes taking place in our society today under

⁶Sergei Vladimirovich Speransky — see footnote 1 in Book 3, Chapter 19: "What to agree with, what to believe?"

the influence of the Anastasia phenomenon are evident and actual, and we cannot — in fact, we do not even have the right to — leave them unstudied.

Some of the events described in Megré's books indeed look like fiction at first glance, and we have endeavoured to treat them with scepticism. Nevertheless, the subsequent events that happened to the author but are not described in the books are even more incredible. But the incredible has happened. And we find ourselves obliged to draw conclusions which are difficult even for *us* to believe.

One of these conclusions is that Vladimir Megré does not exist, and that there's no point in studying his biography for an explanation of what has happened.

What appears at first glance to be a rather far-fetched conclusion removes and explains a whole host of improbabilities — namely: how did it happen that an ordinary Siberian entrepreneur suddenly became capable of writing a book — a series of books, now, which has become one of the most popular in Russia? The speculations put forth in the press, upon closer inspection, turn out to be unfounded:

A bankrupt entrepreneur decides to settle his affairs by becoming a writer. But we have a lot of bankrupt entrepreneurs. Yet not one of them has ever become a famous writer.

He managed to think up a sensational story-line. But the story-line has nothing to do with it. Our esoteric press does nothing but publish sensational stories about unusual phenomena week after week — superhealers, flying saucers and aliens — yet the public hardly bats an eyelid. And these stories are prepared by professional writers and journalists.

Megré's books have a powerful publicity engine working for them. Just the opposite: many publications are now trying to promote themselves on the back of Megré's books. We have established beyond a doubt that Megré's first three books were

published without even any exposure in bookstores — not by a publishing firm with a large distribution network but by Moscow Printshop Number Eleven which doesn't deal in the book trade at all. And yet here people have been standing in queue for Megré's books, and wholesalers have been paying advances up front to carry them, even before they're published.

In the minds of many book dealers, the popularity of Megré's books flies in the face of all book business norms, and goes against experts' predictions concerning consumer demand.

So what is the result? Did Vladimir Megré miraculously become a genius out of the blue? Nothing miraculous about it. I repeat: Vladimir Megré — the entrepreneur who was well-known in Siberia — simply does not exist today. Evidence in support of this argument may be found through a careful reading of Anastasia's sayings back in the first book. Let's recall her words addressed to Vladimir:

"You will write this book, guided only by feelings and your heart. You will not be able to do otherwise, since you have not mastered the technique of writing, but through your feelings you can do *anything*. These feelings are already within you. Both mine and yours."⁷

Note carefully Anastasia's last words cited here: *These feelings are already within you. Both mine and yours*. This means that Vladimir Megré's own sense-perception of the world has been supplemented with that of Anastasia's. We shall not examine how and by what means this supplementing was effected. We shall accept it as a fact which engenders the following logical conclusion: if to one defined magnitude another is added, then the aggregate of the two magnitudes engenders a third independent magnitude.

Hence the present Megré's date of birth cannot be determined by the date registered on his official birth certificate.

⁷Quoted from Book I, Chapter 27: "Across the dark forces' window of time".

There is more justification in considering his birthdate to be in 1994 — i.e., the moment he met Anastasia.

Even though the outward appearance of the new individual corresponds to the former Megré, the radical difference between the two is all too apparent. This includes, for example, both his literary talent and his ability to hold an audience's attention for an extended period of time — five hours or more — as has been twice attested by witnesses to his appearance at a readers' conference in the city of Gelendzhik in the Krasnodar region.⁸ This fact is reflected in accounts in a number of national magazines.

Many researchers and journalists have got caught up in comparisons and investigations of events connected with the activities of Vladimir Megré, just on the basis of the descriptions in the books. They have been attempting to prove, either subconsciously or openly and aggressively that *this cannot be so!*

My dear colleagues, I am inclined to believe, and not without some justification, that the following communications will convince you that such a feeling is nothing more than a defence mechanism found in those whose mind or consciousness is incapable of making sense of what is really going on.

Vladimir Megré himself — or, more accurately, part of his own *self* — is even less capable than that of making sense of the events he is involved in. It is just that he has gradually become accustomed to them, and is beginning to categorise even the most incredible phenomena as normal or commonplace — which has also served to keep him from having a nervous breakdown. I think that, like many readers, he did not pay any special attention to what Anastasia said to him back at that first meeting with him in the taiga. When Megré protested: "I shan't even make an attempt to write anything," Anastasia responded: "Believe me, you shall. *They* have

⁸Described in Book 4, Chapter 34: "Anomalies at Gelendzhik".

already created a whole network of circumstances that will make you do this.”⁹

This dialogue is given right in Book 1, but in Megré’s subsequent books there isn’t even an attempt to return to this question: who in fact are these mysterious *They*? Upon receiving specific information, the members of our group once more delved into the dialogues reproduced in the first book to select all the references to this *They* scattered over its pages. I shall cite these references in Anastasia’s words:

“If it had not been for *them* — and for me too, a little — your second expedition would not have been possible.”

“I want you to be purified. That is why I thought back then about your trip to holy places, about the book. *They* have accepted this, and the forces of darkness are always fighting with them, but never have the dark forces scored a major victory.”

“My plan and conscious awareness were precise and realistic, and *they* accepted them.”¹⁰

“*They* are answerable only to God.”¹¹

The following conclusion can be drawn from Anastasia’s sayings: some indeterminate forces will set in place for Megré some kind of network of circumstances compelling him to carry out action somebody’s pre-programmed for him. And if that is so, then Megré’s role as an individual in his creations amounts to *nil*, or at least something very insignificant. Everything is simply being handed him on a platter through this network of supposedly coincidental circumstances. This also means that the individual of the past known as Megré has evidently been violated.

⁹These and the following passages (except as otherwise noted) are quoted from Book 1, Chapter 26: “Dreams — creating the future”.

¹⁰Quoted from Book 1, Chapter 27: “Across the dark forces’ window of time”.

¹¹Quoted from Book 1, Chapter 24: “A strange girl”.

We decided that if we succeed in establishing certain anomalies in Megré's behaviour — or, rather, the presence of a network of circumstances or so-called coincidences, such a presence could confirm or disprove (a) the reality of what happened in the taiga, (b) the degree of participation of Megré as an individual in the events taking place in society surrounding the publication of his books, and (c) the existence of some kind of forces capable of producing coincidences influencing Man's destiny.

The episode in Megré's life which we have managed to examine in the greatest detail, right down to individual nuances, is his behaviour on Cyprus in June 1999, during the time when he was working on his fourth book, *Co-creation*. It would even be more accurate to say that he was in the process of figuring out the meaning of his dialogues with Anastasia (which he had already transcribed) about the creation of the Earth and Man. What we discovered on Cyprus can only be summed up in one short phrase: *What is it?* Let me acquaint you with certain events that took place there.

At the end of May 1999 Vladimir Megré took a Transavia¹² flight to Cyprus, but not as a member of a tourist group. There was nobody he knew on Cyprus. He did not know any of the languages spoken on the island. The Cyprus travel agency, Leptos,¹³ placed this individual Russian tourist in a single room on the second floor of a small hotel. The room had a balcony overlooking a fair-sized pool, where tourists (mainly from England and Germany) would lounge around and have fun.

¹²*Transavia* — an international airline company, part of the Dutch-based KLM Group.

¹³*Leptos* — a large conglomerate headquartered in Paphos (Cyprus) that includes both tourist services and property development.

Megré's Russian travel agent had informed the manager of Leptos that this particular tourist was a Russian writer. But that was hardly news to a major travel firm like Leptos, accustomed to hosting world-famous celebrities. As far as they were concerned, Megré was just an ordinary tourist. Nevertheless, on the second day of his stay he was approached by the senior company manager responsible for the Russian tourist market with an offer to show him around the city, including the estates the company itself had developed. They brought along a Russian-speaking interpreter employed by the firm. I am now going to quote, my friends, from a transcript of the statement provided to us by the Leptos interpreter, Marina Pavlova,¹⁴ during an interview:

I accompanied Nikos, the manager of Leptos, and Megré, and interpreted during their conversation. Megré distinguished himself from most Russian tourists by his uncompromising attitude, which bordered on tactlessness. For example, we were standing on a mountain with a terrific view of the sea and the city of Paphos.¹⁵ Nikos was giving the usual spiel:

"Look at all this natural beauty around us. What a fantastic view!"

I translated the sentence, but Megré responded:

"It's a depressing view. Nice and warm... The sea... But look, the vegetation's all stunted, just an occasional bush here and there. So unnatural in a climate like this."

¹⁴*Pavlova* (pronounced *PAHV-la-va*) — a Russian surname (feminine form).

¹⁵*Paphos* — a bustling seaport on the south-west coast of the island, which before the time of Constantine served as the capital of Cyprus. An even earlier settlement by the same name (with ruins dating back to 3000 B.C.) is located some 16 km to the southeast. The Paphos District covers the whole western tip of the island and according to local legend is the birthplace of the goddess of love, Aphrodite.

Nikos began to explain:

“Earlier the island was covered with cedar forests, but when the Romans invaded, they cut down the forests to build their ships. Besides, there is very little rainfall here.”

To which Megré retorted:

“The Romans were here many centuries ago. Over that time new forests could have grown up, but you have not been planting them.”

Nikos tried to explain that there is very little rainfall on the island, and even drinking water must be collected in special reservoirs.

But Megré sharply responded:

“There is no water because there is no forest, and the wind carries the clouds on past the island. If there were a forest, it would slow down the movement of the lower air currents, as well as the movement of the higher-altitude clouds. It would rain more often on the island. I think the reason they don’t plant a forest is that they are trying to sell all the land for development.”

Having said this, Megré turned aside and became lost in thought. We didn’t say a word. An oppressive pause hung over us. There was nothing anyone could say.

The next day, as we were having lunch at a café, Nikos enquired as to what he might do to make Vladimir’s stay more comfortable. Megré replied in all seriousness:

“There should be more Russian spoken on the island. The restaurants should serve proper fish, instead of some kind of perch. The hotel rooms should be quieter. Besides, I’d rather have a forest around me than people who smile when they don’t mean it.”

Then there was the meeting between Megré and the head of the Leptos agency. How this came about I have no idea. The CEO has never met with any tourists in person, and even many of his employees have never seen his face.

I was present at the meeting as an interpreter. But even here Megré said the company should change the layout of the sites where it was constructing its new estates. Each site should be no less than a hectare in size, a place where people can plant trees and look after them, and that way the whole island will be transformed. If this doesn't happen, it won't be long before the island becomes an undesirable tourist destination, and Leptos will see a significant decline in business.

After a moment's pause, the CEO began expounding with considerable aplomb on the island's legendary tourist sites and the most famous site of all, the Baths of the goddess Aphrodite.¹⁶ He concluded by offering Megré an opportunity to suggest anything that might make his stay more comfortable. While the CEO of Leptos might have been able to satisfy the wishes of many Western millionaires, what Megré said to him in response completely threw him for a loop — it sounded like a joke, as though Megré were making fun of him. Megré in all seriousness replied:

"I need to meet with the granddaughter of the goddess Aphrodite."

I tried translating this sentence as a joke, but nobody laughed. The shock of the remark left everybody speechless.

By and by news of this Russian tourist's eccentricities reached the ears of the hotel staff where Megré was staying, and they began to make fun of him. Nikos told me in conversation that there was something abnormal in Megré's behaviour.

¹⁶*Baths of Aphrodite* — a serene, shady grotto and pool near Polis on the Akamas Peninsula, about 50 km north of Paphos, where the goddess Aphrodite, according to legend, was wont to take her baths.

Nikos and I made regular morning visits to the hotel on administrative matters, and each time Nikos would jokingly ask the clerk on duty at the main desk whether Aphrodite's granddaughter had checked in yet. The clerk would laughingly respond that she hadn't arrived yet, but there was always a room waiting for her!

Megré evidently felt the mocking glances of the hotel staff whenever he came down to the bar from his room in the evening, or to breakfast in the morning. It seemed to bother him. As a Russian, I too felt uncomfortable about seeing my fellow-countryman being ridiculed, but there was no longer anything I could do.

On the morning of the last day of Megré's scheduled stay on Cyprus, Nikos and I went to the hotel as usual. Nikos wanted to say good-bye to Megré. Once again he greeted the desk clerk with his customary jocular enquiry, but this time the clerk's usual response was not forthcoming. The clerk, in a rather emotional frame of mind, told Nikos that Megré had not spent the night in his room and was not in the hotel at the moment. He went on to report in all seriousness, without even the hint of a smile, that the evening before, Aphrodite's granddaughter had come to the hotel in a motorcar and collected Megré along with his things.

She had told the clerk on duty in Greek that there was no need to be concerned, that Megré would not be returning to the hotel and so his room could be reassigned as needed, and that they need not bother booking Megré's return flight to Moscow. She also asked him to tell Nikos that she would bring Megré to the hotel at ten o'clock the next morning to say good-bye. The clerk repeated that Aphrodite's granddaughter had talked with the hotel staff in Greek but with Megré in Russian. Without a clue as to what was going on, Nikos and I seated ourselves in two of the comfortable armchairs in the lobby and silently waited

for the appointed hour to arrive.

At ten o'clock on the dot the big glass doors of the main entrance swung open, and we saw Vladimir Megré accompanied by a beautiful young woman. I had seen her before. She was Elena Fadeyeva,¹⁷ a Russian who lived and worked on Cyprus as a representative of a Moscow travel firm. I told you I recognised her, but not right away. This particular morning Elena Fadeyeva looked exceptionally beautiful. Wearing a long light-weight dress, she sported an attractive hairdo and had a cheery sparkle in her eyes. The slender young woman accompanying Megré immediately drew the attention of the hotel staff in the lobby. Bartenders, maids and clerks froze in their tracks, their eyes fixed on the approaching pair.

In talking with them Nikos and I learnt that Megré had decided to extend his stay on Cyprus by a month. When Megré temporarily withdrew to see about something at the bar counter, Nikos remarked on Megré's fussiness, saying he was making demands which neither he nor the Leptos CEO could possibly fulfil. Whereupon Elena responded:

"I have fulfilled all his wishes. I think I shall be able to fulfil any others, too, that may arise."

Nikos continued to question Elena as to how she was able to do the impossible in just twelve hours. How could she make Megré's favourite Siberian freshwater fish appear on Cyprus, or cause cedars to grow on the island in just twelve hours, or make all the Cypriots suddenly be able to understand Megré speaking Russian? Where could she have found a place for him to stay where nobody could interrupt the solitude he so desired?

Elena replied that everything Megré needed just simply appeared as though by coincidence. She put Megré up

¹⁷*Fadeyeva* (pron. *fa-D'AY-a-va*) — a Russian surname (feminine form). The first name *Elena* is pronounced *ye-LEN-a*.

at her own villa, which just happened to be vacated at the right moment. The villa was located not far from Paphos at the edge of the village of Peyia,¹⁸ where nobody could possibly disturb him. She provided him with transportation by hiring a motorscooter especially for him. It turned out that her Russian friend Alla who was also working on Cyprus just happened to have some Siberian freshwater fish on hand. And cedars grow on a hillside not far from her villa. Besides, Megré had brought with him two little Siberian cedars, and she put them in pots right at the villa's entrance. The language barrier would present no further problem for Megré, since there are telephones in all the places he wants to visit, including shops and cafés, and she always has her own mobile phone with her and that way she can interpret for Megré whenever necessary — i.e., whenever he has something he wants to say to someone.

As Elena and Vladimir were already making their way toward the door under the fixed stares of everyone present, I reminded Nikos that he had forgotten to ask how Elena would be able to fulfil Megré's request concerning the granddaughter of the goddess Aphrodite. Nikos looked at me in surprise and replied:

"If that Russian girl isn't the living embodiment of Aphrodite or her granddaughter, then for certain the spirit of Aphrodite is present in her at this moment."

My dear colleagues, after hearing Marina Pavlova describe these events of Vladimir Megré's life during his stay on Cyprus, the question naturally arose: whence came this chain

¹⁸ *Peyia* — one of the four municipalities in the Paphos District of Cyprus, close to the tourist resort of Coral Bay — a picturesque village of white-washed houses hugging the steep Mediterranean coastline. A quiet haven in comparison to the bustle of Paphos, Peyia also features the remains of two Christian basilicas on its outskirts.

of coincidences which fulfilled all Megré's stated demands in the blink of an eye? Was it really just coincidence, or was someone — like Anastasia, or the mysterious *They* she talks about — somehow shaping these coincidences? Note how immediately after the people around Megré at his hotel began to wonder what was going on, a situation turned up to remove him from the curious observers' field of vision — he retired to Elena Fadeyeva's villa.

As far as the people back at the hotel were concerned, this ended the unusual chain of coincidences. But we wondered whether it had really come to an end, and so we reconstructed subsequent events in as much detail as we could, thanks to the help of what we were told both by Fadeyeva personally and by people who know her. And what did we learn? It turned out that not only did the series of extraordinary coincidences not stop, but they became even more mysterious. I'll cite just a few excerpts from our records.

So — here we have Vladimir Megré staying all by himself in Fadeyeva's small but cozy villa. He was most probably in the process of deciphering Anastasia's sayings about God, about the creation of the Earth and Man, and Man's destiny. He had just finished working on this part of the book. But he didn't understand everything himself yet. And true to his nature, before publishing the book, he wanted to find somewhere (or in some thing) at least a modicum of confirmation of Anastasia's unusual sayings. From time to time he would ring up Elena and ask her to come and see him, to take him somewhere in the car. And each time the young woman would drop whatever she was doing at the moment to fulfil Megré's request, even if it meant reneging on a commitment to greet people arriving from Russia. Twice she had to reassign her duties to one of her colleagues, losing part of her income in the process.

So, where did Megré go? We established that, apart from the usual tourist spots, he paid a visit to two churches, which

none of the other tourists went to, along with a monastery not on the tourist circuit and a vacant castle in the Troodos mountains.¹⁹ On several occasions he climbed the ridge not far from Fadeyeva's villa. He would take solitary walks among the cedars growing on the ridge while Elena waited for him down by the road.

We were also able to establish that all Megré's visits to the churches and monasteries were spontaneous — i.e., not planned in advance. More specifically, they formed part of the same chain of coincidences. Here is what Elena Fadeyeva told us about Vladimir Megré's night-time visit to one of the churches:

I went to see Vladimir at around nine p.m., directly after he called. He told me he simply wanted to go for a ride around the city. He got into my car and we headed for Paphos. Vladimir seemed absorbed in his own thoughts and scarcely offered a word of conversation. We drove for about an hour or so. As we passed by all the cafés along the embankment, I suggested we stop for something to eat, but he declined. When I asked where he would like to go, he said he felt like visiting some vacant church.

I turned the car around and headed full speed (I'm not sure why I was in such a hurry) to a little village. I knew there was a church there that hardly anybody visits. We drove right up to the entrance and got out of the car. Not a soul around. The night-time silence was broken only by the roar of the waves. We walked up to the main door. It was dark, but just below the door-handle I could feel a large

¹⁹*Troodos mountains* — the largest mountain range on Cyprus, spread across the western end of the island and capped by Mount Olympus (1,952 metres high). The range is home to a number of monasteries and Byzantine churches; nine of the latter are listed as UNESCO World Heritage sites.

key sticking out. I turned it and opened the door. Vladimir went in, and for a long time stood in the middle of the floor below the dome. I stayed by the entrance. Then Vladimir went through the archway the priests come out of and must have lit a candle or something. Anyway, something there began emitting a bright glow, and the whole church interior brightened a bit. I stood for a while longer and then went out to the car. Some time later Vladimir appeared and we left.

Here is the second incident Fadeyeva told us about:

I wanted to show Vladimir a village way out in the country, so he could see how the local people lived. There were so many turns going off the mountain road we were travelling and somehow (probably by mistake) I took a wrong turn, since instead of ending up at the village, we presently found ourselves in front of the gates to a little monastery. Vladimir wanted to go in at once and asked me to go with him to interpret with the monks, but I said I couldn't. I was wearing a rather short skirt and had no head covering, and that's not permitted in a monastery. So I stayed outside.

I watched as Vladimir walked across the courtyard. All at once he noticed a young monk in front of him. They stopped to face each other and began conversing. Then they came over to me. I could hear the young monk speaking with Vladimir in Russian, and presently Vladimir was approached by an older grey-haired man — the Father Superior — and the two of them sat and talked for the longest time on one of the benches in the courtyard. The monks and I were standing a little distance away, and we couldn't hear what they were talking about.

Then the Father Superior and the monks gathered to see us off. But on his way out the gate Vladimir stopped, and

everybody else stopped, too. Vladimir turned and headed across the courtyard to the church. Nobody followed him. We were still waiting at the gate when he came out of the vacant monastery church.

And so the chain of coincidences continued. Just to remind you, Vladimir Megré was working on deciphering what Anastasia had said about God. Was it just a coincidence that at the very moment when he wanted to visit a vacant church, there at his side, coincidentally, was Elena Fadeyeva, who just happened to know about such a church? Was it just a coincidence that a key was sticking out of the door of this vacant church? Was it just a coincidence that Elena made a wrong turn and ended up taking Megré to a monastery hardly anybody goes to? Was it just a coincidence that he encountered a Russian-speaking monk? We are dealing here with a chain of events, real-life situations, practically a series of seeming coincidences, sequentially arranged, all leading to some kind of predetermined end.

Now that we know about such coincidences, can we still talk about the philosophical conclusions Megré comes to in his books as being purely random or coincidental? Perhaps it was in some of these churches where Megré (as we now know) stood alone under the dome, that God's words became consolidated in his mind, afterward to appear in his fourth book, *Co-creation*?

Time and again we have tried to trace in detail the sequence of the coincidences surrounding Megré. Among a great many others there was one that interested us in particular — namely, how Megré just 'happened' to meet Elena Fadeyeva. We shan't speculate as to whether this young woman was actually imbued with the spirit of the goddess Aphrodite. We'll leave such speculation to the esoterics. But let's consider just why this girl dropped what she was doing at the very first call and rushed to Megré's side, made him borsch and carted him

around Cyprus in her motorcar? Why did she change so radically, even in her appearance, after meeting Megré? Why did her eyes suddenly begin to sparkle upon meeting Megré (as claimed by people who know her)?

Perhaps it was just from meeting a celebrity? But as a representative of a travel agency affiliated with Mosèstrada,²⁰ Elena gets to meet much bigger celebrities than Vladimir Megré.

Money, perhaps? But Megré couldn't have had much money — otherwise he wouldn't have booked into a three-star hotel to begin with.

There is only one conclusion to be drawn from all this: *Elena Fadeyeva fell in love with Megré*. This is confirmed by something she said to one of her acquaintances. When the acquaintance asked her:

"Well, Lena, you haven't fallen in love with this Megré chap?"

Elena responded:

"I don't know — it's a rather strange feeling... But, if he asked me..."

And so we have yet another incredible coincidence before us: here's a twenty-three-year-old woman — slender, warm and outreaching, independent and pragmatic, not lacking in a fair share of attention on the part of the many men around her, suddenly falling in love at first sight with a forty-nine-year-old man. I think you will agree that such coincidences are extremely rare indeed.

We've tried analysing in still greater detail — even moment by moment — the first meeting between Vladimir Megré and Elena Fadeyeva. We spoke with the employees at the Maria Café who witnessed it first-hand. From what we were told

²⁰*Mosèstrada* (in full: *Moskovskaya èstrada* — lit. 'Moscow Musical Stage') — a large Moscow-based entertainment enterprise. In Soviet times it was in virtual control of Moscow's pop-music entertainment sector.

by Elena herself and by the people who know her, we have reconstructed the day of that meeting. As a result we have been presented with yet another coincidence — but this time what a coincidence! It could explain Elena falling in love with Megré a few minutes before she met him for the first time! A kind of coincidence that can have an effect on both Man's consciousness and his subconscious simultaneously.

Picture to yourself Elena Fadeyeva driving her car on the way to the Maria Café in a resort town. One of the waiters had rung her up and asked her to come to the café if at all possible, as there was a Russian man sitting at one of the tables and getting very nervous. The café's sign featured its name in Russian, as well as names of Russian dishes, all of which promised a Russian-speaking waiter — but, as it turned out, this person did not happen to be on the premises at the time.

Elena at first declines, but then a little break happens to come up in her work. So she gets into her car and heads for the café where some kind of Russian man is waiting. Along the way she takes care to powder her sun-tanned nose, picks an audiocassette at random and slips it into the player in her car. The car's speaker system fills the interior with the words and melody of a Russian popular song.²¹

I am now going to remind you of the words of that song, and you, my dear colleagues, can draw your own conclusion. Here are the words Elena heard resonating from her car speakers just moments before her encounter with Megré in the café:

*I myself am a rather young god,
My experience? Perhaps there's not much to say.*

²¹*Russian popular song* — these are the words to the song “Don't let him go” (*Ne daj emu uyt'i*) by the well-known St. Petersburg singer-songwriter Maxim Leonidov (1962–). The third stanza shown here is actually the song's refrain and is repeated at the end.

*But still, my dear girl, I just know I could
Help you, and shine sunlight upon your dark day.*

*No moments to spare — you're in a crunch.
You've a break coming up, hardly any time at all.
So you powder your nose, and head off to lunch
To meet him at a café — at a table by the wall.*

*Somewhere far away trains are flying through the wood,
And 'planes are off course — just why, we don't know.
If he should take off, he'll be gone for good,
So the answer is simple — just don't let him go.*

*Why are you suddenly quiet, my dear?
Just look into his eyes and do not be shy.
I've been closing this circle for many a long year...
The one who has brought him to meet you is I.*

And she, or someone acting through her, did *not* let him go. And she, or someone acting through her, fulfilled all his wishes, providing more and more information to confirm his philosophical conclusions. He returned to Russia and submitted the manuscript of his fourth book, *Co-creation*, to the publishers.

Thus Vladimir Megré's life really turns out to be like the life of Ivan the Fool²² in the Russian folk tales, the only difference being that the events that happened to Megré are absolutely real.

²²Ivan the Fool (Russian: *Ivan-durak*) — the main character of many Russian folk tales: in their more recent versions, Ivan is a simpleton who invariably wins considerable favours through no effort of his own. In the older versions of the same tales he is portrayed as a wizard able to control natural forces. The term *durak* is based on the ancient root *ra* signifying the Sun, but which over the centuries has been perverted to take the opposite meaning of 'fool'.

Faced with the reality of such phenomena, we cannot deny the existence of some kind of forces capable of purposefully influencing the destiny of an individual Man. This begs a number of questions: are these forces capable of influencing the destiny of all mankind? How active have these forces been in the past? Have they become more active in our century? What kind of forces are they? The events we have witnessed suggest the need to pay more careful attention to Anastasia's sayings.

My dear colleagues, the majority of our research group is inclined toward the following conclusion: *the Siberian recluse Anastasia, while leaving the governments of the different countries in position for the time being, is actually taking personal control of the whole human civilisation.* Note the distinction — not 'seizing power', but 'taking personal control'.

Upon coming into contact with Megré's books, the majority of readers experience a desire to change their way of life. His readers already number more than a million, and their numbers are steadily growing. Once they have reached a critical mass, they will be capable of influencing the decisions of the world's governments. But even today in these governments there are to be found enthusiastic supporters of the conclusions reached in the books.

In other words our society as a whole will become just as controllable as Vladimir Megré himself. I hope there is no longer any doubt in your minds, my dear colleagues, that this Megré is an entity completely under the control of some kind of forces. I believe it is incumbent upon us, through our joint efforts, to figure out just who this Siberian recluse Anastasia is. Where is she, anyway? What are her capabilities? What kind of forces are helping her? Where are they trying to lead our society? These are the questions that modern science must answer.

CHAPTER TWENTY



Breakdown

I listened to the unknown speaker's report on the audiocassette a second time. It made absolutely no difference to me who this person was. The conclusions he reached had such an effect on me that not only did I not have any desire to continue writing, but my life itself began to seem meaningless.

Anastasia's concept of Man's significance was actually starting to grow on me — about how each Man is the beloved child of God, that he can be happy right here on the Earth. One only needs to gain a proper understanding of one's purpose. I believed Anastasia and believed in the possibility of changing our life today for the better by transforming our lifestyle and building new communities.

But all my faith collapsed after hearing what was on the cassette. The thing was that the facts cited by the speaker regarding the coincidences that had happened to me — which, in his words, formed a pattern — were spot on. Everything he said actually happened, and more. There were other things I knew about besides — things they hadn't been able to establish.

It all did happen the way he said, and that means that I've simply been a puppet in somebody's hands. It doesn't really matter whose — Anastasia's, or some kind of forces or energy — that's not important. What matters is that I, as a Man, am nothing — I don't exist. What exists is my flesh, which is so easily controllable by someone through arranged 'coincidences'. It would be all right if I were the only one who could be controlled. But there may very well be other people under

someone's control from above, or maybe someone on high is controlling all humanity, and all humanity is just a plaything for an invisible someone, someone imperceptible to our human minds.

I didn't want to be anyone's plaything, but the facts cited in the report argue incontestably that I'm nothing, I'm being controlled — and this is clearly manifest. I can see it backed up by facts I know all too well myself.

Whatever happened to me on Cyprus wasn't bad — quite the contrary, it was good! But that's not the point! If an invisible someone has arranged a chain of wonderful coincidences, then tomorrow it may come into somebody else's head to arrange another, not so wonderful chain of coincidences. This is relegating Man to the status of a plaything. And what about mankind as a whole? How could I not have realised before that some kind of forces are playing with all mankind, like children with toy soldiers?!

When Anastasia talked about God and co-creation back in the taiga, it was as though some kind of curtain had parted as a result of her words.

For the first time in my life I pictured God not as some kind of amorphous, incomprehensible being or an old man sitting on a cloud — but as a Person, capable of feeling, experiencing concern, dreaming and creating. My impressions from what Anastasia told me were more vivid and more comprehensible than anything I had ever heard or read before on the subject. And that wasn't all! When she spoke, my heart felt good and not so lonely. Which means: *He exists!* He can be understood and He acts. He is wise and good. And this is confirmed by His creation all around us — the cedars, the grass, the birds and the beasts. There in the taiga, in Anastasia's glade, they are all somehow kindly, not aggressive.

We're so accustomed to taking His creations for granted — we hardly pay any attention to them, but we try to appreciate

Him through something else instead. Through some kind of secret doctrines. And we wander the planet looking for hidden sacred places, looking for teachers, looking for teachings. Now if that isn't truly absurd! A complete absence of logic! If we talk about God as our good Father, then how can we assume that He will conceal something good from His children? There is nothing He has hid or concealed from people — His children. On the contrary, He always endeavours to be right beside them. What power is it that opposes Him? What power has so mesmerised us that we through our lifestyle have placed the whole planet — this splendid Earth which He has given us — under the threat of global disaster? What power is toying with us?

Every evening we see the glow emanating from the windows of our many-storeyed apartment blocks. Behind every window people's lives are unfolding. And how many of them, how many of these lives are really happy in this world? We talk about morality, love and culture, we all try to present an appearance of decency. But in reality? But in reality, even by the most conservative estimate, every other man, though outwardly decent, is fooling around with women on the sly — unbeknownst to his family, which still presents a decent appearance.

What is one of the most lucrative sources of our national government's income? Vodka and cigarettes. The State still maintains a tight hold on its monopoly here. But who does the drinking? The winos lolling about our fences and apartment-block lobbies? Well, of course, they drink, too. But they don't have the financial clout to sustain the hundreds of our flourishing factories spewing out rivers of spirits. No, it is the outwardly decent and respectable folk who constitute the bulk of the consumer market here.

We maintain huge police forces, not to mention personal security services and private investigative teams. What for?

To round up all the winos and philanderers? Nonsense! With the forces at its disposal Internal Affairs¹ could go and collect them all in a single day. It's not them they're after, but outwardly decent folk.

Just think — here we have a whole army of “special services”, and believe me, they do not sit around with time on their hands. Which means there must be a whole army out there working against them! Which means that here a constant warfare is being waged, and we are all sitting right on the border between the warring parties, financing both sides. We attempt to improve the technical capabilities of one of the belligerents — namely, our organs of law enforcement, yet at the same time the other side is also upgrading its own technical prowess, and financing it from our pockets, too. After all, money has only one source — human labour. And the war is being waged on an ever more technically advanced level.

And it's not just a one-year or two-year conflict. It's all been going on for millennia. And nobody knows where it all started or who can put an end to it. And we're right in the midst of the action, and not one of us is neutral — we're all participants. We're all participants in a never-ending war. Some of us are directly involved in the fighting, some finance it willingly or unwillingly, others manufacture the arms for it. But we all proceed under the mask of decency, talking about science, technology and culture.

As an intensively developing, intelligent civilisation, we make ourselves look smart and utter the slogans of scientific and technical progress. Well, you smart civilisation, what about all the stinking water coming out of your taps? How did you ever think up, especially with that smart appearance

¹*Internal Affairs* — the Russian ministry in charge of national security, including the “special services” branch which deals with any perceived threats against the State.

of yours, this business of forcing people to *buy* their drinking water in bottles? Water which gets more expensive day by day?

We are unwilling to take off our masks of decency. But why? Why do we inevitably complicate our lives this way year after year? Why are we moving so inexorably toward some stinking cesspool? And we *are* moving toward it, even if we don't want to admit it to ourselves. Why is nobody stopping this movement?

We have religious denominations aplenty. But not one of them can stop this movement. What if they can't stop it completely, but just slow it down? If so, then that would be a form of sadism, only prolonging the period of torture. We go on thinking of ourselves as being a smart and decent civilisation, but why, in this smart civilisation, are women losing interest in having children? Statistics are already showing us that our nation is dying out. What kind of forces are making a complete nutcase out of Man?



For a whole week I was depressed and apathetic about everything. I simply lay in bed the whole time and hardly had a bite to eat. Toward the end of the week I was suddenly overcome by fits of anger — even rage. I felt like doing at least something to counteract these forces. It didn't matter what kind of forces they were — dark or bright. Just to spite anything that was trying to control us... To show them that Man is capable of coming out from under their control.

But what could I do to spite them? If they — or Anastasia along with them — wanted me to write, then I would refuse to write. If meat was off limits, then I'd eat meat, and smoke

and drink too. Judging by their actions, they wouldn't like that. Well just let them try and stop me!

I drank every day for a whole month. The stupor relieved me temporarily, but then came the sobriety of the following morning, and all the bad thoughts flared up in me once more. Why had I been writing? I was trying to be honest, while all along I was simply becoming a toy of amusement in goodness-knows-whose hands.

At night-time, after getting thoroughly drunk, I would make my way along the wall to my bed. And how I wanted to cry out — cry out so that my grandchildren and great-grandchildren could hear! So that they could hear and understand! Understand!!! I'd been writing because I couldn't take the lie of the mask any longer! I was trying to find a way out!

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE



Attempt at deconditioning

Occasionally in the morning I would feel a desire to break free of my drunken stupor. And then I would head for the bathroom to shave off my several days' growth of stubble. Remembering Anastasia, I tried not to think of bad things, but of the good she had managed to accomplish. I tried to convince myself that she was doing something good, but life kept on tossing more and more destructive arguments my way.

And so on one particular morning, as I was routinely trying to come out of my stupor, a good friend of mine rang the doorbell of the flat I was renting. It was still early, and I hadn't finished shaving yet. I still had shaving cream on my face as I opened the door.

Vladislav was in some kind of emotional state. After saying hello he announced:

"We gotta talk. Go finish your shaving while I start."

I did so, and he began telling me that he had finally read the book. He was excited about it, and could agree with Anastasia on a lot of things. He thought her logic was ironclad, but there was something else that he was even more concerned about.

"So, because of this meeting with her, you broke up with your family and lost your business... You don't feel like carrying on with business any more, eh?"

"That's right."

"And you tried to organise a commonwealth of entrepreneurs with purer thoughts, like she suggested?... So, are you writing your next book?"

"I'm not writing at the moment. There's something I'm trying to work out."

"That's just it — you've got to work it out. Tell me, just what have you accomplished after five years' acquaintance with this recluse — what do you have to show for yourself?"

"What d'you mean, what? I'll give you an example. Here in the Caucasus you can already see the first glimpses of a change in people's attitude toward the dolmens.¹ You can imagine how many scientific papers had been written about them earlier, but they never made anyone excited about them. People just plundered them and carted things away.

"But what Anastasia said had an immediate effect. In just the *Druzhba* sanatorium² alone they had no sooner read my book than the employees got together and went to the nearby dolmen to lay flowers. And in other places too, people are changing their attitude toward their forebears, they're thinking about —"

"Stop! I completely agree with you. Her words *are* having an effect. And the fact you mentioned just now not only confirms this, but something else too. She's turned you into a zombie — you're not really yourself any more."

"What makes you think that?"

"It's simple. You're an entrepreneur who even back in the early days of *perestroika* was able to build up major commercial enterprises from scratch — even without any starting capital. You were the President of the Association of Siberian Entrepreneurs. And all of a sudden you stopped doing business, and now you're doing your own washing and cooking — hey, you're a completely different person!"

¹ *dolmens* — ancient megalithic tombs; see footnote 1 in Book 1, Chapter 30: "Author's message to readers".

² *Druzhba sanatorium* — the name *Druzhba* means 'Friendship'. This incident is described in Book 2, Chapter 33: "Your sacred sites, O Russia!"

"I've heard these arguments before, Vladislav. But what Anastasia said got me excited. She has a beautiful dream: 'Carry people across the dark forces' window of time'. She believes in it. She asked me to write a book. I promised I would. She's alone, after all, waiting and dreaming. She probably somehow associates the book with that dream of hers. You said yourself that what Anastasia says in the book can have a tremendous influence on people."

"That's just it — another illustration confirming her interference in things. Judge for yourself. An unknown author, an entrepreneur, all at once writes a book. And about what? About the history of mankind. The Cosmos. The Mind of the Universe. The raising of children. She's beginning to have an effect on people in their day-to-day real life, she's influencing their behaviour."

"But it is a positive influence."

"Possibly. But that's not the point. Haven't you ever thought what made you suddenly able to write a book?"

"Anastasia taught me."

"How did she do that?"

"She took a stick and outlined the letters of the alphabet on the ground.³ And she said:

"'Here are the letters which you know. All your books, both good and bad, are made up of these letters. It all depends on how and in what sequence these 33 letters are arranged. There are two ways of arranging them.'"

"So that's it? All you have to do is arrange those 33 little letters in a specific sequence? You just arrange them, and then whole groups of people will head into the mountains to lay flowers at the dolmens? That's preposterous! Too much of

³Described in Book 1, Chapter 15: "Attentiveness to Man". There are 33 letters in the modern Russian version of the Cyrillic alphabet (see footnote 2 in that chapter).

a stretch for an ordinary mind. It has to be the presence of some power we can't fathom yet. Whether she's zombified you, or reprogrammed you, or hypnotised you, I don't know. But she's done something."

"Whenever I called her a witch or used words like *mysticism*, *fiction* or *incredible*, Anastasia herself would get very upset and start claiming that she was just an ordinary human being, an ordinary woman — it was just that she had a lot of information in her. But it's only a lot by our standards. She says that back in the days of our pristine origins anybody might have abilities like that. But later... And, after all... She bore me a son."

"And where's your son now?"

"In the taiga, with Anastasia. She says that it would be more difficult to raise a child in the conditions of our technocratic world and make him into a real Man. Because the little one can't comprehend artificial objects. They only lead him away from the truth. We can't show them to him until he's already assimilated this truth."

"And why aren't you in the taiga? Why aren't you with her, helping raise your son?"

"A normal Man can't live in those conditions. She's not even willing to light a fire. She's got her own way of eating. Besides, she says... that I shouldn't communicate with my child for the time being."

"So, she's not able to take it here in our normal living conditions. You can't live there. Then what's next? Ever thought about it? Here you are alone, without a family. What if you fall ill?"

"I'm not ill at the moment. I haven't had anything for well over a year now. She cured me."

"Does that mean you're never going to fall ill again?"

"I'll probably get ill at some point. Anastasia said that all one's little aches and pains will try to come back again, since there's a lot of the dark and harmful stuff in Man, and of

course in me, just like in everyone else. You see, I still smoke. I've started drinking again. But that's not the main thing. She says people don't have too many bright aspirations and thoughts. And they're the principal defence against one's aches and pains."

"In other words, it's unlikely you're going to have the same kind of future as normal people have. Anyway, I've come to you with a business proposal. I'll dezombify you, dehypnotise you, and then, once you're back to a normal state, you'll be able to help me. You can help me get my firm back on track. After all, you've had experience, and you were a talented entrepreneur. You've got connections."

"I shan't be able to help you, Vladislav. I'm not thinking about business at the moment. My thoughts are occupied elsewhere."

"It's quite clear you're not thinking at the moment. You've got to pull out of this first, get back to a normal state of mind. Just believe me. I'm asking you as a friend. You'll thank me for it by and by. After all, once you get back to a normal state, you'll be able to evaluate what's happened for yourself."

"How can you define what is the most normal?"

"It's very simple. You live a normal, natural human life at least for a few days. You have some fun with girls. And then you take a look back at the past few years of your life. If you like what you see, you can go on working and living as you are now. But if, from a normal state of mind, you see that you were hypnotised, you can get back into business again. It'll be good for you, and you can help me."

"I can't go out with prostitutes."

"Who says anything about prostitutes? We'll take up with those who want it themselves. We'll have a party and enjoy some music and other people's company. We can have it at a restaurant or out in nature. I'll get everything organised, all you have to do is go along."

“I need to work out things within myself first. I need to think.”

“Come on, enough with the thinking! Look at my proposal as an experiment. I’m asking you as a friend — just give me a week, and then you can think.”

“Okay — let’s go for it...”

The following day we went by car to a neighbouring town, where some nice girls (as Vladislav put it) lived — girls he said he’d known for a long time.

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO



Our reality

The woman who opened the door for us was attractive and alluring. Thirty-something, feminine and shy, pleasingly plump. No, she wasn't fat. Her body preserved and even accentuated all the man-enticing curves — which were hardly obscured under the sheer gown she was wearing. Her childlike voice and welcoming smile at once made us feel at home.

"Hello there, travellers! Come on in, come on in. Svetlana told me about you. She said you'd like to see the town, and then go to a restaurant and have a great time!"

"That's just the ticket! We want to do all that, and of course with you, my lovelies," Vladislav blurted out. "And how's my dear Svetlanka — still out partying, eh what?"

"Now when would we have time to go out partying, and who with? Seems the rest of us have to wait a lifetime..."

"Why wait? See here, I've brought a pal along. He's from Siberia, and he's one-hundred-per-cent entrepreneur!"

She straightened her tight-woven braid and raised her timidly lowered eyelids to reveal a sparkling pair of eyes that looked as though they could be full of passion and desire. She offered me her hand.

"I'm Lena.¹ Hello!"

"Vladimir," I introduced myself, shaking her cream-puff hand.

While Lena got some coffee ready for us in the kitchen, Vladislav and I washed up and then took a look around her

¹*Lena* — like *Lenka*, an informal form of *Elena*.

two-room apartment. I really liked her flat. The layout was pretty much like any other flat, but hers looked especially clean and cozy, well cared for. Everything was arranged in place, no clutter. The bedroom featured turquoise flowered wallpaper and matching curtains with frills. This colour, also picked up by the rug and the counterpane on what looked like close to a king-size bed — together with the tidiness of the room — had a soothing effect. The bed especially was truly inviting.

We sat ourselves down in comfortable armchairs in the other room, which was a little bigger. Vladislav switched on a rather expensive-looking tape player, and asked me:

“Well, what do you think of her?”

“Jolly good. I’m just wondering, how come she’s not married?”

“How come millions of other women aren’t married? Haven’t you heard? There’s not enough of us — men, that, is — to go round!”

“Sure I’ve heard it, but she’s not just everyone. She’s really nice, and she’s managed to make a cozy nest for herself here.”

“Yes, she has. She gets a decent salary. She’s a top hairdresser. Not just a hairdresser — a stylist to boot. She goes in for competitions, and as for her clientèle — let’s just say she has more than one wealthy lady waiting to pay good money for her services.”

“D’you think she sleeps around?”

“No way. Svetka² said that back when they were in school together, Lenka took up with this dim-wit from the next class up. Then after they finished school she dumped him, but he kept after her for the longest time, and picked a fight with anyone who tried to go out with her. There were quite a few lads he and his pals left in a pretty bad way — right before her eyes. He even got hauled up on delinquency charges. She felt sorry for him and never testified against him. She always claimed she wasn’t fully conscious and couldn’t remember. So

²*Svetka* — like *Svetlanka*, an informal form of *Svetlana*.

they were only able to get him once — for beating up on some lad who had a high-placed daddy.”

“Then maybe she’s frigid — maybe she doesn’t need a man?”

“Frigid? I should say not! Didn’t you notice the way she looked at you with those eyes of hers? Like a boa-constrictor sizing up a rabbit! She was ready to jump into bed with you right off!”

“Don’t exaggerate.”

“Now don’t you go with your faultfinding, just enjoy yourself. *Carpe diem!* We agreed we were going to relax and have a good time, so let’s just relax and have a good time.”

Lena brought in cups of coffee on a beautiful tray. She had changed into a body-hugging sun-dress and had put on a bit of makeup. Looking even better than before, she suggested:

“If you’re hungry, I can throw something together.”

“No,” replied Vladislav. “We’ll eat at a restaurant. Ring up one of the better places here and reserve a table for four.”

While we sat and drank our coffee, Lena telephoned a restaurant and reserved a table with some manager she apparently knew quite well, as she used the familiar form of address,³ instructing him:

“Try to find a good spot — I’m coming with some very nice gentlemen.”

That evening, Lena took us on a ride in her car to see the sights of the city and its environs, ending up at the restaurant.

An obliging doorman in a richly adorned uniform opened the door for us with a gallant sweep of his hand. The Maitre D’ escorted us to a table on the far side of the dining room. It was indeed a nice spot, on a slightly raised floor, with a good view of the whole restaurant and the stage. The dining room with its beautiful plaster mouldings on the walls and ceilings, indicating a rather expensive establishment, was already

³familiar form of address — similar to *tu* instead of *vous* in French.

almost filled to capacity. Probably only the wealthy could afford to enjoy a meal here. We decided we would hold nothing back — we ordered the most expensive hors d'œuvres, some good wine and a bottle of vodka for me.

The orchestra struck up a dance tune — some kind of tango. Vladislav immediately suggested we all take to the dance floor, and we started off. Lena's womanly body swayed cozily and comfortably in my arms. Already a wee bit tipsy, I was even more intoxicated by the fragrance of her perfume, not to mention those sparkling eyes of hers. Her lowered eyelids lifted from time to time to reveal a tender gaze, burning, as it seemed, in anticipation of forthcoming passion. And then they lowered once more, as though embarrassed all of a sudden.

By the time we got back to our table, all my sense of being a seeker on the straight and narrow vanished out the window. I felt good and light-headed, and I was grateful to Vladislav and Lena and everything in general. So, it *was* possible to live a good life, as long as one didn't dig into it too deep, but simply enjoyed its benefits.

I poured everyone a glass of wine, vodka for myself. I was just about to propose a toast when Vladislav interrupted.

After dancing with his Svetlana he looked very nervous for some reason. He immediately lit a cigarette, carelessly dropping the ashes into his salad. Without waiting for anyone else he took a large gulp of wine and didn't say a word, only fidgeted in his chair. I was on the point of picking up my glass and proposing my toast when he started muttering:

"Wait, something's come up... Something serious. Let's step out for a bit. We gotta talk." And without waiting for my reply he rose sharply from his seat. "You birds stay here and swap a bit of gossip. We'll be right back."

We went out into the spacious restaurant lobby. Vladislav beckoned me over into a far corner by the fountain and in a sour, muffled voice spat out:

"She's a bitch! You were right... A damned bitch!"

"Who's a bitch? If you've had a falling out with Svetka, then don't spoil the evening for others."

"Not Svetka... Lenka's set us up, or rather set *you* up, though I'm in for it, too. I'm gonna stick with you."

"D'you mind telling me just how she could set me up, or set us up? Who or what for?"

"Svetka told me while we were dancing. I'd been telling her all about you, and she felt sorry for you... As soon as she saw you... And while we were dancing she told me the whole story."

"What story?"

"Lenka's a bitch. Some kind of sick masochist. A pervert. You can see how men fall for her, she flirts with them, and then she takes them to this restaurant. She invariably gets a table reserved through her friend there, and that lackey right off contacts this mafia bloke."

"What mafia bloke?"

"That dim-wit over there, the one she got to know in school. I was telling you how even when he was younger he and his chums would beat up on anyone taking her out. And now he's making like a kind of local gang boss, running some sort of racket. Anyway, she knows that as soon as she asks for a certain table through her pal there, he'll automatically contact this mafia bloke. And right here in the restaurant, or more often afterwards in some secluded spot he'll lie in wait with his thugs and beat Lenka's companion half to death. The whole business is supposed to take place right before her eyes. She gets a real high from it, maybe even starts to 'come'. Svetka says it's already a disease with her. She once admitted to Svetka that these scenarios can even sometimes give her an orgasm."

"And the dim-wit, what does he get out of it?"

"Who knows what he does it for! Maybe he loves her like he did before. Maybe he too gets some perverse pleasure from it. Svetka says Lena pretends she's 'out of it', and then after

the scene's over he takes her home and spends the night with her. And goodness knows what they do there in her flat."

"So why doesn't he just go ahead and marry her?"

"What difference does it make to *you* why they don't get married? I tell you, it's like Lenka's sick! Like she doesn't want to let go of her youth. You get married, and all you've got is humdrum everyday life. This way she gets her high, but what high would she get in married life? She's sick, Svetka says. What's it to us? We gotta think of ourselves, how to get outta this now."

"Let's just leave the restaurant, since you say they might contact that mafia jerk."

"Too late. He's already here with his henchmen. Watching us... Svetka says the first thing he'll do is come over to our table, and very politely ask to have a dance with Lenka. If her companion says okay, they'll have a dance. Otherwise, he'll calmly walk away. But it all ends up the same — they lie in wait and then beat him half to death. If there's any valuables, his henchmen will grab them. I've already given my Rolex to Svetka. If you've got anything like that, let me give it to her too for safekeeping."

"I don't have any valuables. Tell me, how come they're not afraid of the cops?"

"Listen, I tell you they've got it all set up... He's got a lawyer... Not only that, but they can make the whole situation look like they were protecting the woman from a rapist."

"And that means Lena won't testify?"

"She'll shut up, the bitch, fake a memory lapse, like she was in shock or had a fainting spell... It's all my fault. We've landed in this pile of crap, but I think I have an idea. I've got an idea. Let's pretend to start something, pick a fight, get into a row with each other, so the police will come and take us away. Better to spend a night in the drunk tank and pay a fine than end up scarred for life!"

"No, no way. I'm not going to punish myself for their sakes. Can't we go out through a back door, then you could ring up Svetka, order a taxi to go and collect her?"

"We shan't make it — they're already sitting out there. If we leave, they'll only come after us and bring us back. We'll get it doubly hard in that case. And then they'll claim we were trying to run off without paying our bill."

"If there's no escape, then let's go all out — sky's the limit! At least play on the nerves of these bastards. It's a shame the evening's spoilt — I was having such a good time."

"How're we gonna 'go all out'? Tell me, how?"

"We'll go and get really soused, then we shan't have a care in the world. Let's pull out all the stops, while we still can. Only don't let on that you know — don't get nervous in the meantime."

"What d'you mean? I'm not afraid for myself — I'm worried about you."

"Let's go."

We returned to our table. The spacious and luxurious restaurant sparkled with the grandeur of the ladies' refined attire, and the jewels adorning them were to all appearances genuine. A lot of the still very young beautiful girls in the company of their suave escorts also sported fancy jewellery. These were the so-called 'new Russians' out for a good time.

But *they* are Russia too. Which meant that here was Russia herself out for a good time in a way she alone was capable of. With daring and pizzazz. And the pizzazz will most certainly show itself in due time, even if for now everything is done with decorous grandeur and luxury.

As soon as we sat down at our table, I filled our wine-glasses to the brim and proposed a toast:

"Here's to satisfaction! Let each of us sitting here tonight bring at least a moment's satisfaction to those around us. To satisfaction!"

Vladislav and I emptied our glasses, while the women drank half of theirs. I edged my chair right up to Lenka's, put my arms around her right away, rested my hand on her half-exposed cleavage and whispered in her ear.

"You're beautiful and cute, Lena. You'd make a terrific wife and mother!"

Initially feigning embarrassment at my embrace and my hand upon her breast, she made an attempt to withdraw, but not a serious attempt. On the contrary, she began inclining her head toward me. Thus the game was afoot — playing by their (or her) rules. And I played along as best I could, without really thinking about why I was doing it, as though rushing headlong, ever closer to a sad result for someone's (or some dark forces') sport. And the result came.

From a table beside the stage rose a stout-looking fellow with a neck like a bull's. He stood there for some time, staring at us. Directly the music began he buttoned his jacket and confidently strode over to our party's table.

But half-way across the floor he suddenly stopped and began to stare just as hard in the opposite direction. And throughout the room many heads turned in the same direction. A number of couples even got up from their chairs in astonishment. I too followed their gaze, and nearly fainted from shock.

There, making her way from the main entrance to the stage was none other than Anastasia! And not a single person could be left unastonished at her sprightly — I would have to say: defiantly sprightly — step, not to mention her outfit!

And what an outfit it was! She was still wearing her old but clean cardigan, skirt and mother's kerchief, but this time they looked as though the world's most celebrated fashion designer had come up with a super-ensemble especially for her, outshining all the other women's attire that had seemed to me so refined and fashionable up 'til now.

Perhaps it seemed that way on account of the fact that her usual clothing was supplemented by some rather unusual jewellery, or perhaps it was her posture, or the manner in which she carried herself?

From Anastasia's earlobes hung (as though clipped on) two little green twigs with fur-like needles. Her head was encircled by a garland of grasses woven into a braid, keeping in place a thick golden shock of hair. Over her forehead a little flower, burning bright as a ruby, had been woven into the band. And she was wearing makeup — there was just a tint of green shadow above her eyelids.

She had on the same skirt as before, but with a slit almost to her thigh. Around her waist was a belt made from a kerchief and tied with a knot. The incredible ensemble was topped off with an extraordinary, superfashionable purse, into which she had transformed her bundling cloth. Folding the cloth in half, she had tied two of the corners to one end of a bark-covered stick and the other two corners to the other end, and then used a little grass belt she had woven to fasten it all together into a kind of hippie-style handbag. And to top it all off she strode with a freedom and confidence that models and supermodels could only dream of.

Upon reaching the dance-floor, where a few couples were launching in to some kind of a quick-paced dance, Anastasia all at once spun gaily around several times in time with the music, whereby every limb of her supple body bent and twisted with beautiful, fluid movements. Then she arched her arms over her head and clapped her hands with a delightful laugh, and all the men in the room responded in enthusiastic applause.

As she then headed for our table, two alert waiters approached her enquiringly, and I could see her gesturing in our direction. One of them picked up an elaborately carved wooden chair and followed her. As she walked past Lenka's friend with the bull neck who had been about to head over to

our table, Anastasia paused for a bit and looked him straight in the eye. It almost seemed as though she gave him a wink before heading over to us.

There I was sitting with my arm around Lena, watching the proceedings with open-mouthed astonishment. None of us were talking, only staring.

Anastasia approached our table as though nothing unusual had happened, and greeted us as though she were an expected guest:

"Hello and good evening! Hello, Vladimir! If you will allow me... You will not mind if I join you for a bit?"

"No, of course not, Anastasia — do sit down!" I began, recovering from the shock of her arrival. I rose to offer her my seat, but the obliging waiter had already put the additional chair in place. The second waiter moved my plate to one side and, setting a clean plate in front of Anastasia, offered her a menu.

"Thank you," she responded. "But I am not hungry at the moment."

Reaching into her hippie-style purse, she brought out a cluster of berries wrapped in a large leaf — huckleberries and cranberries. Putting them on a plate in the middle of the table, she invited us to help ourselves.

"How did you happen to show up here all of a sudden, Anastasia?" I asked. "Have you been taking in the restaurant scene lately?"

"I came to visit you, Vladimir. I had a feeling I would find you here, and so I decided to come. I am not imposing on you?"

"You're not imposing at all. Only what's with the fancy get-up? And the makeup?"

"At first I did not have any makeup or fancy clothes, but when I tried to enter the restaurant, the doorman would not let me in. He let others in, and bowed to them as he held the door open for them, but he told me:

"Outta here, sister, this ain't your local greasy spoon!"

"I stepped aside to a more shaded place, and watched to see how others managed to get in. I realised they were wearing different attire and did not walk the same way I did. I caught on to it all quite quickly. I found two twigs handy that had fallen from a nearby tree, split them with the ends of my nails and attached them to my ears as decoration. Look!" Whereupon Anastasia turned sideways to me and showed me her invention. "What do you think — did they turn out well?"

"Very well indeed."

"So I quickly made myself a purse, and a belt out of my kerchief, and some makeup from leaf and flower sap. Pity, though, I had to tear a slit in my skirt..."

"You didn't have to make such a huge tear, practically to your thigh! Just to your knees, that would have been enough."

"I wanted everything to be as perfect as possible, so they would let me in."

"And where did you get the lipstick? That's real lipstick you're wearing!"

"That I obtained here. When the man at the entrance opened the door for me, I went over to the mirror in the lobby to see how I looked. Naturally, I was curious. There were some women standing in front of the mirror, looking at me. One of them came over, all excited, and asked me where I got my outfit from. She offered to do a 'full swap' — said she would give me her ring and costume jewellery. She even offered me some 'greenbacks'.⁴

"I explained to her that it would not take her long to put together a dress like this on her own. I started by showing her the clip-on twigs. The other women looked on, and one of them kept saying 'Oh, wow! Oh wow!' Another started asking me where she could find magazine pictures and descriptions

⁴'greenbacks' — American banknotes have commonly functioned for many years as a second currency in Russia, though not always legally.

of such fashions. And the first one said that if I wanted to ‘turn tricks’ here, she was the Madam and wouldn’t allow any pimps, since her girls are free agents and she’s quite capable of smashing any protection racket.”

“That must have been Anka-putanka,”⁵ said Sveta. “She’s one tough cookie — they’re really afraid of her. If anyone crosses her, she can come up with all kinds of schemes and arrange an ‘incident’ where so many heads will be banged together they’ll really be sorry.”

“One tough cookie’...” Anastasia echoed moodily. “But her eyes are full of sadness — I feel sorry for her. I wanted to do at least something for her. When she started to sniff me over and ask about my perfume, I gave her a little twig containing the essence of cedar oil and showed her how to apply it. She at once daubed it on herself and on her girlfriends, and in return she gave me some lipstick and a pencil to highlight the edges. I could not get it right at first, and we had a good laugh over it. Then she helped me put it on, and said anytime I needed anything, I could come to her. She offered to have me join them at their table, but I said I had only come to see my —” Anastasia paused in mid-sentence, then continued after a moment’s thought: “to see you, Vladimir, and the rest of you.

“Vladimir, could we take a little walk outside? There is a breeze blowing off the sea — the air is better there. Or would you like to stay here a little while longer with your friends? I can wait until you have finished. Or I — Are you certain I am not imposing?”

“Not at all, Anastasia!” I replied. “I’m really happy you came. It’s just that I was so surprised to see you at first.”

⁵*Anka-putanka* (pron. ANN-ka poo-TAHN-ka) — a play on words derived from the rhyme of *Anka* (derivative of the name *Anna*) and *putanka* (hooker). Two other variants of *Anna* which will be encountered later are *An* (highly colloquial) and *Ania* (endearing).

"Indeed? So, perhaps you and I could take a stroll by the sea? Just the two of us, or all together? Which would you prefer?"

"Let's go, Anastasia. Just the two of us."

But getting out of there wasn't all that easy. Elena's friend was heading our way. He too, it seemed, took a while to recover from the unexpected arrival of Anastasia. *We should have left earlier — right off*, I thought to myself, but now it was too late. They had already set their dastardly scenario in motion. And Elena, as though getting herself mentally prepared for it, began sitting up straight, lowered her eyes and made a show of smoothing out her hair.

He came over to our table, but instead of approaching Elena, he went directly to Anastasia. With a slight bow of his head he began addressing her, taking no notice of anyone else. Elena's jaw dropped in surprise at hearing him ask Anastasia:

"Miss, allow me the pleasure of asking you for this dance."

Anastasia rose, smiled and responded:

"Thank you so kindly for the invitation. Please, have a seat in my chair. They will miss your company otherwise. As for me, I really do not care to dance at the moment. My... my gentleman friend and I have just decided we would like to go for a walk in the fresh air."

In obedience to her suggestion he sat down in her chair, not taking his eyes off her for a moment. Anastasia and I headed for the exit.

My plan was to get as far away from the restaurant as possible, go for a bit of a walk as Anastasia wanted, then grab a taxi and go back to my flat. It was around ten o'clock at night. We walked through a shady allée and then down to the rocky seashore.

We hadn't yet reached the water's edge when I heard the screech of brakes. I turned around to look. From a jeep parked at the side of the road up above, five tough-looking

lads were heading in our direction. As four of them encircled us, I recognised the fifth as the dim-wit with the bull neck — he took up a position just a little distance away. But it was he who kicked off the conversation:

“Hey, pal, you’d better get back to the pub. Your lady’s missing you.”

With no response from me, he started up again:

“Hey, you deaf or what? We say you’d better go back to your lady. But you got this lady mixed up with another and split. We’re gonna help you back — right this instant.”

The oversized lad standing nearest me took a step closer, and I made a decision.

“Run, Anastasia!” I cried, and decided to let him have it first, and keep them at bay as long as I could so that Anastasia could get away. I tried to land the first blow on the chap approaching me, but he seized hold of my arm, punched me in the solar plexus, and then *wham!* — right in the face. I tumbled to the ground, right on the rocks. I would probably have landed right on my head, but Anastasia reached out her hand and cushioned my fall.

My head was spinning and I could hardly breathe. I lay there and watched the big fellow’s feet — shod in steel-reinforced boots — come right up to my face. *Uh-oh, he’s going to use his foot on me next!* the thought flashed through my mind. Now he came *really* close and lifted his leg...

Only right at that point Anastasia did what just about any woman would have done under the circumstances — she screamed. But what a scream! It was a regular scream only for a split second. The sound associated with it quickly vanished, and her inaudible scream rose wildly in intensity to the point of shattering one’s eardrums. I could see the lads around us letting some kind of objects fall from their hands as they grabbed hold of their ears. Three of them collapsed to the ground and began writhing on their knees in pain.

Anastasia, having covered my ears with her own hands, kept refilling her lungs with fresh breaths of air and screaming again. Her scream was evidently something akin to ultrasound, causing all our would-be attackers to writhe in pain. They had no idea what was happening, or where this piercing, unbearable sound was coming from. Through her hands I could feel the sharp penetrating sensation — maybe not as strongly as the others, but it still hurt.

Then I noticed a group of women running down toward us from the road. Anastasia stopped screaming and took her hands off my ears, I sat up on a rock. I could see the two *Zhigulis*⁶ the girls had arrived in standing beside the jeep.

The women were armed — one was carrying a bottle, another a tyre iron, a third brandished a policeman's truncheon, while the fourth held a massive candlestick in her hands. Out in front was Anka-putanka, holding in her hands the neck of a broken champagne bottle, while following behind, slowly, came yet another — a plumpish woman clad only in a nightgown, who had apparently come straight out of bed and hadn't had time to get dressed. Somehow the Madam-in-charge had managed to sound the alarm and rope all her 'workmates' into the task at hand.

The fearsome, dishevelled Anka stopped just a few metres from our little group, which was now picturesquely sprawled over the rocks. Anastasia was the only one of us standing, and Anka spoke to her:

"How now, friend! You've got so many lads after you — they wouldn't be botherin' you, would they now?"

"I just wanted to have a talk with one of them," Anastasia calmly replied.

"And the rest of them — what are *they* doin' here?"

⁶*Zhiguli* — a car produced at Toliatti on the Volga River (see footnote 1 in Book 4, Chapter 22: "Other worlds").

"They followed us for some reason. I have no idea what they want."

"*You* have no idea? I know what those scumbags want," replied Anka and burst into a torrent of expletives in the direction of Lena's friend. "How many times have I told you, muttonhead, not to lay a hand on me girls?!!"

"*She* isn't one of yours," the 'dim-wit' responded gruffly.

"She's my 'professional colleague'. That means she's mine. Got it, you overgrown school-kid? If I see your pimp-snout so much as anywhere *near* one of me friends, I'll smash the livin' daylights outta you an' your cronies. Just remember that! I'm not puttin' up with a single pimp on my territory — not a single scumbag will I allow. You're not satisfied with sucking blood from the suits? You wanna be pimpin' for us too?"

"You've gone crazy. She's *not* yours. She's a novice. I just wanted to have some fun with her myself. This time, Anka, you've gone too far. What's all the fuss about her? What's she to you?"

"She's me friend. Got that? An' you've got your hands full with that sadist of yours."

"You've gone bonkers! Before you know it every last bird's gonna be your friend — eh what?"

The leader's voice in him was now no longer stifled by fear. And I realised why: while Anka was talking with him, his henchmen had come to, and the short, stocky fellow standing beside the leader was holding a gun in his hands, aimed right at Anka. A second man had his own gun trained on the group of hookers standing behind her.

Here was this group of young women, armed with whatever they could lay their hands on, standing directly in the path of the thugs' guns. The situation, as it now turned out, was far from being in their favour. One thing was absolutely certain: another moment and their morale would be broken and their bodies maimed, not to mention the loss of their freedom and

income. I really felt like doing at least something to influence the proceedings and head off the inevitable dreaded result.

Anastasia was standing beside me, intently observing the situation. I jerked her arm. Putting my hands over my ears, I quickly said:

"Scream, Anastasia! Scream as quick as you can!"

Lowering my arm, she enquired:

"Why scream, Vladimir?"

"Eh? Don't you see what's going on? These women are about to get their heads bashed in, maimed for life. Their bluff's been called. It's all over for them."

"Not for all of them. The spirit is still fighting in three of them."

"But what can the spirit do against guns? They're done for."

"They are not 'done for' yet, Vladimir. As long as their spirit is still fighting, nobody should interfere. Outside interference may take care of the situation at hand, but it will weaken their self-confidence, and mean that a whole lot of other situations in their lives will not turn out favourably for them. They will come to rely on outside help."

"Stuff that philosophy of yours, at least for now. Can't you see the situation's hopeless?" I fell silent. It was clear Anastasia's mind was made up. And I thought wistfully: *Oh, if only I could scream like that!*

Seeing his cronies ready and alert, Lena's boyfriend (the pimp) spoke up — it was clear from the tone of his voice that he was already feeling he had the situation well in hand.

"I told you, Anka-putanka, you've gone too far. But this time we've won. So you'd better drop your toys, you little tarts! Drop them, and get those rags off — we're gonna screw all of you, one at a time."

Anka looked around at the thugs standing or concealing themselves, guns at the ready, and answered with a sigh:

"Maybe you don't need all of us — maybe just me's enough?"

"Ha, ha, bitch! See, now you're singing a different tune," the leader responded over the laughter of his buddies. "We shan't be satisfied just with you — we're gonna teach you all a lesson here. After this you're gonna be working for us, bitches!"

"An' jest where are you goin' to get the stud power to take on all of us?" Anka responded with a laugh. "You'll be lucky if you have enough for just one!"

"Shut your trap, bitch! We'll screw all of you, several times over!"

"I doubt that! I bet you won't be able to take on even one of us!"

"We'll keep screwing you all night long!"

"You know, sweetcheeks, you're startin' to get on my nerves — you an' your 'promises'. I don't believe 'em, I don't believe you're *man* enough!"

"You'll find out soon enough, bitch! I'm gonna smash that pretty face of yours in!" wheezed the leader, already seething with rage, putting on a pair of brass knuckles as he moved toward Anka.

Anka retreated a bit and called out to her group:

"Step aside, girls!"

The group of hookers took several steps back. Only the sullen plumpish 'cow' in the nightdress stood on the sidelines as though rooted to the spot, and when the tall and lanky leader took another step in Anka's direction, the 'cow', who before this had not spoken a word, suddenly said blandly:

"Hey, An — what're you waitin' for, An? Let's get started, eh?"

"Don't be in such a hurry, Mashka,"⁷ replied Anka, taking another couple of steps back. "Well, go ahead, seein' you're itchin' to get on with it!"

⁷*Mashka* — like *Masha* and *Mashenka*, a colloquial variant of *Maria*.

The plumpish Masha, calmly and coquettishly tore open the flaps of her nightdress, scattering the buttons to the winds, exposing not only her bare breast and bikini briefs, but something else as well...

Under her nightgown the 'cow' was carrying a Kalashnikov assault rifle with a silencer and night-vision telescopic sight. She pulled the bolt, raised the butt stock to her shoulder, pressed her cheek to the stock and peered into the sight.

"Only remember, Masha, no automatic," Anka suggested. "This ain't no war zone. Just one bullet at a time. You know — every bullet costs money."

"Uh-huh," answered Masha, her eye still pressed to the sight, and fired off five shots, each about a second apart. But what shots they were! The first bullet tore off the heel from one of the leader's boots, apparently wounding his foot in the process. He jumped back in the direction of the water, limping. The other four shots landed right by each of the thugs in turn. Immediately they began looking for cover behind the rocks, and the ones who didn't have any cover handy lay face down on the ground.

"An, tell them to crawl into the water! Or they may get blasted by a ricochet!" Masha blurted out, her Kalashnikov still at the ready.

"You heard her, sweetcheeks! Into the water!" Anka ordered the big thugs already crawling toward the water's edge, gently reminding them: "Mashenka's not yet a good enough shot to be responsible for ricocheting bullets!"

A moment later, and all of them, including their leader, were standing waist-deep in the sea.

Ania went up to Anastasia, and for a while the two simply looked at each other, face to face, without saying a word. Then Ania said quietly, with just a hint of sadness:

"You, friend, wanted to go for a stroll with your companion there. So go ahead. It's a fine evening, quiet, warm..."

"Yes. There is indeed a pleasant air blowing over the city," Anastasia replied, adding: "You are tired, Ania, perhaps you would care to relax in a garden of your own?"

"Perhaps... but I feel sorry for me girls, an' I'm still so mad at those... blokes. Say, are you from the country?"

"Yes."

"Nice place, where you live?"

"Very nice. But I do not always feel at peace, especially when things are not going well for everyone in other places, as here right now."

"Don't mind them. Come whenever you like... Anyway, I'm off. Gotta work. Have a nice quiet stroll here."

Ania headed toward the cars, her entourage in tow. As they walked past the 'cow' still sitting on the rock, the Kalashnikov lying across her bare knees, Ania said:

"You stay and relax here a bit, Mashenka. We'll send a car for you later."

"I've got a client waitin' — I was with 'im when you called me. An' he's paid already!"

"We'll take care of your client. We'll say you had an upset stomach. Like, the quality of the champagne wasn't up to scratch."

"I had vodka. And only half a glass."

"Well, then, maybe you ate something..."

"I didn't have anything to eat — just a bit of candy and some pastries."

"So that's it, then — the pastries weren't too fresh. How many d'you eat?"

"Don't remember."

"C'mon — she never eats less than four at a time," said one of the girls. "Right, Masha?"

"Well, maybe you're right. At least leave me a cigarette. So's I don't get bored out of my skull."

Ania put a package of cigarettes along with a lighter on the rock beside Masha, and the girls walked on.

"Hey," came a voice from the water, "you gonna leave this gal of yours here on the rock?"

"She's stayin', sweetcheeks, she's stayin'!" replied Ania. "I told you right off, one of us is enough for the likes of you. You wanted all of us. And now it turns out it's goin' to be pretty boring for just one of us to stay here with you."

"Once this gets out, about how conniving you are..." one of the thugs called out. "Once it gets out... Well, no one will ever want to shag with you again. Even if *you* offer to pay *them*."

Five muffled shots rang out from the rock in quick succession. And five little splashes popped up in the water, one right beside each of the men standing there, making them retreat even further out from the shore. Ania turned to them and warned:

"Look, boys, just make sure you don't rile Mashenka here. When we like someone, we can be sweet and tender. An' loyal as dogs. When we like someone, understand? No matter who..." And then, as she clambered up the hill toward the cars, she struck up a song in a resonant, wistful voice:

*The paths and roads are all overgrown there
Which my dear lover's feet have known there.*

And the young prostitutes following her picked up on the tone of her voice, on the intonations of sadness and despair:

*Overgrown there with mosses and grasses:
He's taken up with another of the lasses.
Where does he travel, my lover?
It makes my heart only sorrow and suffer.*

And off they drove, still singing the song about the pathways and roads, as they headed back to work.

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE



Your desires

It was almost midnight by the time Anastasia and I got back to my apartment. As I put the key into the lock, I felt a sense of exhaustion after all the intense experiences the day had brought. Upon seeing my bed, I told Anastasia that I was extremely tired, and went to take a shower. When I came out of the shower, Anastasia told me she'd already made up my bed, and that she herself would lie down on the balcony.

It's probably too stuffy for her in one of these mass-produced apartment blocks, I thought, and went out to the balcony to see what kind of bed she had made for herself there. It turned out she had put a little strip of rug down on the balcony floor and covered it with some white paper, which my landlord had got ready for wallpapering the flat. In place of a pillow she had folded her cardigan, and put a small tree-branch at the head of her makeshift bed.

"How can you get a good night's sleep here, Anastasia? It's hard, and you'll be cold. At least let me fetch you a blanket."

"Not to worry, Vladimir. I shall be fine here. The air is fresh, and I can see the stars. Look up and see how many stars there are! There is a soft, warm breeze blowing — I shall not be cold. You go lie down, Vladimir, and I shall sit on the edge of your bed for a while, and once you fall asleep, I shall lie down, too."

I lay down on the bed Anastasia had made up for me and thought I was so tired that I'd nod off right away, but it didn't work out quite like that. The thought, or realisation, that Man — i.e., every single individual — was nothing more than

a plaything in the hands of some sort of coincidences, kept gnawing away at my mind, giving me no peace. This led to a growing feeling of irritation at those who had arranged these coincidences, and Anastasia too. Anastasia in particular, since I considered it a definite possibility that she had actually participated in the formation of these coincidences, at least as far as my life was concerned.

"Is something disturbing you, Vladimir?" Anastasia calmly enquired, and I even raised myself slightly on my elbows.

"As if you didn't know!... I believed you... I wanted to believe... I particularly wanted to believe that Man — every Man — is capable of making his own life happy. I especially believed in the eco-communities you talked about, where people can live a secure existence thanks to their own family plot of land, and raise their children to have a happy life. And that there would be good schools there for the children. I believed you when you said that every Man is the beloved child of God. 'Man is the summit of creation' — you did say that, didn't you?"

"Yes, Vladimir, I did tell you that."

"Of course you did! And how convincing you made it all sound! I not only believed you, I started acting on it, started organising a community. I've already submitted the necessary paperwork to the authorities. The Anastasia Foundation is collecting people's applications. A design's been commissioned, along with a layout for gardens and all sorts of plantings. It would have been all right just to believe you and all that, but I actually started carrying things out, and with pleasure! *You knew!* You knew I'd carry things out!"

"Yes, Vladimir, I knew. After all, you are an entrepreneur. You are always ready to carry out practical actions, to make things happen..."

"Always ready?" I echoed. "How simple it all is! Of course. No need to be a clairvoyant to see that. As long as an

entrepreneur believes in something, he will start to act. And I, fool that I was, started too.”

I couldn't stay lying down any longer. I jumped out of bed, walked over to the window and opened the *fortochka*,¹ since I felt a sudden wave of heat — either in the room or within me.

“Why did you think your actions foolish, Vladimir?” Anastasia calmly asked.

And her equanimity, along with her feigned ignorance, as I then considered it — made me even more angry.

“And you just sit there talking all calm-and-collected-like? Calm and collected! As if you didn't know all along that Man is a puppet in somebody's hands. *They* control Man through various circumstances. Each Man is easily controllable by some kind of forces. If they feel like it, they can plunge half the human race into war. They plunge people into war and then take up a position somewhere up above or on the sidelines to watch us kill each other. If they feel like it, they'll slip some sort of religion into the proceedings and watch, once again, as people go to war over their faith. If they feel like it, they can play with just a single individual. I'm convinced of it. I've been convinced by people who are smart enough to analyse what's going on.”

“And just how did these ‘smart people’ succeed in convincing you that Man is just a plaything in the hands of some kind of forces?”

“I listened to a report. They were talking about me. Some smart people became interested in public reaction to the books. They became interested in you, and in me too. They followed my every move during my time on Cyprus, while I was working on the fourth book. They recorded everything

¹*fortochka* — a small openable window in the upper corner of a larger window-frame.

and then analysed it. And, if you can believe it, I'm not mad at them for following me. I'm even grateful to them — for finally opening my eyes. They showed how Man is being toyed with. Coincidences don't just happen, they're arranged, and I've become convinced of this through my own experience."

"What experience is this, Vladimir? Have you been conducting an experiment?"

"I haven't, but they've been conducting an experiment on me. When I was on Cyprus, I happened to mention freshwater fish, and *presto!* — freshwater fish appeared. I mentioned cedars, and cedars appeared. I wanted to pay a night-time visit to a church — and, lo and behold, there was a church, and the church doors were open at night. A whole lot of other things happened — all I had to do, no doubt, was write what they wanted me to.

"But the main thing — the granddaughter of the goddess Aphrodite appeared. I mentioned to several people on Cyprus that I wanted to meet with her granddaughter, since I had had it up to here with their Aphrodite. There were posters everywhere about her Baths, and people were forever carrying on about her. Anyway, I told them I was going to meet with the granddaughter of this goddess Aphrodite. I mentioned this, and a few days later along comes this girl with fire in her eyes — anyway, the way things turned out, everybody decided that Aphrodite had indeed sent her granddaughter, and was working miracles through this girl, and the girl herself underwent some kind of transformation.

"But who arranged all these circumstances one after another? Who? I certainly didn't arrange anything. If only one thing like this happened to take place, well, okay, but here was a whole chain of them together, and if you take them altogether, it's no longer a coincidence, it's a *pattern*. This is the conclusion the academics came to. And I'm convinced they're right. And you can't persuade me otherwise."

"But I was not about to deny that there is a pattern to what has been happening, Vladimir," Anastasia calmly observed.

I felt my whole insides turn cold, and I was suddenly overwhelmed with some kind of extraordinary sense of apathy following these last words of Anastasia's. I did have a hope — a faint one, but still a hope — that she would be able to dissolve the whole feeling that had been building up in me of Man's utter insignificance — not just my insignificance but all mankind's — but this she didn't do. In any case, how could she have? Who would dare deny what is so patently obvious? Indifferent to everyone and everything, I stood by the window in a room lit only by moonlight, and looked out at the stars.

Somewhere out there, perhaps on one of those very stars, lived those who were controlling us, toying with us. *They* were living, *they* were real! But could *our* existence really be called life? A toy in subjection to somebody's will cannot be said to live an independent life — which meant only one thing: *we were not living*. This is why we are indifferent to so many things.

Once again Anastasia began talking in that same quiet and calm voice. But this time her voice didn't arouse in me any emotions whatsoever — it was more like some kind of extraneous sound.

"Vladimir, you and the people who sent you that cassette with the report were right: there really are energies out there capable of changing time, joining together into a single chain various events or, as happened with you, arranging a chain of circumstances required to achieve a predetermined goal. Pure coincidences do not happen — that is already clear to many people. Coincidences, even those which seem to be the most far-fetched, are programmed. Everything that happens to each individual is programmed. And what happened to you on Cyprus, which served as a clear illustration for the researchers as well as, naturally, for you, was also programmed, and then turned into reality.

"Tell me, please, Vladimir, would you not like to know where the one directly responsible for programming your coincidences is now?"

"What difference does it make where he is? Doesn't matter to me. On Mars, the Moon... Whether he feels good or bad."

"He is right here in this room, Vladimir."

"That means, it's you?... If so, that still doesn't change anything. I'm not even surprised. And I'm not angry. I simply don't care. We are manipulable, and that's the hopeless tragedy of the human race."

"I am not the one in charge of programming your coincidences, Vladimir. I am able to exercise but a tiny speck of influence."

"Then who *is* in charge? There's only two of us in the room. Or is there a third — a programmer who's invisible?"

"Vladimir, this programmer is right within you — it is *your desires*."

"How so?"

"Only Man's desires and aspirations can launch any kind of programme of action. This is the law of the Creator. Nobody, none of the energies of the Universe, can ever break that law. Because Man is the master of all the energies of the Universe! Man!"

"But I didn't launch anything on Cyprus, Anastasia. Everything happened all by itself, by coincidence, apart from me."

"There were indeed certain minor incidents that were not part of the more significant events — though they contributed to their realisation — and these incidents did happen apart from your will. But the basic events themselves were preceded by your desires. Was it not you who wanted to meet with the granddaughter of the goddess Aphrodite? You expressed your wish in the presence of witnesses and repeated it a number of times."

"Yes, I did..."

"And if you remember that, then how can you call servants carrying out the will of their lord masters, and how can you call the master a plaything in their hands?"

"Yes, that *would* be silly. Interesting, how all this is turning out! Wow! Desires... But why then aren't all our desires fulfilled? Many people wish for things, but their wishes aren't fulfilled."

"So much depends on how meaningful the goal is. On whether the desire corresponds to the light or the dark. On how strong the desire is. The more substantial and bright the goal, the more the forces of light are drawn to fulfil it. To bring it about."

"And if the goal is a dark one — let's say, for example, to get drunk, or get into a fight, or plan a war?..."

"Then the dark forces take over — Man through his desire has given them the opportunity to act. But, as you can see, it is still Man's desire that is first and foremost! Your desire, Vladimir."

I began to ponder what Anastasia had said, and my heart felt better and better. The very pleasant moonlight filled the whole room, and it seemed as though the stars in the sky were shining not with a cold light, but with a warm one. And Anastasia, sitting there on the edge of the bed, seemed to look even better than before. I said to her:

"You know, Anastasia, back there, when I first arrived on Cyprus, to be honest with you, I very nearly went on a binge. Because at first I couldn't find anything there I liked. Nobody spoke Russian. It was too noisy to work — people were whooping it up all around. *Why on earth did I end up here*, I thought, *maybe to get to know some hookers?* There are lots of women there, shall we say, of loose behaviour — from both Russia and Bulgaria."

"You see, Vladimir? You had the desire, and there they were. You got drunk on vodka, and set up a date with them.

With one woman from Bulgaria, and another from Russia. Only even before that you wanted to meet with Aphrodite's granddaughter — your first desire proved to be stronger, and *she* appeared, and saved you from all the wretched stuff. She helped you."

"Yes, she did. And just how might you know about the Bulgarian girl?"

"From my feelings, Vladimir."

"I don't understand that, but never mind. Tell me rather: this girl, Elena Fadeyeva, she's not the daughter of the goddess Aphrodite — she's Russian, she's simply an employee of a tourist agency on Cyprus. But I was talking about Aphrodite's granddaughter. Does that mean these forces of light were too puny to show me the real granddaughter of Aphrodite?"

"They are by no means 'puny'. And they did show you. The goddess Aphrodite today exists as energy. She is capable of connecting for a time with the energy of any Man — if she can see some meaningful reason to do so. That Elena Fadeyeva, whenever she was with you, had two energies inside her. There was a lot she could do during those days. There was a lot she succeeded in doing, and she managed to help you, too."

"Yes, I'm grateful to her. *And* to the goddess Aphrodite."

All my concerns and unpleasant sensations, connected with my assumption that all people were simply pawns in the hands of some kind of forces, literally flew out the window. Now, after my talk with Anastasia, a sense of confidence and peace set in.

For some time I just watched silently as Anastasia sat on the edge of my bed in the moonlight, her hands meekly folded atop her knees. And then... to this day I cannot figure out how this happened, but I suddenly came out with:

"I realise that you, Anastasia, are a great goddess." And as I said this I fell on my knees before her.

A cry of pain and despair burst from Anastasia's lips. She immediately rose and stepped back from me, leaning against the wall and clasping her hands to her breast as though in prayer.

"Vladimir, I beg of you, get up off your knees — you should not bow down to me. O God, O God, I have overdone it, I have been in too great a haste — forgive me for not making myself clear enough to Your sons. In God's sight, Vladimir, all people are equal. They should not bow down to one another. I am simply a woman — *I am Man!*"

"You are so vastly different from all other people, Anastasia, so if you are simply Man, then who are we? *Who am I?*"

"You are Man, too, only as you are living out your life in vanity, you have not yet been able to think of what your purpose is."

"Moses, Jesus Christ, Mohammed, Rama,² Buddha — who are they? And how do you relate to them?"

"Those are my elder brothers you have named, Vladimir. I am not in a position to judge their works, but I shall say one thing: none of them had their fill of earthly love."

"That can't be — every single one of them has millions of worshipping followers, even today."

"But worship does not mean love. It only exhausts the worshipper's power of thought — a power exclusive to Man. Great is the *egregor*³ of my brothers — for millions of years many people have fed it through their worship, and in so doing each worshipper lost some of his energy. Over the centuries there have been many willing to condemn the deeds of my brothers. And I could not understand why they made such

²*Rama* — a god-king and an earthly incarnation of Vishnu (in the Hindu tradition).

³*egregor* — a unifying collective psychic entity or field — see footnote 3 in Book 3, Chapter 24: "Who are you, Anastasia?"

great efforts to feed their own *egregor*; building up its energy over thousands of years. Nobody has been able to guess their secret until the dawn of the present age. And my brothers decided to gather the accumulated energy into a single whole, in order to distribute it to souls now living on the Earth. A new millennium will soon be given birth, in which the gods will settle the Earth — those people whose conscious awareness will allow them to accept this energy in all its worth.

“Vladimir, I beg of you, get up off your knees! It is painful for any father to see his son bowed down and enslaved. It is only the dark forces that have always tried to demean Man’s significance. Vladimir, get up off your knees, refuse to betray yourself. Do not separate yourself from me.”

Anastasia was extremely upset, and I did as she asked. I got up off my knees and said:

“I wasn’t separating myself from you. On the contrary, it seems I’ve just begun to understand you. Only I don’t agree that worship interferes with love. On the contrary, all believers say that they love God. And I am bowing before you as a goddess, but you are frightened for some reason, you’ve become upset.”

“We have known each other for five years now, Vladimir. A lot of time has gone by since that night when our son was conceived, but ever since that time, not once have you had the desire to touch me, to give me the look you give to other women. Lack of understanding — and now, worship — do not allow love to reveal itself. Worship does not bring forth children.”

“Well, that’s because you’re not exactly a woman, Anastasia. You’ve become a kind of information node. It’s not just me — others too don’t get your meaning right off. For example, what does ‘don’t betray yourself’ mean? Why did you say that in reference to me?”

“You wrote a letter to the President of Russia, Vladimir, but at the same time you have come to doubt yourself — you

almost perished. You have ceased creating on your own and handed your problems to others — basically to a single President.”

“That’s because he’s the only person in Russia who can realistically do anything.”

“One person cannot do it by himself — the will of the majority is required. Besides, why did you send your letter only to one president? There are presidents in Ukraine, Belarus, Kazakhstan...”

“But you’ve always talked about Russia. Besides, Russia is my Motherland.”

“But your passport⁴ says you are a Belarusian.”

“That’s right. My father was Belarusian.”

“And you spent your whole childhood in Ukraine.”

“Well yes, I did. And that was the best part I remember from my childhood. I remember the white cottage with its straw roof, and the weir where I fished for mud loaches along with the neighbourhood lads. And my grandma and grandpa never once quarrelled in my presence, and never punished me.”

“Yes, yes, Vladimir, and remember how you and your grandfather planted tiny seedlings in the garden...”

“I do remember. Grandma would water them from a bucket.”

“But you know that even today in the village of Kuzdnichi, in Ukraine, in the village where you were born, that garden has been preserved, its trees are all crusty now, but they are still bearing fruit — they are waiting for you.”

“So then, where is my Motherland, Anastasia?”

“It is within you.”

“In me?”

⁴*passport* — in this case, an internal identity document, which states one’s ethnic origin.

"In you! You can materialise it forever on the Earth, wherever your soul indicates."

"You're right — I have to figure it all out somehow. At the moment I get the feeling I'm scattered all over the land."

"Vladimir, you are tired. This whole day has brought a lot of emotion upon us. Lie down and go to sleep. By morning your sleep will have built up fresh strength for you, and you will have a new conscious awareness..."

I lay down on the bed, and could feel Anastasia taking my hand in hers. Now a deep sleep would ensue, and I already knew that she could make it deep and peaceful, so that everything would be all right by morning. But just before I dropped off I managed to say:

"You know, Anastasia, could you please see to it that I shall be able once again to catch a glimpse of Russia's splendid future?"

"Fine, go to sleep, Vladimir. You will see it."

And Anastasia started singing very quietly — a wordless song, like a lullaby. *Anyway, it's great that people can program everything for themselves*, I managed to think before plunging into a peaceful and pleasant dream about the future of Russia.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR



Eternity lies ahead for you and me

The rising Sun shone through the uncurtained windows straight onto the bed, waking me up. I had such a wonderful sleep! Some kind of extraordinary strength (fantastic!) was making its presence known inside me — I even felt like I wanted to do push-ups or some other kind of physical exercise. And I was in an excellent mood.

From the kitchen I could hear the clatter of dishes. *Wow!* I thought, *Don't tell me that's Anastasia trying to make breakfast?! She doesn't know how to cope with all the kitchen gadgets, or even how to turn on the gas. Maybe I'd better help her?* I put on a track suit and opened the door to the kitchen. No sooner had I caught sight of Anastasia than a hot flash seemed to run through my entire body.

This was the first time I had seen the Siberian recluse not in a taiga forest, not in her glade or by the seashore, but in a modern city woman's most typical surroundings — the kitchen. She was leaning over the gas stove, trying to regulate the burner. She kept turning the gas knob up and down, but the old cooker was not designed for any settings except 'high' and 'low'.

In the kitchen Anastasia appeared to be a completely normal woman. Now why did I go and scare her last night by bowing down on my knees? I'd probably had too much to drink and was beastly tired to boot.

Anastasia felt my gaze upon her, and turned to face me. One of her cheeks sported a dab of flour, and from underneath her bandana a braid of hair clung to her slightly perspiring

forehead. Anastasia smiled. And her voice — that marvelous voice of hers!

“A splendid good morning for the coming day to you, Vladimir! You see, I have almost finished preparing breakfast. Just a wee bit more to do. You go and wash up, and by then everything will be ready. You go wash up, and do not worry — I shall not damage anything here — I have figured things out.”

Instead of heading for the bathroom right off, I stood there dumbfounded, just looking at Anastasia. For the first time in the five years we'd known each other I caught a glimpse of just how extraordinarily beautiful this woman really was. There are no words to describe a beauty like this. Even with a flour-spotted cheek, even without a fancy hairdo (her hair was simply tied back in a bun) — not to mention her plain, unfashionable clothing — she was still extraordinarily beautiful.

I headed off to the bathroom, did a careful job of shaving and took a shower. During all this time I could not get my thought off this woman's beauty. When I came out of the bathroom, I sat down on the bed (which by this time had already been made). Instead of going into the kitchen, I just sat there, my mind still racing with thoughts about Anastasia.

It's been five years now that I've known this woman, this recluse from the Siberian taiga. *Five years...* And how my whole life has changed over these five years! Even though we rarely get together, it seems she's always around. And it's really her!

Of course, it was thanks to her that I was able to patch up my relationship with my daughter. We get along famously now. And as for my wife, well, even though I haven't been home in five years, I *have* talked with her on the telephone, and I can tell by her voice that my wife now speaks to me without any sense of coldness or resentment. She tells me that everything's fine with the family.

Anastasia... After all, she was the one who cured me. The doctors weren't able to, but she was. I knew myself that I was in danger of dying, and she cured me, and she made me famous, too. Now I'm getting big royalties for my books, but they're still her words, after all. And she always talks so tenderly, never gets angry. Even if I get mad at her without meaning to, she still won't get angry. Of course she's changed my life drastically, but she's changed it for the better. It was she who bore me my son! Sure, it's not your normal situation — my son lives in her glade in Siberia, but it's probably better for him there, with her.

She's so very kind. I need to say something nice to her, and do something nice for her. Only what? There's nothing she needs. Funny how it turns out — even if you owned half the world, she'd still have more than you. Still, I really felt like giving her some kind of gift. A long time ago I had bought her a pearl necklace. Not artificial, but large, natural pearls.

I decided this was a good moment to go and give it to her. I took the little jewellery box out of my suitcase, but instead of heading straight for the kitchen I decided, for some reason, to change my clothes. In place of the track suit I put on a pair of trousers, a white shirt and even a tie.

Then I put the necklace in my trouser pocket, but I was still too excited to go out to the kitchen. So I stood by the window, looking neat as a pin, until I managed to get a hold of myself. *What's going on here, anyway?* I thought to myself. *It's high time! Enough of this silly emotionalism!* And I walked out to the kitchen.

Anastasia was sitting at the table she had got all set for breakfast, waiting for me. She rose to greet me. By this time she had done her hair and put on a very neat appearance. She got up and silently gave me one of her tender looks with her greyish-blue eyes, while I just stood there, not knowing what to say. Then I said, unexpectedly using the formal form of address:

“Good day to you, Anastasia!” My formality completely took me aback. But she replied in all seriousness, as though she hadn’t even noticed:

“Hello, Vladimir! Please, sit down. Breakfast is waiting.”

“Okay, I’ll take a seat. But first I wanted to say... I have something to tell you...” But I couldn’t remember the words.

“So, tell me, Vladimir.”

But I completely forgot what I was going to say. I went up close to Anastasia and gave her a kiss on the cheek. Whereupon my whole body flared up — I felt hot all over. And Anastasia’s cheeks flushed a deep red, and her eyelids fluttered faster than usual. And when I spoke, it didn’t sound like it was me at all, but some kind of constrained voice:

“That’s from all my readers, Anastasia. So many people are grateful to you.”

“From your readers? A big thank-you to all the readers. Thank you very much!” Anastasia quietly whispered.

And then I gave her a quick kiss on her other cheek and said:

“That one’s from me. You are extremely good and kind, Anastasia. And you are extremely beautiful. Thank you for being you.”

“You think I am beautiful, Vladimir? Thank you... Do you really think so?”

She was excited, too. I didn’t know what to do next. But then I remembered the pearl necklace in my pocket. I hastily pulled it out and began trying to undo the clasp.

“This is a gift for you, Anastasia. Those are pearls... real ones... they’re not fake. I know you don’t like anything artificial, but those are real.”

But the clasp wouldn’t budge. I jerked at it, and the thread broke, and all the little pearls that had been threaded onto it clattered to the floor and scattered in different directions. I sat down on the floor to pick them up. Anastasia

began picking them up too, only she managed to go faster. I watched as she deposited the pearls into the palm of her hand. She took a careful look at each one, and I just sat there entranced with her movements. I sat there on the floor, leaning against the wall, and watched her in astonishment.

I thought to myself how common the standard kitchen was, but how uncommon and marvellous I felt everything was in my heart. Why? Probably because *she* was here in this very kitchen — *Anastasia*. She was right beside me, but for some reason I couldn't muster up enough resolve to embrace her.

This woman, who back there five years ago in the taiga had seemed to be a somewhat abnormal recluse, now appeared as a star which had dropped in for a few moments from heaven. Here she was right beside me, yet as a star she was unreachable. And the years... Pity, the difference in years between us! I watched intently as Anastasia rose and put the pearls she had collected into a saucer on the table. Then she turned her head toward me. Entranced, I went on sitting there on the kitchen floor, leaning against the wall, and looking into her greyish-blue eyes. And she never averted her tender gaze even for a moment.

"Here you are right beside me, Anastasia, but now I can't touch you. I feel as though you're a distant star in the sky."

"*A star?* That's how you feel? Why? Look! Here she is at your feet — this little star, turned into an ordinary woman."

Anastasia quickly got down on her knees and sat next to me on the floor. She put her hands on my shoulder and rested her head on her hands. I could hear her heart beating, only *my* heart was beating a lot stronger. And her hair smelt of the taiga. Her breath was like a warm breeze infused with the intoxicating scent of flowers.

"Oh why, Anastasia, why couldn't I have met you when I was young? You're so young, and just look at how old I am! I've lived almost half a century already!"

"But it has taken me ages to break through to your wandering soul! Do not chase me away now."

"I'm getting old, Anastasia. And my life will soon be at an end."

"But while you are getting old, you will be able to plant your own family tree, and lay the foundation for a city with a splendid future, and a marvellous garden."

"I'll try. Pity I shall have such a short time to live in this garden myself. It'll take quite a few years to grow."

"If you set it up, you will always live there."

"Always?"

"Of course. Your body will grow old and die, but your soul will take flight!"

"The souls of the dead take flight — I know that. The soul takes flight, and that's the end of it."

"Oh, what a marvellous day we have today! Why are you creating a joyless future, Vladimir? You are creating it for yourself."

"It's not me creating it. That's objective reality, plain and simple. First comes old age, then death — for everyone. And even you, my dear, sweet dreamer, cannot come up with any other scenario."

Anastasia shuddered all over and moved slightly to one side. Her kind and cheerful eyes peered into mine and sparkled — radiating a joyful confidence that nothing could withstand.

"I have no reason to 'come up with' anything. There is only one truth. Death exists for the flesh — that is clear to everyone. For the flesh! In every other aspect death is a dream, Vladimir."

"A dream?"

"Yes, a dream."

Anastasia got up on her knees and began talking, looking me straight in the eye. But somehow the way she talked

silenced the kitchen radio, the sounds of voices and other noise outside the window, as she spoke in a gentle voice:

“My dearest! Eternity lies ahead for you and me. Life will always claim its own, you see. The littlest ray of sunlight glimmers in the spring, and the soul enrobes itself in its new things. But the decaying body does not embrace the ground in vain. Come spring, from our bodies will sprout new flowers and grass again. You shall forever hear the birds sing, and drink in the drops of rain. In the blue sky above, the clouds — again and again — will entrance you with their dance.

“And if you, my dearest, should find yourself scattered across the unfathomable Universe as little specks of dust, still refusing to believe, then from these specks of dust wandering through eternity I shall begin to gather you up. And the tree you plant will help me do this: in the early spring, to the place where your soul lies in unfeeling peace, it will stretch out its branch above. And those you have been kind to upon the Earth will remember you with love. And if the sum total of earthly love is not enough to materialise you once again, then there is one — one whom you know, and on every plane of being she will be flaming with a single breath of desire, namely: *materialise yourself, my love!* — there is one who will give herself over, for a moment, unto death.”

“That will be you, Anastasia? Are you sure you will be able to do such a thing — really?”

“Any woman possesses the ability to do it, if only she can compress the Logos into her feelings.”

“And what about you, Anastasia? Who will help *you* return to the Earth once more?”

“That I can do for myself. I need not bother anyone about it.”

“But how shall I recognise you? After all, our lives will be quite different from before.”

“Once you materialise upon the earthly plane, you will become a youngster once again. You will notice a snotty little

red-haired girl in the garden next door to yours. Say a kind word to this slightly bow-legged youngster, pay attention to that little maid. After you grow into your teens, you will start to notice pretty girls. Do not be in a hurry to join your destiny to theirs. In the meantime, in the garden next to yours your friend will be growing, too. Her face will be all freckled — she will not appear beautiful yet. At some point you will notice her following you out of the corner of her eye. But do not laugh at her, do not chase her off when she approaches you to draw your attention away from a more mature beautiful woman. Three springs will pass, and the neighbour girl will become a truly beautiful young lass. One day you will look at her and feel yourself aflame with love. And you will be happy with her. And she will be happy, too. And it is my soul that will be living in that happy girl you choose.”

“Thank you for that marvellous dream, Anastasia, my precious storyteller!”

I carefully embraced her by the shoulders and drew her close to me. I wanted to listen to how excitedly her heart was beating, to feel the fragrance of this marvellous woman’s hair — a woman who believes only in good, in eternity. And possibly to grasp hold of, if only like a straw, her incredible dreams. Her words about the future made everything around me seem more and more joyful.

“Maybe what you say, Anastasia, is all just words, but still they are marvellous words, and I feel more joy in my soul when I hear them.”

“The words of a dream can set a tremendous energy in motion. Man creates a future for himself through his dream, through the thoughts he cherishes. Believe me, Vladimir, everything will happen for the two of us exactly as I have described. But you are free in your dream, and you can change anything you like just by speaking different words. You are free, you have the liberty, and every Man is a creator for himself.”

"I shall change none of the words, Anastasia, spoken by you. I shall try to believe in them."

"Thank you."

"For what?"

"For not spoiling eternity for the two of us."



On this splendid sunny day the two of us swam in the sea and sunned ourselves on the deserted seashore. That evening Anastasia took her departure. As usual, she asked me not to see her off. I stood on the balcony and watched as she made her way along the pavement by our building, her head covered with her kerchief, wearing the plainest of clothing and carrying her hand-made cloth bag. She walked along, trying not to stand out among the other pedestrians — this same woman who had created a splendid future for the whole country.

And it will definitely come. People will turn her dream into reality and start living in this splendid world themselves.

Before disappearing around the corner, Anastasia paused, turned in my direction and waved. And I waved back in farewell. I could no longer make out her facial features, but I was sure she was smiling. She is always smiling, because she believes in and creates only good. Perhaps it has to be that way. I waved back, whispering to myself: *Thank you, my dear, sweet Anastasia!*



Appendix

Desertification has affected the lands of the Rostov Region¹ (up to 50% of the Salesian Steppes), the Altai Territory² (a third of the Kulunda Plain) and thirteen other regions within the Russian Federation. Altogether 6.5 million hectares of Russian farmland have now been taken over by blowing sands, the largest single segment being in the Caspian Lowlands, covering as much as 10% of their total area.³ The overall area of Russian farmland subject (either actually or potentially) to desertification approaches 50 million hectares.

According to agrochemical indicators, Russia's agricultural lands are, on average, not very productive, especially outside the Chernozem Belt.⁴ The layer of topsoil does not contain a sufficient quantity of nutrients for proper cultivation:

¹*Rostov Region* (Russian: *Rostovskaya oblast*) — a prairie region comprising just over 100,000 square kilometres around the city of Rostov-on-Don, bordering on the Sea of Azov (just north of the Black Sea) in Russia's south, including the fertile *Salesian Steppes* (Russian: *Sal'skie stepi*).

²*Altai Territory* (Russian: *Altaiskii kray*) — a partially mountainous territory of 169,100 square kilometres in the south-western part of Siberia, south of Novosibirsk at the headwaters of the Ob River, centred around the capital Barnaul. Almost two-thirds of its area is covered by the *Kulunda Plain* (*Kulundinskaya ravnina*), which is suitable for farming.

³*Caspian Lowlands* (Russian: *Prikaspiiskaya nizmennost*) — a semi-arid lowland area (as low as 28 metres below sea level) covering approximately 200,000 square kilometres around the northern end of the Caspian Sea in both the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan.

⁴*Chernozem* (lit. 'Black Earth') *Belt* — a zone of forest and farmland containing a layer of dark-coloured soil (ranging from 1 to 6 metres in depth)

nitrogen, phosphorous, potassium, calcium, magnesium, micronutrients (especially cobalt, molybdenum and zinc). At least a third of the farmlands have acidic soil, and soil containing low concentrations of available phosphorous and potassium amount to 30% and 10%, respectively.

Over 43% of arable lands have a low humus content; in 15% of them (45% outside the Chernozem Belt) the proportion is critical. More than 75% of the farmlands of the Kaluga, Smolensk, Astrakhan and Volgograd Regions,⁵ as well as the Republics of Kalmykia, Adygeya, Buryatia and Tuva⁶ are low

in southern Russia and Ukraine. It is characterised by a high percentage (up to 15%) of humus, as well as large quantities of acids, phosphorous and ammonia. A similar belt (also known as Chernozem) is found in the prairielands of the province of Manitoba in Canada. (The original Russian term is pronounced *chernoz-YOM*.)

⁵These regions are all named after the cities at their respective centres: *Kaluga* — a city on the Oka River about 200 km southwest of Moscow, originally the domain of the princely Vorotynsky family. *Smolensk* — one of the oldest cities in Russia (dating back to AD 863), located about 360 km west-southwest of Moscow, and described in an ancient history text as one of the key stations on the trade route between Scandinavia and the Mediterranean. *Astrakhan* — at the mouth of the Volga, on the Caspian Sea, in the Caspian Lowlands; formerly the capital of a Tatar khanate, the city was conquered for Russia by Ivan the Terrible in 1556. *Volgograd* (originally *Tsaritsyn*, known as *Stalingrad* from 1925 to 1961) — a city founded in 1598 at the confluence of the Volga and Tsaritsa Rivers, about 400 km northwest of the Caspian Sea.

⁶These republics are all part of the Russian Federation: *Kalmykia* — just southwest of the Astrakhan Region in the northern Caucasus, covering an area of 76,000 square kilometres, bordering on the Caspian Lowlands. *Adygeya* (pron. *a-di-GAY-ya*) — a small republic (7,600 sq. km) surrounded by Russia's Krasnodar Territory (northwestern Caucasus), with prairie lands in the north and mountains in the south. *Buryatia* — a large, primarily mountainous republic of 351,000 sq. km in south central Siberia, situated on the eastern shore of Lake Baikal. *Tuva* (pron. *too-VAH*) — also in south central Siberia, covering an area of 170,500 sq. km, not far to the west of Lake Baikal; the western section of Tuva comprises a dry lowland.

in humus. Experts believe that, on average, with irregular and insufficient applications of organic fertiliser and improper cultivation practices, a significant depletion has taken place in Russia's soil content. Humus levels have been reduced to a minimum — 3.5–5.0% of topsoil in the central Chernozem regions and only 1.3–1.5% outside the Chernozem belt. Annual humus losses in farmland topsoil are pegged at 0.6–0.7 tonnes per hectare (as much as 1 tonne per hectare in Chernozem areas). This means an annual nationwide loss of approximately 80 million tonnes.

It has been proved that there is almost a perfect linear relationship between the humus reserves in basic soil types and the productivity of major agricultural crops. A one-tonne-per-hectare increase in humus levels means an increase in average long-term productivity of cereal crops of 10–15 kg/ha. For a number of crops cultivated under various soil/climatic conditions, this amount corresponds to 30 kg of cereal crop units. For every 1-centimetre decrease in humus depth in Chernozem topsoil under the influence of either natural or man-made factors (e.g., erosion), cereal crop productivity falls by 100 kg/ha.

Over the course of many years Russia's soil resources have been extensively exploited⁷ by various means, and nutrients have often been eliminated through the harvesting process at a faster rate than they could be replenished.

Agricultural scientists warn that such extensive exploitation of the soil's fertility will lead to an irreversible degradation. Trends in overall cereal output are cited as evidence of this. The annual manure application required to maintain constant humus levels in the soil should amount to between

⁷*extensively exploited* — In Russian the term 'extensive' (*èkstensivnoe*) here refers specifically to using up more and more land resources, as opposed to increasing fertility on the lands already under cultivation.

7 and 15 tonnes per hectare. This means adding to the soil a minimum of 1 billion tonnes of organic fertiliser every year. Russia today employs only about 100–120 million tonnes, or approximately 10 times less than is required.

What is the current situation with regard to conservation of soil resources?

Centralised financing of soil-improvement projects has been completely cut off, and the scope of these projects has been drastically reduced. Financing now comes out of local budgets — since 1993 out of land taxes, with 30% of the conservation-programme expenses to be paid by land-users. As a result, from 1994 to the present all projects for applying peat-manure compost in non-Chernozem areas, as well as lime treatment of acidic soils, delivery of liming materials and bone-meal, and phosphate application have pretty well ceased on most Russian territory because local authorities do not have funds for carrying out agrochemical projects.

This has contributed to the failure of practically all comprehensive federal soil-improvement and agricultural development programmes initiated by the Russian government and the Ministry of Agriculture and Food.

In view of the above, we can now speak of the escalating degradation of Russia's topsoil, which threatens its ecological and food security, as well as its national security as a whole.

THE AUTHOR, Vladimir Megré, born in 1950, was a well-known entrepreneur from a Siberian city of Novosibirsk. According to his account, in 1995 — after hearing a fascinating story about the power of ‘ringing cedars’ from a Siberian elder — he organised a trade expedition into the Siberian taiga to rediscover the lost technique of pressing virgin cedar nut oil containing high curative powers, as well as to find the ringing cedar tree. However, his encounter on this trip with a Siberian woman named Anastasia transformed him so deeply that he abandoned his business and went to Moscow to write a book about the spiritual insights she had shared with him. Vladimir Megré now lives near the city of Vladimir, Russia, 190 km (120 miles) east of Moscow. If you wish to contact the author, you may send a message to his personal e-mail megre@online.sinor.ru

THE TRANSLATOR, John Woodsworth, born in Vancouver (British Columbia), has over forty years of experience in Russian-English translation, from classical poetry to modern short stories. Since 1982 he has been associated with the University of Ottawa in Canada as a Russian-language teacher, translator and editor, most recently as a Research Associate and Administrative Assistant with the University’s Slavic Research Group. A published Russian-language poet himself, he and his wife — Susan K. Woodsworth — are directors of the Sasquatch Literary Arts Performance Series in Ottawa. A Certified Russian-English Translator, John Woodsworth is in the process of translating the remaining volumes in Vladimir Megré’s Ringing Cedars Series.

THE EDITOR, Leonid Sharashkin, is writing his doctoral dissertation on the spiritual, cultural and economic significance of the Russian *dacha* gardening movement, at the University of Missouri at Columbia. After receiving a Master’s degree in Natural Resources Management from Indiana University at Bloomington, he worked for two years as Programme Manager at the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF Russia) in Moscow, where he also served as editor of Russia’s largest environmental magazine, *The Panda Times*. Together with his wife, Irina Sharashkina, he has translated into Russian *Small is beautiful* and *A guide for the perplexed* by E.F. Schumacher, *The secret life of plants* by Peter Tompkins and Christopher Bird, *The continuum concept* by Jean Liedloff and *Birth without violence* by Frederick Leboyer.

ORDERING INFORMATION



USA:

- *on-line* — www.RingingCedars.com
- *tel. / fax (toll-free)* — 1-888-DOLMENS (1-888-365-6367)
- *tel. / fax (from outside US & Canada)* — 1-646-429-1986
- *e-mail* — sales@RingingCedars.com
- *mail (US)* — send US\$14.95 per copy plus \$3.95 shipping and handling for the first copy and \$0.99 s&h for each additional copy in your order to:

Ringing Cedars Press
415 Dairy Rd., Suite E-339
Kahului, HI 96732, USA

Make a check or money order payable to "Ringing Cedars Press". Please indicate clearly the quantity and title of the book(s) you are ordering and be sure to include your US postal address with your payment. Allow 2-4 weeks for delivery. Prices are subject to change without notice.

UNITED KINGDOM:

- *order on-line* — www.RingingCedars.co.uk
- *by phone (toll-free)* — 0800-011-2081
- *e-mail* — books@RingingCedars.co.uk

AUSTRALIA:

- *order on-line* — www.RingingCedars.com.au
- *by phone* — 1800-248-768
- *e-mail* — books@RingingCedars.com.au

NEW ZEALAND:

- *order on-line* — www.RingingCedars.co.nz
- *by phone* — 64-9232-9792
- *e-mail* — sales@RingingCedars.co.nz

SOUTH AFRICA:

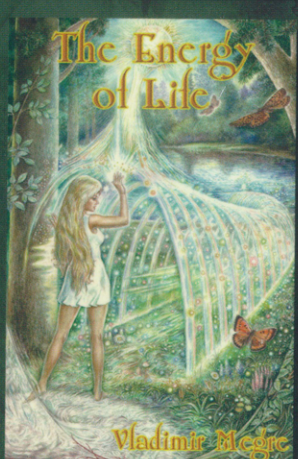
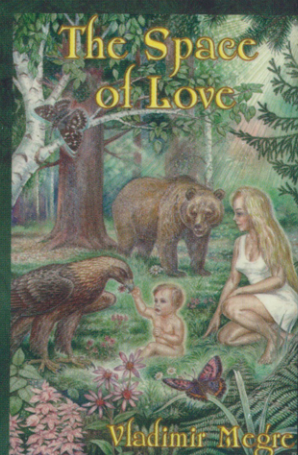
- *order on-line* — www.RingingCedars.co.za
- *e-mail* — books@RingingCedars.co.za

Who Are We? by Vladimir Megré

Book 5 of The Ringing Cedars Series

Spirituality /
Nature /
Childrearing

Who are we? describes the author's search for real-life 'proofs' of Anastasia's vision presented in the previous volumes. Finding these proofs and taking stock of ongoing global environmental destruction, Vladimir Megré describes further practical steps for putting Anastasia's vision into practice. Full of beautiful realistic images of a new way of living in co-operation with the Earth and each other, this book also highlights the role of children in making us aware of the precariousness of the present situation and in leading the global transition toward a happy, violence-free society.



RINGING CEDARS PRESS

www.RingingCedars.com

1-888-DOLMENS

US\$14.95 CAN\$19.95 AU\$24.95

ISBN 978-0-9763333-4-0



9 780976 333340

5 1495 >

The Book of Kin



Vladimir Megre

Vladimir Megré

The Ringing Cedars Series

English translation by John Woodsworth

- Book 1 **Anastasia**
(ISBN: 978-0-9763333-0-2)
- Book 2 **The Ringing Cedars of Russia**
(ISBN: 978-0-9763333-1-9)
- Book 3 **The Space of Love**
(ISBN: 978-0-9763333-2-6)
- Book 4 **Co-creation**
(ISBN: 978-0-9763333-3-3)
- Book 5 **Who Are We?**
(ISBN: 978-0-9763333-4-0)
- Book 6 **The Book of Kin**
(ISBN: 978-0-9763333-6-4)
- Book 7 **The Energy of Life**
(ISBN: 978-0-9763333-7-1)
- Book 8, Part 1 **The New Civilisation**
(ISBN: 978-0-9763333-8-8)
- Book 8, Part 2 **Rites of Love**
(ISBN: 978-0-9763333-9-5)



Published by Ringing Cedars Press
www.RingingCedars.com

Anastasia herself has stated that this book consists of words and phrases in combinations *which have a beneficial effect on the reader*. This has been attested by the letters received to date from thousands of readers all over the world.

If you wish to gain as full an appreciation as possible of the ideas, thoughts and images set forth here, as well as experience the benefits that come with this appreciation, we recommend you find a quiet place for your reading where there is the least possible interference from artificial noises (motor traffic, radio, TV, household appliances etc.). *Natural sounds*, on the other hand — the singing of birds, for example, or the patter of rain, or the rustle of leaves on nearby trees — may be a welcome accompaniment to the reading process.



Ringling Cedars Press is an independent publisher dedicated to making **Vladimir Megre's** books available in the beautiful English translation by **John Woodsworth**. Word of mouth is our best advertisement and we appreciate your help in spreading the word about the Ringling Cedars Series.

Order on-line	www.RinglingCedars.com	ordering
call / fax toll-free	1-888-DOLMENS	details
or call / fax	1-646-429-1986	see last page

Generous discounts are available on volume orders. To help spread the word as an independent distributor, or to place the books in your bookstore, or to be kept up to date about future book releases and events, please email us at:

info@ringlingcedars.com

or write to the Publisher, Ringling Cedars Press, 415 Dairy Rd., Suite E-339, Kahului, HI 96732, USA. We also welcome reviews, poetry and artwork inspired by the Series.

Vladimir Megré

THE BOOK OF KIN

The Ringing Cedars Series
Book 6

Translated from the Russian by
John Woodsworth

Edited by
Leonid Sharashkin



Ringing Cedars Press
Paia, Hawaii, USA

The Book of Kin by
Vladimir Megré

Translation, afterword and footnotes by
John Woodsworth

Editing, footnotes, design and layout by
Leonid Sharashkin

Cover art by
Alexander Razboinikov

Copyright © 2002 Vladimir Megré
Copyright © 2007 Leonid Sharashkin, translation
Copyright © 2007 Leonid Sharashkin, afterword, footnotes
Copyright © 2007 Leonid Sharashkin, cover art
Copyright © 2007 Leonid Sharashkin, design and layout

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, except for the inclusion of brief quotations in a review, without permission in writing from the publisher.

Library of Congress Control Number: 2006920097

ISBN: 978-0-9763333-6-4

Published by
Ringling Cedars Press

www.RingingCedars.com



Contents

1. Who raises our children?.....	I
2. Conversation with my son.....	36
<i>A distorted view of history</i>	42
<i>"You loved Mama, but did not recognise it"</i>	50
<i>A book of pristine origins</i>	52
<i>One plus one equals three</i>	56
<i>"I shall make a Universe Girl happy"</i>	59
<i>How to bridge the gap?</i>	64
<i>"I shall save my Mama"</i>	69
3. An invitation to the future.....	78
4. A dormant civilisation.....	89
5. The history of mankind, as told by Anastasia.....	101
<i>Vedism</i>	101
<i>A union of two — a wedding</i>	103
<i>Raising children in the Vedic culture</i>	121
<i>Rituals</i>	132
<i>Feeding life in the flesh</i>	137
<i>Life without violence and crime</i>	143
6. Imagery and trial.....	148
7. The secret war with Vedic Rus'.....	167
<i>In which temple should God dwell (Anastasia's first parable)</i>	168

<i>The best place in Paradise (second parable)</i>	175
<i>The wealthiest groom (third parable)</i>	179
<i>A change of priestly tactics</i>	186
8. Occultism.....	193
<i>The priest who still rules the world today</i>	197
9. A need to think.....	203
<i>Who saved America?</i>	210
<i>Who is for, who is against?</i>	223
<i>They defamed our forebears too</i>	228
<i>Glad tidings</i>	235
10. The Book of Kin.....	242
<i>A good and attentive grandmother</i>	255
<i>To live in a marvellous reality</i>	260
Translator's Afterword.....	267
About the Ringing Cedars Series.....	274
Readers' comments.....	277

CHAPTER ONE



Who raises our children?

There was a large sign on the office door of the private clinic giving the M.D.'s full name, along with a title indicating an advanced academic degree, and identifying him as a specialist in child psychology. He had been recommended to me as one of the best scientific minds on the subject of parent-child relationships. I had put my name down for his last appointment of the day, as I didn't want to limit the length of our consultation — if it proved useful, I was prepared to pay him extra to continue as I was in such desperate need of advice. I opened the door and walked in.

Behind the desk was seated a gentleman of retirement age with a drawn face, listlessly stuffing sheets of scribbled paper into a file. After inviting me to take a seat, the doctor placed a clean sheet of paper before him and said:

“So? How can I help you?”

To avoid getting into a long, extended story about everything that had happened after meeting with Anastasia, I did my best to put the essence of my question in a nutshell:

“Alexander Sergeevich,¹ I need to learn how to get along with my child — my son — who will soon be five years old.”

“So, you believe you have lost contact with your son?” the psychologist asked blandly and dispiritedly.

“There has been practically no meaningful contact as such to date. The way it's turned out, since his birth I've hardly

¹ *Alexander Sergeevich* — first name and patronymic, the usual polite form of address in Russian among adults.

had any communication with him at all. I did see him one time while he was still an infant, but after that... I haven't talked with him even once. So, I have to say, he's started learning about life without me. We've been living quite apart from each other.

"But now I'm going to have a chance to meet with my five-year-old son and actually talk with him. Maybe there are some ways to help make him favourably disposed toward me? Like when a man marries a woman who already has a child, and wants to get along with him, to become his father and friend."

"There are ways, certainly," Alexander Sergeevich observed, "but none which are guaranteed to be effective in all cases. There's so much in parent-child relationships that depends on individual nature and character."

"I realise that, but still, I'd like to become familiar with whatever specific hints you may have."

"Specific... Hmm... When you make your appearance in the family — and you have to remember that even a single mother with a child constitutes a family — try to interfere as little as possible with the way of life they have already established. It will take some time before you become anything beyond an outsider to your son, and that's something you've got to accept. At the beginning stages you will have to spend some time sizing up the whole situation AND... give them a chance to size *you* up.

"You could try tying in your appearance with the fulfilment of some dream or desire the child has had but which has been impossible to fulfil. You could find out from his mother some kind of toy he's had his eye on which she hasn't been able to buy for him. But don't buy it yourself in advance. Start talking with him about your own childhood and the toys you had, and tell him how you dreamt of getting this one in particular. If he picks up on that and mentions about how he wants the

same thing, then you can suggest the two of you go to the store together and get it. What's important here is the actual conversational process, and the outing itself. The boy should get to the point of trusting you with his dream, allowing you to have a hand in making it come true."

"The toy example really won't work in my case. My son has never seen store-bought toys."

"Strange... So, that won't work, eh?... Well, my friend, you've got to be frank with me. If you want to hear some useful advice, then you'll have to give more details about your relationship with your child's mother. Who is she? Where does she work? Where does she live? What's her family's financial situation? What do you think led to the break-up?"

It was dawning on me, finally. If I wanted to get more specific advice out of the psychologist, I would have to go into my relations with Anastasia, which I still hadn't fully fathomed myself, so how was I going to explain them to a psychologist?

Without mentioning her name, I began describing the situation as follows:

"She lives in a very remote area, in Siberia. I happened to make her acquaintance while I was on a trade expedition. I've been doing business there since the beginning of *perestroika* — on a ship which took me to some isolated settlements along the Ob River, selling various manufactured goods and bringing back fish, furs and wild mushrooms, berries and nuts."

"I see. So, like Paratov,² this tradesman makes everyone jealous with his romantic exploits along a Siberian river?"

"No romance, just work. Haven't you heard? Entrepreneurs work like dogs!"

² *Sergei Paratov* — a cynical, hard-nosed character in Alexander Ostrovsky's drama *The dowerless bride* (*Bespridannitsa*), who betrays the affections of a poor girl named Larissa in a small town on the Volga River.

“Well, let’s say they do, but... entrepreneurs also find time to have fun, do they not?”

“Believe me, with this woman it wasn’t a question of having fun at all. I wanted to have a child by her. I’d been wanting a son for a long time, but then I seemed to forget about that particular dream. The years went by... But as soon as I saw her — how wholesome, young and beautiful she was... It seems just about every woman today is sick or sickly, but she — well, she was simply beaming with energy, the picture of health! So I figured her child would turn out healthy and good-looking too.

“She bore me a son. I went to see them when he was still quite little, before he could walk or talk. I held him in my arms. But since then I’ve had no contact with him.”

“And why is that?”

How on earth was I to explain to this gentleman during our brief conversation everything that it had taken me several books to describe? How could I tell him that Anastasia had refused to leave her taiga glade and move with our son into town, while I on the other hand was not adapted to life in the taiga? Or that she was the one who would not let me even communicate with him, let alone give him traditional toys?

Every summer I had gone back to Siberia, to the very glade where Anastasia and my son made their home, but I never managed to see my son again after that one time. Each time he would be somewhere else — with her grandfather and great-grandfather, who lived not far away, in the wilds of the endless Siberian forest. Anastasia refused to take me to visit them, and further insisted each time that I should first prepare myself for conversation with my son.

In attempting to find out more about child-raising, I would put a single question to many of my friends and acquaintances,

which was invariably greeted with misunderstanding and astonishment, even though it was quite a simple question:

“Have you ever had a serious conversation with your child?”

It would always turn out that the topics of conversation were pretty much the same: “Come to the table... Time for bed... Stop fooling around... Pick up your toys... Got your homework done?...”

The child gets older, goes to school, but talking about the meaning of life, Man’s destiny or even just about what his future path in life will be — well, most of them don’t have time for that, or even think it anything worth discussing. Maybe they feel the time isn’t right yet, that they’ll still have a chance to... But they never do. The child grows up...

But if we ourselves never even try having a serious conversation with our children, who then is raising them?

Why has Anastasia not allowed me to communicate with my very own son all these years? I have no idea what she’s been afraid of or trying to ward off.

Anyway, the day came when she all at once asked me whether I felt I was ready to meet and talk with my son. I replied that I did want to meet with him, but I still couldn’t quite bring myself to say I was ‘ready’.

All these years I had been reading anything I could lay my hands on concerning parent-child relationships. I kept writing my books, giving talks at conferences in various countries, but wrote and said almost nothing about the most important thing that interested me during all this time — the raising of children and how older generations should interact with them.

I kept thinking about all the different words of advice I had encountered in child-raising literature, but each time I would find myself coming back to what Anastasia said: “*Raising children means also raising yourself.*”³ It took me a long

time to comprehend the meaning of that saying, but I finally managed to reach a definite conclusion:

Our children are not raised by parental admonition, nor by kindergartens, schools and colleges. Our children are raised by the way people live — the way we ourselves live and the way society in general lives. And no matter what kids hear from their parents or teachers in school or any other institution of learning, no matter what clever systems of education are adopted, children will follow the lifestyle practised by the majority of people around them.

That means that the raising of children depends entirely on your own understanding of the world, on how you live your own life, how your parents live and how society in general lives. A sick and unhappy society can only give birth to sick and unhappy children.

“If you don’t tell me in detail about your relationship with the mother of your son, I’ll have a hard time finding any real advice to give you!” said the psychologist, interrupting a rather lengthy pause.

“That’s a rather long story,” I mused. “To put it briefly, the way things turned out, I’ve had no communication with my son for several years, and that’s all there is to it.”

“Okay, then tell me, in all these years have you given any financial support to your child’s mother? I think, for an entrepreneur, financial support would be the simplest way to show your interest in the family.”

“No, I haven’t. She believes she is fully provided for.”

“So, she’s a wealthy woman, then?”

“Let’s just say she has everything she needs.”

Alexander Sergeevich rose sharply from behind his desk and blurted out:

³See Book 4, Chapter 30: “In His image and likeness”.

"She lives in the Siberian taiga. She lives the life of a recluse. Her name is Anastasia, your son's name is Volodya,⁴ and you are Vladimir Nikolaevich Megré. I recognise you. I've read your books — more than once, in fact."

"Yes..."

Alexander Sergeevich started pacing the room excitedly. Then he began talking again:

"Well, well, well! I was right, eh? I guessed it! So, would you please answer me one thing. I need an answer! It's very important to me. To science... But no, don't answer. I'll say it myself. I'm beginning to understand... I'm sure that all these years since you first met Anastasia you've been doing intensive studies in psychology and philosophy. You've been constantly thinking about child-raising. Am I right?"

"Yes."

"But the conclusions you reached after reading these 'scholarly' books and articles did not satisfy you. And so you started looking for answers within yourself, or in other words, you started reflecting on the rising generation, on child-raising?"

"More or less. But most of all about my son."

"That's an inseparable part of it. You came to see me in desperation, and without too much hope for answers to the questions you've come up with. And if you don't get them from me, you'll go on searching on your own."

"Probably."

"So... Amazing! I'm going to mention the name of someone who is immeasurably stronger and wiser than me in all this."

"Who is that person and how can I arrange an appointment?"

"That person is none other than your Anastasia, Vladimir Nikolaevich!"

⁴*Volodya* — an endearing form of the name *Vladimir*.

"Anastasia? But she's hardly said anything about child-raising lately. And she's the one who wouldn't let me communicate with my son."

"That's just it — she's the one. And up to this moment I haven't been able to find any logical explanation for this decision on her part. Such strange behaviour! A loving woman suddenly announces to the father-to-be that he shouldn't communicate with his own son. A most irregular situation — never come across it before. But the result!... The result is simply amazing! You see, she's succeeded in making you... No, that word isn't applicable here. Anastasia's succeeded in attracting... And who? If you will pardon me, she's made a not-very-well-educated entrepreneur get interested in psychology, philosophy and the problems of child-raising. You've been thinking about that through the years — I can tell as much just by the simple fact that you came to see me. She's been raising your son all these years by herself, but at the same time she's also been educating you! She's been preparing you for this meeting of father and son."

"Yes, she actually has been raising our son alone. As for educating me, I don't think so. We don't get together all that often. And only for a brief time."

"But that information she gives you, even during those 'brief' moments, as you say, you're still having to sort out even today. The information is truly amazing. You, Vladimir Nikolaevich, say that Anastasia rarely talks about child-raising, but that isn't so."

Alexander Sergeevich quickly went over to his desk and pulled a thick grey notebook out of one of the drawers. Tenderly stroking it in his hands, he continued:

"I took all Anastasia's sayings in your books about the birth and raising of children and wrote them out in order, leaving out the details of the plot. Maybe, though, it wasn't right to take these quotations out of context. After all,

there's no doubt the plot makes them a lot easier to comprehend.

"These sayings of Anastasia's are fraught with great meaning — a great philosophical meaning, I would say, and wisdom from an ancient culture. I'm inclined to suppose — and I'm not alone here — that these principles are set forth in some kind of ancient book, maybe millions of years old. What Anastasia says has the kind of depth to it and the accuracy of expression that one associates with what I think are the most important thoughts set forth in ancient manuscripts, as well as modern scholarly works.

"After I had written out everything I could find concerning the birth and raising of children, what I had before me amounted to a treatise with no equal anywhere in the world. I am sure it will be used as the basis for a great number of dissertations and awardings of academic degrees, along with amazing discoveries. But even more importantly, it will give rise to a new race on the Earth known as *Man*!"

"But *Man*⁵ already exists right now."

"I think, when people look back from the future, the fact of *Man*'s existence may be in some doubt."

"How can that be? You and I exist. How can our existence ever be placed in doubt?"

"Our bodies exist, and we call them *people*. But in the future the content, or mental makeup of the human individual will be vastly different from yours and mine today, and so to underline the difference, the name will have to be changed. Possibly today's people will be called 'Such-and-such-a-period *Man*', or else they'll find a new name for those who are born in the future."

⁵*Man* — Throughout the Ringing Cedars Series, the word *Man* with a capital *M* is used to refer to a human being of either gender. For details on the word's usage and the important distinction between *Man* and *human being* please see the Translator's Preface to Book 1.

"Is it really that bad?"

"It is — no question about it. You've gone and read a lot of books about child-raising — books written by scholars. Now tell me, at what point does child-raising begin?"

"Some writers think it should begin when the child's a year old."

"Precisely. At best, starting at a year old. But Anastasia showed how Man is formed even before... I know you're thinking 'in the mother's womb'. But she showed that parents can form their future offspring even before the sperm and the egg get together. And this is explainable scientifically. Anastasia stands head and shoulders above all other psychologists who exist or have ever existed on the Earth. Her sayings are potent, they cover all stages of the development and the raising of the child — the pre-conceptual, the conceptual, the foetal stage and so forth.

"She covers topics which neither wise men of the past nor contemporary scholars have been able to grasp hold of. She has specifically highlighted what is absolutely essential to bearing and raising a fully fledged Man."

"But that's not something *I* remember. I never wrote about developmental stages."

"The books you wrote just documented the events you witnessed. Anastasia realised that that is just how you would be writing. Her next move was that she herself began giving specific form to these events, effectively clothing a great scientific work in an entertaining narrative form. She created your book with her very life, using it to bring invaluable knowledge to people.

"Most readers feel this intuitively. Many are ecstatic over the books, but they are unable to fully make sense of the cause of their excitement. They are absorbing information they never knew about before, on a subconscious level. But it can be taken in consciously too. I'll prove it to you.

“Look, here before you is a transcript of Anastasia’s sayings about the birth of a Man. My colleague and I have gone over them very carefully and noted down our comments. He is a sexopathologist with a post-graduate degree in medicine, and has the office next to mine. We conducted experiments and analysed the situation.”

Alexander Sergeevich opened his notebook and began speaking excitedly, almost exultantly:

“So, we have the beginning... The *pre-conceptual stage*. This is hardly ever looked upon as an aspect of child-raising, either in the present time or in the past as we know it. But it is quite clear today that at some point on the Earth, or somewhere in the limitless expanses of the Universe, there existed or still exists a culture in which the relationships between men and women were immeasurably more perfected than our own. And that the pre-conceptual stage was an important component — perhaps the basic component — in the upbringing of Man.

“Following the cultural traditions of a civilisation hitherto unknown to us, Anastasia carries out specific preparatory steps before conceiving a child. First, she dulls your sexual appetite. This is quite evident to me as a psychologist from the events described in your first book. Let me remind you of the order in which these events take place.

“During a rest stop on your trek through the taiga, you drink some cognac and have a bite to eat, but Anastasia does not respond to your offer of food and alcohol. She takes off her outer clothing and lies down on the grass. You are awed by her natural beauty, and you are aroused by a natural desire to possess this beautiful womanly body. Driven by a sexual impulse, you attempt to penetrate her, you touch her body and then... you lose consciousness.

“We shan’t go into the details of just how she manages to make you lose consciousness. The important thing is that as

a result of this you no longer look upon Anastasia as a sexual object. And you yourself mention this — I wrote down your words: ‘I had no thought of wanting to possess her.’”⁶

“Yes. You’re right — after the incident at the rest stop I had no further sexual desires in regard to Anastasia.”

“Now to the *second event* — *conception* — you tell about the proper way to conceive a child.

“Night-time in a cosy dug-out, with the fragrance of sweet grass and flowers. But you are not accustomed to spending the night alone in the taiga, and you ask Anastasia to lie down beside you. You already realise that if she is with you nothing bad will happen. She lies down beside you.

“So it turns out that in this intimate situation you find this most beautiful young womanly body right next to yours — a body which has the added attraction of being radiant with health. Unlike most women’s bodies you have known before, this one actually luxuriates in health. You sense the fragrance of Anastasia’s breath, yet at the same time you feel no sexual inclination. It has been expelled from you. The space it occupied has been cleansed to make way for another mental state — an aspiration to ensure the continuation of the family line. You are thinking about a son! A son that doesn’t yet exist. This is what you wrote in your book:

“‘It would be good if my son could be borne by Anastasia! She is so healthy. That means my son will be healthy and good-looking too.’”

“You involuntarily place your hand on Anastasia’s breast and start caressing it, but not with the same caresses as before. This time they are not sexual. It is as though you are caressing your son. Then you write about the touch of the lips, about Anastasia’s gentle breathing, and then — a complete

⁶Quoted from Book 1, Chapter 9: “Who lights a new star?”.

⁷Quoted (with slight variations) from Book 1, Chapter 9.

lack of any kind of details. Then you jump to describing the following morning, your excellent mood, and the feeling that an extraordinary feat has been performed.

"I wouldn't be surprised if your publishers tried to persuade you to describe that night in greater detail, to increase the book's popularity."

"Yes, they actually did try to do this, several times."

"But still, you did not describe that night in any of the subsequent editions of your book — why?"

"Because —"

"Stop! Please, don't go on. I want to see if my own conclusions are correct. You did not describe the sexual details of that night because you simply didn't remember anything after touching Anastasia's lips."

"You're right, to this day I can't remember anything about it. Except for that unusual sensation the following morning."

"What I'm going to say to you now you may find incredible. On that marvellous night you spent with Anastasia, absolutely no sex took place."

"No sex? But what about my son? I saw my son with my own eyes."

"What you experienced that night was indeed physical intimacy. There was sperm involved — in fact, everything that accompanies the conception of children, but there was no sex. My colleagues and I kept going over and over what happened with you. Just like me, they too concluded that you did not have sex with Anastasia."

"You see, the word *sex* in our time implies the satisfaction of fleshly needs, the aspiration for the pleasure of fleshly gratification. But in the context of the events of that night in the taiga, that particular motivation was lacking — in other words, you were not aiming to achieve sexual satisfaction. This time your aim was quite different — namely, a child."

Consequently, even the name of that event must be different. It's not just a question of terminology here — we are talking about a fundamentally different way of giving birth to Man.

"I'll say it again: *this is a fundamentally different way of giving birth to Man*. This is not an abstract statement — it is easily provable by means of scientific comparisons. Judge for yourself: no psychologist or physiologist today would deny the influence of external mental factors on the formation of the foetus in the mother's womb. Among other factors a major one (and frequently the dominant one) is the man's attitude toward the mother-to-be. Similarly, we cannot deny that a man's thoughts about a woman at the moment of their sexual intimacy has an unmistakable influence on the formation of the future individual. In one instance he is thinking of her as an object of sexual gratification. In the other he looks upon her as a co-creator. The result will naturally be different. It is possible that the child born under such circumstances will be just as strikingly different intellectually from contemporary Man as contemporary Man is different from the ape.

"Sex and the pleasure associated with it during the moment of co-creation is not an end in itself, but merely a means to an end. Other mental energies will govern the couple's bodies, and the child's psyche will be formed quite differently.

"Here is the first rule following from what I have said: a female desiring to bear a fully fledged Man and create a solid and happy family must be able to capture the moment at which the male wishes to join with her for the purpose of giving birth to a Man, cherishes the image of their child-to-be and desires its birth.

"Under these conditions the man and the woman achieve a mental state which allows them to obtain the highest possible satisfaction from their intimacy. And the child-to-be obtains a kind of energy which is absent in those who are born in the traditional manner — i.e., haphazardly."

“But how does the woman feel this moment? How is she to know about the man’s thoughts? Thoughts, after all, are not something you can see.”

“Caresses! That’s how she can tell. The mental state is always expressing itself through outward signs. Joy is shown in smiles and laughter, sorrow in a telltale expression of the eyes, position of the body etc. In this particular case, I think, it is not too hard to distinguish purely sexual caresses from the way he would touch his future child. Only with this kind of touch a certain ‘something’ happens that Man alone, of all the creatures living on the Earth, can experience. Nobody will ever be able to describe or scientifically explain this ‘something’. At the moment when it occurs any kind of analysis is impossible.

“As a psychologist, I can only assume that what is paramount in such an event is not the coming together of two physical bodies, but something immeasurably greater: the merging of two thoughts into one. More specifically: the merging of two complexes of feelings into one. The pleasure and bliss experienced through this are significantly superior to mere sexual gratification. Its continuity is not fleeting as with ordinary sex. The inexplicable pleasant feeling that it brings can last for months and even years. This is what makes a strong and loving family. This is what Anastasia is talking about.

“This also means that once the man has experienced it, he cannot bring himself to exchange the new sensation for mere sexual gratification. He will not be able to, or even desire to, betray his wife — his beloved. That is the moment that marks the beginning of the formation of the family. A happy family!

“There is a saying that ‘marriages are made in heaven’. The saying is quite true in respect to this particular case. Judge for yourself. What is generally considered today to attest to a heavenly marriage? A scrap of paper issued by the Civil

Records Office, or all sorts of church rituals. Funny, isn't it? Funny, yet at the same time sad.

"Anastasia is quite right when she says that a marriage made in heaven can only be affirmed by the couple's extraordinarily splendid mental state, which leads to the birth of a new and fully fledged Man.

"And I might add that the majority of children born today are born out of wedlock... And now... Now I'd like to read to you some comments made by my colleague, the sexopathologist:

The mutual sexual relations between a man and a woman as described in the book Anastasia, bring out a whole new meaning of sex. All currently existing textbooks on the subject, beginning with those of Ancient India and Greece right up to our contemporary treatises, may be seen as naïve and ridiculous in comparison to the significance of what Anastasia has to say. All the research described in all known works on sex, both ancient and modern, is focused solely on discovering various body positions, caressing techniques and sexual aids. But people have different physiological and psychological abilities and capabilities.

For any given individual there may be just a single most effective and acceptable position and just one particular sex aid that will match his character and temperament.

One would be hard put to find anywhere in the world a specialist capable of pinpointing with any degree of accuracy the most appropriate technique (out of the thousands of possibilities) in the case of a particular individual.

To carry out such a task the specialist would need to know the thousands of existing techniques with all their nuances, and study the physical and mental abilities of the individual in question, and that is patently impossible.

Evidence that the questions raised in regard to men and women's sexual relations have not been solved by modern science may

be seen in the ever-increasing loss of potency on the part of the majority of men and women in today's society. There is a growing number of sexually dissatisfied family couples. But this joyless picture can be changed.

Anastasia has shown that there exists in Nature some kind of mechanism, some kind of higher power capable of solving a seemingly insoluble problem in an instant. Through a couple's — a man and a woman's — specific mental state, this mechanism or power will help them find the conditions and techniques of sexual intercourse appropriate solely to them.

Undoubtedly, the pleasure experienced in this particular case will achieve the highest level attainable. It is quite possible that the man and woman who have experienced such satisfaction will maintain their conjugal fidelity for ever, quite independently of the dictates of laws and rituals.

“Conjugal fidelity! Conjugal infidelity. Betrayal.”

Alexander Sergeevich got up from behind his desk and continued to talk while standing.

“Anastasia was the first to show the nature of this phenomenon. I remember by heart not only isolated phrases, but whole monologues. Listen to what she says:⁸

They try all sorts of tricks to persuade people that satisfaction is something you can easily obtain, thinking only of carnal desire. And at the same time they separate Man from truth. The poor deceived women who are ignorant of this spend their lives accepting nothing but suffering and searching for the grace they have lost. But they are searching for it in the wrong places. No woman can restrain a man from fornication if she allows herself to submit to him merely to satisfy his carnal needs.

⁸This and subsequent quotations (unless otherwise indicated) are taken from Book 1, Chapter 9: “Who lights a new star?”.

“And again... I’ll have it in a moment... Yes, here it is:

They will strive to possess body after body, or make paltry and fateful use of their own bodies, realising only intuitively that they are drifting farther and farther away from the true happiness of a true union!

“Here is an absolutely accurate explanation of the cause of conjugal infidelity. I can also explain it as a psychologist. It’s all quite logical: a man and a woman — the so-called husband and wife — engage in sex just for the sake of sex. When they intuitively feel they are not getting sufficient satisfaction, they turn to a specialist and read supplementary literature on the subject. They are advised to try various positions and ways of caressing each other — in other words, to engage in a search for greater satisfaction through switching sexual techniques.

“Note what I said — ‘engage in a search’. They may not say this explicitly, but if they themselves, as Anastasia has correctly pointed out, have an intuition about the existence of a higher happiness, they will engage in a search. But... where are the limits of this search? Is it just limited to a change of positions? The logical next step is a change of bodies.

“Aha!” society cries. “That’s conjugal betrayal!” But there’s no betrayal going on here. There’s no betrayal, because there is no married couple!

“A marriage dependent on a scrap of paper is not a marital union. It is nothing but a convention thought up by society.

“A marital union should be established by a man and a woman through their attainment of the highest mental state Anastasia describes. She not only talked about it, she showed how to achieve it. This is an entirely new culture in male-female relationships.”

"Does that mean, Alexander Sergeevich, that you are recommending young people engage in intimate relations before a marriage is officially recognised?"

"Most people today are doing just that. Only we're ashamed to talk about it openly. But what I am proposing is to *refrain from engaging in sex just for the sake of sex, either before or after the marriage is registered*.

"We consider ourselves a free society. We have the possibility of freely engaging in debauchery. And oh, how we engage in it!

"Debauchery has become a whole industry. Look at the cinema and the endless stream of all kinds of pornography, look at prostitution or the rubberised dolls you can buy at sex-shops. What more evidence do you need?!

"In the face of this whole sexual orgy, which only attests to the failure of modern science to understand the nature and function of the mechanisms involved in the union of two people, Anastasia's words come as a discovery — literally a revelation!

"As a psychologist I have been able to appreciate the grandness of Anastasia's discovery. She has brought to light a whole new culture in male-female relationships.

"The primary role in them is taken on by the woman. Anastasia has succeeded in bringing you, too, to the understanding of this culture. She has been able to do this, using — intuitively, perhaps — the knowledge of some kind of ancient civilisation. But... we — or rather, my colleague — he has proved it in practice. He has proved that even a man can...

"He's a sexopathologist. He and I have worked together to analyse Anastasia's sayings. He was the first to talk about the new culture in relationships that has been unknown up to now. He was especially struck by this saying — you should remember it — she said:

...who — what individual — would want to come into the world as a result of carnal pleasures alone? We would all like to be created under a great impulsion of love, the aspiration to creation itself, and not simply come into the world as a result of someone's carnal pleasure.

But that is precisely how our children have come into the world — as the result of carnal pleasure. My wife and I wanted a child, so we had sex. I don't even know which day it was my wife conceived. It wasn't until after she became pregnant that we started thinking more specifically about the child. But Anastasia says that a particular mental state and aspiration is required right at the very moment preceding intimacy. Anyway, my colleague, no doubt, got more out of those sayings of hers than I. Or he felt more. He wanted to experience this mental state. He wanted them to have a child — a son.

"My colleague is already past forty, and his wife is two years younger than he. They have two children. He himself admitted that they have rarely had any sex these past few years. But he began talking with his wife about a child.

"At first she was quite surprised at his desire. She said it was too late for her to bear children. But her attitude toward her husband took a turn for the better. He gave her the book with Anastasia's sayings to read. And now the woman herself would start a conversation — no, not about her desire to have a child, but about how true the sayings in the book were.

"And then one night my colleague began caressing his wife — only not thinking about sex, but about their future son. He probably managed to do the same thing you did. The only difference is that you were led to that point by Anastasia, while he achieved it all on his own. Whether it just happened that way or not, it's hard to say, but he managed to achieve, in all probability, precisely the mental state you experienced. His wife responded with the same kind of caresses.

"These are not young people, and naturally they were not feeling the same strong sexual inclinations as in their youth. Their thoughts about their future child, no doubt, pushed any concerns about sexual techniques into the background.

"As a result... as a result, that 'something' happened. Neither my colleague nor his wife could remember any of the details of their intimacy. Just like you, they don't remember anything. But, as you did, they talk about the unforgettable, marvellous sensations they experienced the next morning. My colleague tells me that he has never felt anything like it in all his life, from intimacy either with his wife or with any other women — and, believe me, there were quite a few of those.

"His forty-year-old wife is now pregnant, in her seventh month. But that's not the main thing. The main thing is that his wife has fallen in love."

"With whom?"

"With her husband, my dear Vladimir Nikolaevich! Just imagine, here's this woman who used to be rather irritable and nagging, now coming to our clinic and waiting for her husband to finish work. She sits in the reception room and waits like a young girl newly in love. I have often caught the expression on her face out of the corner of my eye. It too has changed, and a barely noticeable hidden smile is now evident.

"I've known this family quite some time. About eight years. This plump, depressed woman has suddenly become ten years younger. And she is beautiful, in spite of her all-too-obvious pregnancy."

"What about your colleague's attitude toward his wife — has it changed too, or has it remained the same?"

"He's changed too. He's completely given up drinking, even though he didn't really have a serious problem with it before. He's stopped smoking. He and his wife have a new favourite pastime — painting."

"Painting? What do they paint?"

“They paint their future family domain, the kind Anastasia talks about. They want to get a piece of land and build on it — wrong word: not to build a house, but to lay the foundation for a future corner of Paradise for their children-to-be.”

“You said, *children-to-be*?”

“Exactly. His wife’s only regret is that the conception took place in an apartment, and not in their own domain, as Anastasia recommends — in the Space of Love built with their own hands, where the woman should stay during the whole period of her pregnancy and where the birth should take place.

“My colleague’s wife is convinced she can have still another child beyond this one. And my colleague thinks so too.

“I am convinced that the instinct one finds among animals to perpetuate the species differs from the human condition in the fact that the animals’ mating is governed only by the call of nature. When Man engages in so-called sex, he is merely imitating the animals. A child brought into the world as the result of this process is half-man, half-animal.

“A true Man can be born only when the energies and feelings inherent in Man alone are involved — i.e., love, a vision of the future, an awareness of what is being created. In fact, the word *sex* isn’t really applicable at all. It only trivialises the event taking place. The term *co-creation* is much more accurate here.

“When a man and a woman achieve the mental state where co-creation takes place, it is at that point that they enter into a marriage made in heaven. This is not a union sealed by a scrap of paper or a ritual, but by something immeasurably greater and more meaningful, and hence it will be solid and happy.

“And you mustn’t think that only young people can enter into a union like this. The example of my colleague shows that it is available to people of all ages. Such a union is possible

only on the condition that they themselves are able to comprehend the significance of what Anastasia has set forth.”

“So what does all this mean?” I asked. “Does it mean that all the people whose passport⁹ is stamped with a marriage registration aren’t married after all?”

“A passport stamp is nothing but a convention thought up by society. The pieces of paper and all the rituals practised by different peoples in different historical periods may be outwardly different, but in essence they all amount to the same thing — an attempt to impress the mind and artificially create at least an appearance of union among two people. As Anastasia correctly points out:

A false union is a frightening thing.

Children! Do you see, Vladimir? Children! They sense the artificiality, the falsity of such a union. And this makes them sceptical about everything their parents tell them. Children sub-consciously sense the lie even during their conception. And that has a bad effect on them.

“It turns out that in Nature there is not an artificial, but a natural, Divine union. And Anastasia has shown people living today how it can be achieved.”

“So what you’re saying is that even people who are married — even the ones with a stamp to that effect in their passport — should really be marrying their spouse a second time?”

“Not the *second* time, but *for the first time in actual fact*, it would be more accurate to say,” observed Alexander Sergeevich.

“That’s going to be a hard one for most people to understand. In every country of the world sex is held up as the

⁹*passport* — in this case, an internal document issued by the Russian government as proof of one’s identity, which includes a record of marriage where applicable.

highest form of pleasure, and every last individual engages in it for the sake of pleasure.”

“All a lie, Vladimir Nikolaevich! Ninety percent of men are incapable of satisfying a woman.

“The myth that the majority of people derive supreme delight from sex is nothing but a psychological suggestion. Human beings’ appetite for sex is the basis of a whole commercial industry. The flood of legal and underground porno-magazines is a veritable gold-mine. And they know how to pull the wool over people’s eyes. Films where all sorts of supermen freely satisfy their partners — that’s all business too.

“The simple fact is: we are too timid and too afraid to admit to each other that we don’t have the right partner. But the fact remains — an indisputable fact — that sixty percent of marriages do not last. And the other forty percent are far from perfect, as is evidenced by continual spousal betrayals and the tremendous increase in prostitution.

“The gratification we derive from sexual experiences today is hardly satisfying. It is no more than an infinitesimal part of the satisfaction Man experiences from the genuine co-creation appointed by God, in partnership with Him — something we search in vain for all our lives.

“*We’re ‘searching for it in the wrong places’!* The truth of this saying is indisputably borne out in our very lives.

“Anastasia represents a culture of some kind of ancient civilisation which our historians probably haven’t the faintest concept of. She completely destroys prevailing stereotypes. Just how perfect this culture was can be seen by considering how it dealt with pregnant women, who upon conception were expected to stay in the same place for nine months, and give birth there. How important is this?

“The advantage of this policy can be corroborated by information from modern science and comparative analysis. The

place where the mother conceives and carries her child-to-be is termed a *domain*. In this domain a man and a woman have established a garden with their own hands, a garden containing all sorts of plants. Physiologists recognise the importance of proper nourishment for pregnant women — this has been written up in dozens of scientific and popular publications. But what of it? Is it necessary for every pregnant woman to study these? Just forget about everything else and set about studying the literature on the subject? That would be rather hard to swallow!

“Even if every single pregnant woman took to studying these scientific treatises, she would inevitably be faced with another insoluble problem: where could she obtain the products recommended?

“Let’s suppose a couple had unlimited funds at their disposal and could buy whatever they liked. *An illusion!* No money will or even can buy what a pregnant woman desires, and right at the very moment she desires it. I’m thinking, for example, of an apple of the quality a woman can pick in her own garden and eat on the spot.

“Then there are the psychological considerations, which are no less important than the physiological. Let’s take and compare two situations.

“The first is a standard scenario, which happens with the vast majority of people. Let’s take a young family with an average or slightly-above-average income. A pregnant woman lives with her husband in a flat. Is she able to feed herself with the proper quality of food? No! Modern supermarkets, even those with upscale prices, are unable to offer us good-quality food. Tinned or frozen foods are *not* something natural for Man.

“Well, what about the farmers’ markets, then? Even there the quality is doubtful, to put it mildly. Private farmers too have learnt to use all sorts of chemical additives in raising

their crops. When they're growing things for themselves, that's one thing, but when they're growing to sell, that's when their desire to make money pushes them to use all sorts of stimulating devices. Everyone knows about it, and so there is naturally a feeling of concern and alarm over using food from unknown sources.

"A feeling of alarm! A feeling that has become modern Man's bosom companion!

"Pregnant women today are overwhelmed by an endless flood of information about constant social cataclysms and ecological disasters. Both her consciousness and sub-conscious become home to an ever-increasing fear over the future of her child-to-be. Where can we possibly find anything positive to counteract it? There are no positive aspects — indeed, under the monstrous circumstances of contemporary life we have doomed ourselves to, there cannot be.

"Even in a comfortably appointed apartment we get used to our surroundings and they cease to delight our eye with anything new. We also get used to everything in the apartment ageing and breaking, even as we are accustomed to our tap water being undrinkable.

"All this all of a sudden starts to weigh upon a pregnant woman's acute sensibilities. All she can do is to hope for a miracle. Under the constant pressure of hopelessness, this is the most she can count on.

"In the second scenario, the woman is surrounded by a Space of Love, as Anastasia terms it, where in addition to the satisfaction of her physiological needs she is also given a powerful psychological boost.

"Modern science is capable of explaining and demonstrating the truth of practically every one of Anastasia's sayings. They are altogether simple and logical. The only wonder is that in spite of all our studied speeches on the subject we have never given them much heed.

“But Anastasia also talks about mysterious phenomena that modern science cannot explain:¹⁰

Parents should impart to their co-creation the three most important points, the three primary planes of being.

“She further says that for all three planes of being to merge into one in one spot, namely, in one’s family domain, the following must occur:

The thoughts of two in love will merge into one... Here is the first point — it is called parental thought... The second point, or rather, yet another human plane, will be born and light a new star in the heavens when two bodies merge into one — merge in love and with thoughts of a splendid creation... And a third point, a new plane of being should come about in that space. Right there on the spot where the conception occurred the birth should take place. And the father should stay close around. And the great all-loving Father will raise over the three of them a crown.

“I am certain that physiologists and psychologists will be able to explain the advantages of conceiving, carrying and giving birth to a child all in the same spot — in a splendid kin’s domain. But Anastasia talks about something even greater. She says that in such a case the individual who is born experiences a complete connection with the Universe. Why? How does it happen? How important is this approach to a child’s birth for his future as a Man? Scholars today can only guess.

“I tried juxtaposing what Anastasia said with the prognostications of the horoscopes that are popular today. The question naturally arose, which of the three points Anastasia

¹⁰These passages are quoted (with a slight variation) from Book 4, Chapter 30: “In His image and likeness”.

mentions is the most important constituent of a Man's birth — the thought, the physiological conception or the emerging of the infant from the mother's womb?

"It is generally accepted today that one's birthdate is defined by the moment of emergence from the mother's womb. This is what horoscopes are based on. But science has already determined that the foetus, even before it has emerged from the womb, is alive, it has feelings. And if that is so, then the Man already exists. He is already born. He can move — the mother can feel the push of his little legs and arms. Perhaps, then, it would be more accurate to calculate a Man's birthdate from the moment the sperm fertilises the egg? Certainly from the physiological point of view, this could be considered the most accurate defining moment of somebody's 'birth'. But...

"The meeting of the sperm and the egg is still not a cause — it is an effect. It is preceded by the couple's thoughts. Could it be that *these thoughts* define one's birthdate? Of the three moments we have mentioned, it is generally accepted today that one's birthdate is the moment of emergence into the world. Tomorrow, though, the calculation could be different.

"According to Anastasia's theory, Man's birthdate is the point where these three moments merge into one. And here may be seen her irrefutable logic. But we (and here I am referring to religious teachings as well as modern science) are afraid even to mention this."

"What is there to be afraid of?" I queried.

"There *is* something, actually... You see, Vladimir Nikolaevich, if we accept the irrefutability of Anastasia's statements, then we are obliged to admit that by comparison with the people of the culture she represents, we are not fully fledged people. Most of us today are lacking one or two of the components inherent in a fully fledged Man. So that's why we're afraid not just to talk about it, but even to think about it. And yet we should be thinking about it..."

"But perhaps we don't think or talk about these statements because they're too controversial?"

"On the contrary! They are too *uncontroversial* — they are incontrovertible!

"*First*, think about this: who will deny that a situation where thought rather than debauchery precedes the birth of a child — the meeting of the sperm and the egg — is more moral and more psychologically fulfilling?

"*Second*: it is also absolutely indisputable that a pregnant woman should receive a wholesome variety of nourishment and avoid stress. One's own family domain, as Anastasia describes it, is ideal for this.

"*Third*: giving birth in familiar surroundings, in a setting one is accustomed to, will create a much more favourable condition for the birthing mother and, more importantly, for the newborn. This is also an irrefutable fact in both psychology and physiology. Now, are you in agreement with these three points so far?"

"Of course I am."

"You see, they are indeed irrefutable, and not only for scholars. Consequently, we cannot deny the positive influence produced by the union of these three positive components into a single whole.

"As a psychologist, I can conjecture that in such a union, a psychic reaction takes place in space. The whole Space of the Universe reacts to it — accepting the newborn and establishing an information link with him."

"Possibly. But what is the significance here of establishing an exact birthdate for Man?"

"A tremendous significance! A global significance! This is what determines the level at which we perceive the world. If we give priority to the emergence of the foetus into the world, that means *matter* is primary in our world-view.

"If on the other hand we give priority to the moment at which the man's and woman's thoughts merge together, then *consciousness* takes precedence in our world-view.

"The upshot is that we are dealing with the formation of two different cultures which determine our way of life. In the first instance *matter* takes predominance, in the second, it is *spirituality*. This conflict has been going on for ages, either openly or below the surface. But now I am beginning to see the absurdity of such a conflict. Anastasia talks about the merging not only of these two concepts, but of a third as well, into a single whole. On the basis of her statements one can postulate not only a *theory* of the birth of a fully fledged Man, but also the possibility of its realisation in practice. It comes right down to something that is available to everyone. But why do we not take advantage of the opportunities we have? Why is there chaos in our consciousness, and why does life evaporate into vanity? — there's the question!"

"I still think," I said, "you should use the date and hour when the infant emerges into the world from the mother's womb as one's birthdate. Only phrase it more accurately: 'the moment of emergence into the world'."

"Possibly. Quite possibly! But as to the moment of the birth itself, I still think you'd better ask Anastasia."

"I shall indeed ask her. I'll be interested to know myself exactly when I was born, and when my son was born."

"Oh, your son! You came to me asking for advice, and here I've been rambling on about my own — Sorry, I got talking too much. It's something that's been nagging at me. You see, I hold consultation three times a week. People come to me with their problems.

"They all ask the same kinds of questions: *How to raise a child? How do I establish contact with my son or daughter?* And the child may be already five, or ten or even fifteen years old.

"If I tell someone: 'Well, old chap, it's too late to think about raising them now!', then I'm killing his last hope. So my real task is basically one of comforting."

"Well, my son too will soon be five years old. Does that mean it's too late for me too?"

"You, Vladimir Nikolaevich, are in quite a different situation. Your son's got Anastasia watching out for him. It's just as well she prevented you from tossing your child out into the routine of our world. She's raising him in the context of a totally different culture."

"Does that mean my son and I are of different cultures, and so we'll never be able to understand each other?"

"Parents and children always represent what seem to be different cultures, different world-views. Each generation has its own priorities. Granted, the distinction is generally not so sharp as in your case. My advice to you is this: before attempting to communicate with your son, have a talk with Anastasia about how best to approach it. Pay careful attention to whatever she says. After all, you've been reading a lot and thinking a lot about the raising of children. Now it'll be easier for you to understand her."

"Understanding her doesn't always work out," I countered, "even after a long time goes by. Some of her sayings still provoke doubts in me. They are mystical and not the kind you can prove. In fact, I've deliberately refrained from publishing a lot of her sayings — a lot of them sound more like fantasy and —"

Alexander Sergeevich suddenly banged the palm of his hand down on the table and sharply — even somewhat rudely — interrupted me:

"You've no right to do that. If your mind won't allow you to make sense of something, at least give others the opportunity."

I did not appreciate the psychologist's sharp tone of voice or his message. This wasn't the first time I had heard or read

such accusations directed at me. They would reduce me to some kind of half-wit and say that my role was no more than transcribing as accurately as possible everything this Siberian recluse had said. But in making such statements these smart alecs weren't taking the whole picture into account. I decided to put this suddenly aggressive psychologist in his place:

"Naturally you count yourself among those — those others, who are able to understand everything she says. I may not be a psychologist with an academic degree, but there is one simple truth even I can comprehend: if I were to publish all her mystical sayings without back-up evidence, people would be inclined to treat everything written in the books as a fairy tale. And all the practical stuff that can be put into practice today would get lost. By not publishing some of her mystical sayings, it is quite possible that I have saved the practical message she has for people."

"Can you tell me specifically what kind of 'mystical sayings' you're talking about?"

"Well, here's a good example. She said that she's taken the best combination of sounds in the Universe and hidden them in the text of the book and they will have a beneficial influence on the readers."¹¹

"Yes, I remember that. I remember it very well. It's written right in the first book. It also says there that the effect is increased if the reader listens to natural sounds while reading."

"You remember that, eh? And the fact that these words can be found not only in the text itself, but right at the front of the book. Remember? The publishers suggested I put them there, to intrigue the readers. And I did..."

"And rightly so."

¹¹See Book 1, Chapter 27: "Across the dark forces' window of time".

"You think so? But you know, that particular saying right up front turned a lot of people off the book. Many saw it as just an advertising gimmick, and said so in the media. I removed it in some of the editions. Many people consider it mystical, or just something made up."

"Idiots! Don't tell me... Don't tell me the mind of society can atrophy to that extent! Or has mental laziness switched off any logical thinking on the part of the masses?"

"What's mental laziness got to do with it? If the saying is impossible to prove?"

"*Prove?* What is there to prove? This saying is nothing if not a psychological test ingenious in its simplicity and effectiveness. It has the power to identify at a single glance complete dullards with atrophied mental capacities. If they go ahead and mention this in the media, it'll be as though they're saying: *Look at what utter klutzes we are!* A most ingenious test, indeed."

"What's this about a test? The saying in question is simply not provable."

"Not provable, you say? Well, it's not a matter of proving anything. What Anastasia says here is an axiom. Judge for yourself. The text of any book — and I mean *any* book, any letter, any oral speech — consists precisely of combinations of sounds. Does that make sense? Do you agree?"

"Well, yes, in general, I agree. It's true that the texts of all books are made up of combinations..."

"You see how simple it all is? It is this very simplicity that people who are too lazy to think logically have stumbled over."

"Possibly... But, after all, she did say she had found and collected the best combinations from the expanses of the Universe and that they would exercise a beneficial effect on the readers."

"But there is absolutely nothing 'mystical' in that. Judge for yourself: when you read any kind of book, or newspaper or

magazine article, doesn't it have an effect on you? The reading can leave you indifferent, provoke irritation, satisfaction, anger or joy. Well? Get it? D'you agree?"

"Yes."

"Okay. As for the beneficial effect of Anastasia's texts, it's clearly evident in the reaction of the readers. I'm not talking about published reviews, which are sometimes paid for. The fact of beneficial influence is confirmed in the creative urges shown by the readers. It is evident in the multitude of poems and songs your readers have composed. I myself have bought five audiocassettes of songs dedicated to Anastasia. They have been written by people who are very simple, or maybe just the opposite — quite possibly they're not so simple after all. I bought these cassettes and listened to them. What Anastasia said has been confirmed by life itself. After all, the poetry came about under the influence of the reading. And you call it 'mystical'. You have no right to censor Anastasia."

"Okay. That's it — I'm leaving. Thanks for the advice."

I had already taken hold of the doorknob and was about to walk out, when I heard the doctor say:

"Hold on a moment, please, Vladimir Nikolaevich. I can see you've taken offence at what I said. I'm sorry if I sounded a bit sharp. I don't want us to part with bad feelings."

Alexander Sergeevich was standing in the centre of the room. A little bit pudgy around the middle, getting along in years. He neatly buttoned up his jacket and went on:

"You should understand that you have a duty to publish everything Anastasia says. Don't worry if not everything she says is clear to you, or to me or to someone else. Don't worry about that. It's important for *them* to understand."

"And who's *they*?"

"Young women still capable of bearing healthy children. If they get it, that means everything will change... Anyway,

look at how little we've talked about your son, and that is the whole reason you came to see me!"

"Of course it is."

"There's no concrete advice I can really give you. Your situation's too irregular. Maybe you could take some picture-books to Siberia for him. History books, for example. You might also try dressing up. Maybe this all sounds silly, but I just want to make sure you don't paint too harsh a picture of our reality for him."

"What picture would you like me to paint? All prettied up and glossed over?"

"That's not what I'm talking about. Remember, you'll be introducing yourself to your son as a representative of our reality, and this may mean you'll be compromising yourself in his eyes."

"And why should I alone be expected to answer for all the perversions of our society?"

"If you show your son that you are incapable of changing anything in our society for the better, you'll simply be demonstrating how powerless you are. You'll be compromising yourself in your son's eyes. I have a feeling he has been raised in such a way that he will not understand how anything *impossible* can exist for Man."

"I guess you're right, Alexander Sergeevich. Thanks for the practical advice. Really, it's *not* a bad idea to put a good face on our life as far as the child is concerned. Yes, definitely it's worth it, or else he'll think..."

We shook hands and, as far as I could tell, parted friends.

CHAPTER TWO



Conversation with my son

Having trekked from the river the whole way to Anastasia's glade all on my own, I felt right at home as I approached the familiar places. This time nobody was there to greet me. It even gave me a good feeling to walk through the taiga all on my own, without a guide.

I wasn't about to cry out, or call Anastasia's name. Perhaps she was occupied with her own affairs. When she was free, she would feel my presence and come to me on her own.

Spying my favourite spot on the lakeshore where Anastasia and I were wont to spend time together, I decided I would change my clothes first before sitting down and relaxing after my trip.

I took out of my backpack a dark grey wrinkle-resistant suit, a thin white sweater and a new pair of comfortable shoes. In getting ready for my trip I had also thought of taking along a white shirt and tie, but then decided that the shirt would only get wrinkled, and there would be no place to iron it in the taiga. But I had the suit packed in the store so it wouldn't wrinkle.

I decided I should present myself to my son in a solemn, elegant manner, and so I spent a great deal of time and effort in thinking about my outward appearance.

I had brought along a battery-powered razor and a mirror. Resting the mirror on a tree-branch, I proceeded to shave and comb my hair. Then I sat down on a small hillock, took out a notepad and pen to round out my plan for meeting my son with some thoughts that had come to me along the way.

My son will soon be five years old. Of course he can talk already. The last time I saw him he was still very little, he wasn't talking yet, but by now there must be a lot of things he can understand. He probably natters on with Anastasia and his grandfathers for days on end. I had it all set in my mind that just as soon as I saw Anastasia I would let her know how I had planned out my meeting with our son and what I would say to him.

For the past five years I had been diligently studying all the various systems of child-raising, taking from them what I considered the best and easiest to understand. After talking with educational experts and child psychologists I had arrived at the conclusions I needed for myself. Now, before meeting with my son, I wanted to talk with Anastasia about these conclusions, along with the plan I had worked out — to think through everything once again in detail, this time with her. Perhaps Anastasia could suggest what first words I should say to him, and what pose to adopt while saying them. I had decided the pose was important, too, since a father should appear to his son as a significant person. But first Anastasia had to introduce me to him.

The first point on my notepad read: *Anastasia presents me to my son.*

All she had to do was introduce me with some simple words, such as: "Here, son, here before you is your birth father."

But she had to say them quite solemnly, so that our son would be able to feel from her tone of voice his father's significance, and subsequently treat him with respect.

All at once I felt everything around become quiet, as though put on alert. The sudden onset of silence didn't frighten me. This always happened every time I met Anastasia in the taiga. The taiga and all its residents literally froze, listening,

watching and deciding whether the newcomer might have brought their mistress any kind of unpleasantness. Then, if no aggression were detected, everything would calm down.

I surmised from the ensuing silence that Anastasia had quietly approached me from behind. It wasn't a difficult thing to sense her presence, especially since I always experienced something like a warming sensation in my back — something only Anastasia was capable of producing with her look. I didn't turn around right away, but continued sitting there for some time, luxuriating in the pleasant and cheering warmth. Finally I turned, and lo and behold...

There before me was standing my little son, his bare feet planted firmly on the ground. He had grown. His straw-blond hair was already falling in curls down to his shoulders. He was dressed in a collarless shirt woven from nettle fibres. His features resembled those of Anastasia's — perhaps mine too, though this was not obvious at first glance.

Turning to face him, my hands pressed against the ground, I found myself standing on all fours, watching him intently, oblivious to everything else in the world. He in turn kept his eye silently trained on me, watching me with Anastasia's kind gaze. Perhaps the unexpectedness of it all would have continued to prevent me from saying anything for a long time, but he was the first to speak.

"Greetings to your bright thoughts, my dear Papa!"

"Eh?... And greetings, of course, to you as well," I responded.

"Forgive me, Papa."

"Forgive you for what?"

"For interrupting your important reflections. I have been standing at a distance, so as not to interfere, but I wanted to come and be close to you. Please, Papa, let me sit beside you quietly until you have completed your reflections."

"Eh? Okay. Sure, have a seat."

He quickly approached, sat down a half-metre away and didn't move a muscle. I continued kneeling distractedly on all fours. As he was settling in, I managed to think: *I must adopt a deep-thought pose while I finish my 'reflections', as he put it. I need to think of what to do next.*

I took up what I thought was a dignified pose, and for a while we just sat there side by side without saying a word. Then I turned to my little son and asked him:

"Well, how are things going with you?"

Upon hearing my voice he gave a joyful start, turned to me and looked me straight in the eye. His look told me he felt tense, not knowing how to answer my simple question. But he finally responded:

"I cannot, Papa, give you an answer to your question. I do not know how things are going. Here, Papa, life is going on. It is something very good, life is."

Somehow I've got to carry on the conversation, I thought. *I can't afford to lose the momentum.* And so I asked him another traditional question:

"Well, how are you doing here? You minding your Mama?"

This time he replied at once:

"I am always happy to mind my Mama when she speaks. And when my Grandfathers speak, it is interesting to listen to them too. I talk to them as well, and they listen to me. But Mama Anastasia thinks that I talk too much — I ought to think more, says Mama Anastasia. But my thoughts come very quickly and I want to talk differently."

"What do you mean, differently?"

"Like my Grandfathers, I want to arrange my words one after another, like Mama does, like you do, Papa."

"And how do you know how I arrange my words?"

"Mama showed me. I get very interested when Mama starts talking with your words."

"Really? Wow!... Well... and what do you want to be?"

Again this very ordinary question, which adults frequently ask children, was apparently beyond his understanding. After a brief pause he replied:

“But I already *am*, Papa.”

“I know that you are, but I meant: what do you want to become? When you grow up, what are you going to do?”

“I shall be you, Papa, when I grow up. I shall carry on what you do now.”

“How do you know what I do?”

“Mama Anastasia told me.”

“And what all has she been telling you about me?”

“A whole lot. Mama Anastasia tells me that you are such a... What is the word? Oh yes, I remember — that you are such a *hero*, my dear Papa!”

“A hero?”

“Yes. It is hard for you. Mama wants life to be easier for you. She wants you to be able to rest in normal conditions for Man, but you go to a place where many people find it very hard to live. That is why you go away, to do good to people there. I was very sad to learn that there are people who do not have their own glade and they are always being frightened and made to live in a way they themselves do not want. They cannot pick their own food. They have to... well, *work*, I think it is called. They have to do not what they want themselves but what somebody tells them to do. And for this they are given paper — money — and they then exchange this money for food. They have simply forgotten a bit how it is possible to live otherwise and enjoy life. And you, Papa, you go to that place where it is hard for people to live, to bring good to the people there.”

“Eh? Yes, I do go there... There should be good everywhere. But how do you plan to carry on with the good? — how are you preparing for it right now? You need to study, to learn.”

"I am learning, Papa. I like learning very much, and I try my best."

"What are you learning, what subject?"

Again, he didn't understand the question right off, but then replied:

"I learn the whole subject. Just as soon as I chase it up to the speed Mama Anastasia has, I shall immediately understand the whole subject, or all the subjects. Yes, it is better to say: *all the subjects*."

"What do you chase up to the speed your Mama has?"

"My thought. But for the time being I cannot chase it up as quickly. Mama's thought runs more quickly. Her thought is quicker than my Grandfathers' — quicker than a ray of sunshine. She is so quick that only He thinks faster."

"Who? Who's *He*?"

"God — our Father."

"Oh yes, of course. Still, you have to try. Yes, you must try your best, my son."

"Fine, Papa, I shall try even harder."

In an effort to continue the conversation about learning without saying something stupid and meaningless, I reached into my backpack and pulled out a book at random — one of the books I had brought with me. It turned out to be a Grade 5 textbook called *A history of the ancient world*. I explained to my son:

"You see, Volodya, this is one of the many books people are writing today. This book tells children about how life began on the Earth, how Man and society developed. It's got a lot of colour illustrations along with a printed text. This book outlines the history of mankind. Scholars — they're such smart people, well, smarter than others, or so people say — have described in this book the life of primordial people on the Earth. When you learn to read, you'll be able to learn a lot of interesting stuff from books like this."

"I know how to read, Papa."

"Eh? Really? Your Mama's teaching you to read?"

"Mama Anastasia once drew the letters for me in the sand and said their names aloud to me."

"D'you mean to tell me you memorised all the letters right off?"

"I did. There are very few of them. I was sad to learn there are so few."

I didn't pay any attention at first to his remark about the fewness of the letters in the alphabet. I was interested in hearing whether or not my son could actually read a printed text. I opened the book to the first page, handed it to him and said:

"Here, try to read this."



A distorted view of history

He took the open book, in his left hand for some reason, and spent a few moments silently looking at the printed text, before starting to read:

The earliest people lived in hot climates, where there were no frosts or cold winters. People did not live by themselves, but in groups, which scholars call human flocks. Everybody in the flock, from the littlest to the greatest, collected food. They would spend whole days searching for edible roots, wild-growing fruit and berries, and birds' eggs.

After reading this text aloud, he raised his head from the book and began looking me straight in the eye, enquiringly. I said nothing, not understanding his query. His voice betrayed concern as he began talking.

"I do not have any concept from this."

"What kind of 'concept' do you mean?"

"No concept at all comes to me. Either it is broken, or it cannot present a concept of what is written in this book. When Mama Anastasia or my Grandfathers speak, I have a clear concept of everything they say. When I read His book, the whole concept is even clearer. But from this book I have only a distorted kind of concept. Or it is somehow broken within me."

"What do you need this 'concept' for? Why waste time on a concept?"

"The concepts come all by themselves, when there is truth being told... but here, it is not happening — that means... One moment... I shall try to check. Perhaps the people written about in this book had no eyes, if they had to search all day long for food? Why did they spend days searching for food if it was always right with them?"

Then something inexplicable began happening with the child. He suddenly shut his eyes tight and began feeling the grass around him with one hand. Upon finding something, he picked and ate it. Then he got to his feet, and said without opening his eyes:

"Perhaps they did not have noses either."

He pinched his nose tight together with his fingers and began walking away from me. After proceeding about fifteen metres, he lay down on the grass, his hand still covering his nose, and uttered a sound something like *a-a-a*.

At that point it seemed as though everything around sprung into motion. Several squirrels jumped down together out of the trees, spreading their paws and fluffing out their tails like

a parachute. Running up to the child lying on the grass, they would put something down beside his head, then dash back up into the trees and again parachute down to the ground.

Three wolves standing some distance away also came running up to the boy lying on the grass and began hovering anxiously around him.

With a noisy crunch of branches a young bear appeared, toddling quickly along, then a second bear, a little smaller but more agile.

The first bear sniffed the child's head and licked his hand, which was still holding on to his nose. Various other creatures of the taiga, big and small, kept popping out of the bushes. They all began to hover anxiously around the little fellow lying on the grass, completely oblivious to each other's presence. It was quite evident they didn't understand what was happening to him.

I too could not understand at first my son's strange actions. Then I figured it out. He was portraying a helpless person deprived of sight and smell. The little *a-a-a* sounds he kept making from time to time were to signal to those around him that he was hungry.

The squirrels kept arriving and departing as before, bringing cedar cones, dry mushrooms and something else besides, and piling them up on the grass beside the child.

One squirrel stood up on its hind legs, its front paws holding a cedar cone. With its sharp teeth it quickly began extracting the nuts inside. Another squirrel bit the nuts open and made a pile of the freshly shelled kernels.

But the boy did not take the food. He continued lying there with closed eyes, his hand holding his nose, and uttering his *a-a-a* with growing insistence.

At this point a sable came running headlong out of the bushes. A beautiful fluffy creature with a luxuriant coat of fur. It ran two circles around the boy, paying no attention to

the gathering cluster of animals. And the creatures, whose attention had been totally focused on the unusual behaviour of the child, didn't seem to take any notice of the sable at all. But when it suddenly pulled up sharply and stopped at the pile of cedar nuts the squirrels had shelled and began eating them, the creatures reacted.

The first ones to bare their teeth and have their hair stand on end were the wolves. The bear, which had been swaying back and forth, shifting its weight from one paw to another, first froze still, his gaze trained on the glutton, then he gave it a slap with his paw. The sable flew off to one side and flipped over, but immediately jumped up again and made a nimble dash for the child, putting its front paws up on his chest. Directly the little one tried making his usual demanding *a-a-a*, the sable brought its muzzle right up to the boy's open mouth and deposited therein the food it had just chewed.

At long last Volodya sat up on the grass, opened his eyes and let go of his nose. He surveyed all the creatures around him, who were still showing signs of concern. Then he got to his feet and began calming them down.

Then each creature in its turn, according to a hierarchy known only to them, approached the boy. Each one received a reward. The wolves got a friendly clap on the mane. With one of the bears Volodya took its muzzle in both hands and gave it a shaking, then for some reason rubbed the second bear's nose. He used his leg to press the sable squirming at his feet to the ground, and when it flipped over onto its back, he proceeded to tickle its tummy.

After receiving their due reward, each creature in turn respectfully withdrew.

Volodya picked up a handful of shelled cedar nuts from the ground and made a sign to the squirrels which by all appearances was intended to let them know that they need not bring any more gifts. Even though the child had been calming the

creatures down, up to this point the squirrels had been continuing to feed him, but stopped immediately upon Volodya's signal.

My little boy came over to me, handed me a fistful of nuts and said:

"In the concept I have within me, Papa, when the first people began to live on the Earth, they did not need to spend entire days searching for and gathering food. They did not need to think about food at all. Forgive my concept, Papa — it is not at all like what the intelligent scholars wrote in the book which you brought me."

"Yes. I realise it is quite different."

I sat down again on the hillock. Volodya immediately followed suit, and asked:

"But why are they different — my concept and the one in the book?"

I'm sure my own thought must have been working faster than ever before. Indeed, why did this book, a textbook for children, contain such hocus-pocus? Even an adult unfamiliar with the wilds of nature must grasp the fact that in a warm climate, especially a tropical climate, there would be all sorts of food in abundance. So much so that even the huge creatures — mammoths and elephants — had no trouble in finding enough to eat. And the smaller animals didn't go hungry either. And yet here was Man, the most intellectually developed creature among them, having difficulty feeding himself! Really, a virtually impossible scenario!

It turns out that the majority of people who study history simply do not think about the implications of what is written in history textbooks. They do not evaluate what they read against the criterion of the most elementary logic, but simply accept the historical past in whatever form it happens to be served up to them.

Try telling a dachnik,¹ for example — a dachnik with just six hundred square metres of land — that his neighbour spends

his day walking among the food growing there and can't find anything to eat. The *dachnik* would get the impression that his neighbour must be sick, to put it mildly.

By the same token, how could a child who has grown up in the taiga and tasted all the various fruits and growing plants, imagine any need for searching for them if they are always at hand? Especially when the creatures around him are ready at any moment to serve him, to spare him the necessity of climbing trees to fetch nuts and even the task of shelling them?

Earlier I had observed still another phenomenon. All the female creatures living on Anastasia's family territory accepted the child born to her as their own.² And I am not the only one to have described this phenomenon. There are many instances recorded where animals have nourished human children. And many people, no doubt, have observed a dog feeding a kitten or a mother cat feeding a young puppy. But animals have a special relationship to Man.

Creatures in the taiga always mark out their territory. It is on such a territory that Anastasia's family lives, and hence their special relationship to her too. How is it that all the creatures are so drawn to Man and ready to serve him with heartfelt desire? How is it that Man's loving attitude is so essential to them? Just like household pets in a modern apartment — a cat, a dog or a parrot, for example — each and every one tries to get at least some kind of attention from Man, and treats any indication of love as the ultimate reward. They are even jealous when a Man shows attention to some pets more than others.

¹*dachnik* — one who has a *dacha* — something like a country cottage but always with a garden where enough fruits and vegetables are grown to feed the family right through the winter (for further details, see the Translator's Preface to Book 1: *Anastasia*).

²See Book 3, Chapter 14: "A father's role".

While this is something we easily take for granted with pets, it may seem a little unusual here in the taiga, and yet fundamentally it is the same amazing phenomenon — all animals aspire to feel the invisible light of grace (or feelings, or some other kind of radiance) emanating from Man. The specific term may vary, but the fact is incontestable. The important thing is that this is a real natural phenomenon, and we need to understand its specific purpose.

Did this phenomenon exist right from the very beginning, or has Man trained the animals over the centuries? It is quite possible that every single one of them has been trained. After all, look at how many different animals and birds on all continents serve Man today! They know who their master is. In India we are talking about elephants and monkeys, in Central Asia — camels and donkeys. And almost everywhere this applies to dogs, cats, cows, horses, chickens, geese, hawks and dolphins — so many kinds of creatures, it is hard to name them all. The important thing is that they are in service to Man — a fact practically everyone is aware of. But when did it begin — three thousand years ago? Five, ten thousand years ago? Or possibly this was part of the Creator's thought right when He created Nature? Most likely the latter.

It says in the Bible: "To determine the purpose of every creature."³ And if all this was planned and implemented right from the beginning, then Man could not possibly have had any problems finding food.

Why then do our history books — those written for adults as well as children — say exactly the opposite? This happens

³The reference here is apparently to Genesis 2: 15, 18–20. In Anastasia's (and Megré's) interpretation, based on what they understand to be the logic of the biblical text, Adam's *naming* actually refers to an *assignment of function* to each creature in respect to the task of tending the Paradise garden and its human resident.

not just in our country, but such absurdities are inculcated in people the world over. A mistake? Probably not! Whatever's behind this is more significant than a mere mistake. Design! If so, that means it's important to someone. To whom? Why? What would happen if history were written differently? If the truth were written? What if textbooks all over the world stated something like this:

The first people living on our Earth did not have any problems finding food. They were surrounded by a great variety of high-quality and nourishing food.

But then... Then the question would arise in the vast majority of minds: *What happened to this great variety and abundance? Why is Man today forced to work as a slave for someone just to earn a piece of bread?* And perhaps the most important question of all: *How flawless is the course of human society's development today?*

How was I now to answer my son as to why this 'intelligent' book — a textbook — was spouting such absurdities? People in the tropics spending whole days searching for food? To one brought up in the taiga surrounded by faithful creatures, these sayings of so-called 'intelligent people' were patently absurd.

I remembered Anastasia's words: *To perceive what is really going on in the Universe one need only look into one's self*.⁴ In an attempt to extricate myself from the situation, I tried explaining to my son:

"This is not a simple book. You should examine everything written here against your own concept. Why write about something that you have such a clear concept of already? Here everything is presented upside-down. You need to use your own concepts to verify whether something you read is

⁴Quoted from Book 2, Chapter 6: "The cherry tree".

the truth, or whether it's turned upside-down. You need to be more attentive to that. Do you understand me, Volodya?"

"I shall try to understand, Papa, why people write what is not true. At the moment I do not understand. I know that some creatures use their tails to wipe out their tracks. Others build fake burrows, and there are those that even construct traps. Only why do human beings need to be so deceptive?"

"I told you, it's for their self-development."

"But can they not develop themselves through the truth?"

"They could do that too... But it would be different."

"Where you live, Papa, do they develop themselves through the truth or through lies?"

"They try all sorts of things — sometimes truth, sometimes lies — whatever will get them ahead most effectively... Anyway, Volodya, do you often read books?"

"Every day."

"What kind of books do you read? Who gives them to you?"

"Mama Anastasia has given me all the books to read that you wrote, Papa. I read them very quickly. But every day I read other books. Books that have lots of different happy letters of the alphabet."

At first I didn't pay any attention to his words about some kind of strange books with 'lots of different happy letters'.



"You loved Mama, but did not recognise it"

A fearful conjecture flashed through my mind: *If my son has read all my books, then he is well aware of my relationship to*

Anastasia during those first few days after I met her. He knows how I insulted her and even wanted to hit her with a stick. What child who loves his mother can forgive such shameful treatment? There can be no question that every time my son remembers this, he will think evil of me. Why did she give him my books to read? It would have been better if he hadn't learnt to read at all. Or maybe she remembered to tear out the pages describing my despicable behaviour?

Grasping at this latter hope, I carefully asked Volodya:

"So, Volodya, you've read all the books I wrote, eh?"

"Yes, Papa, I have."

"And did you understand everything in them?"

"Not everything, but Mama Anastasia explained to me how to figure out what I could not understand, and then I understood."

"What did she explain to you? Could you give me at least an example of something you didn't understand?"

"Yes, I can. I did not understand at first why you got angry at Mama Anastasia and wanted to hit her. She is very good, kind and beautiful. She loves you. And if you got angry at her, that must mean you did not love her. But then Mama explained everything to me."

"What? What did she tell you?"

"Mama Anastasia explained how you loved her very much but did not recognise it. But all the same, even with your love that you did not recognise, when you returned to the place where people find it hard to live, you began doing what Mama asked you to. She says that you, Papa, did everything your own way, the way you thought best. But when you remembered Mama, you wrote a book which people liked. People started writing poems and songs. People started thinking about how to do good. Now there are more and more of them — people thinking about what is good. That means that good shall prevail on the Earth.

“Yet people both criticised you and envied you over the book. But then, Papa, you wrote another book, and then another and another. Some people got even more angry at you. But others clapped their hands when you went to meet with them, they understood what you wrote in the books. They felt the energy of Love — which you still did not recognise — helping you write those books. And I was born, because you very much wanted to see me, and so did Love. You wrote the books, Papa, because you wanted to make the world better for my birth. Only you were not able to make it completely better by the time I was born. Because the world is very, very big.

“Mama Anastasia told me I must be worthy of you and the world. I need to grow up and understand everything. And Mama told me too that she has never been offended at you. She recognised at once the energy of Love. Then Mama Anastasia read you a book written with letters of the alphabet that are not sad. She did not read you the whole book. But what she read, you were able to write with letters which people could understand. And you got almost all of it right.”

“What book? What do you mean, Mama read you a book? What’s it called?”

“It is called *Co-creation*.”

“*Co-creation*?”



A book of pristine origins

“Yes, *Co-creation*. And I love to read it every day. Only not with your letters, Papa. Mama taught me to read this book

with different alphabetical letters. I love all sorts of happy letters. This is a book I can read my whole life. It tells about everything. And soon a new book will appear on the Earth. And you, my dear Papa, will write about this new book.”

“I don’t think you said that right, Volodya. You should have said: ‘will *write* this new book’.”

“But your ninth book, Papa, will not be one *you* will write. It will be co-created by many people — grown-ups and children. It will be a living book. It will consist of a whole lot of splendid chapters — paradise domains. People will write this book on the Earth with their Father’s happy letters. It will be eternal. Mama taught me to read these living and eternal letters, to make words from them.”

“Wait,” I interrupted my son. “I have to think about that one.”

He meekly fell silent at once.

Incredible, I thought. That means, somewhere here in the taiga Anastasia has an ancient book written in letters nobody else knows. She knows these letters, and she has taught our son to make words out of them and read them. She read me chapters from this book for my Co-creation. The chapters about how God created the Earth and Man, and I wrote them down. That’s how it worked out, according to my son. But I never saw Anastasia with any kind of book in her hands. And yet my son tells me that she translated the letters of this book for me. I shall have to find out everything through my son.

And I asked him:

“Volodya, you know that in the world there are a whole lot of different languages — for example, English, German, Russian, French and many others?”

“Yes, I know.”

“What language was it written in — the book Mama can read, and you too?”

“It is written in its own language, but its letters can speak in any language. And they can be translated into the language

you speak, Papa. Only not *all* the words can be translated, because in your language, Papa, there are so few letters.”

“Can you bring this book to me — the one with ‘all sorts of happy letters’, as you put it?”

“I cannot bring you the *whole* book, Papa. I could bring you some of the little letters. Only why carry them around — it is better for them to stay where they are. If you wish, Papa, I can read you the letters right from here. Only I cannot read as fast as Mama.”

“Well, read it as best you can.”

Volodya rose to his feet, and pointing his finger out into space, began ‘reading’ sentences from the chapters of *Co-creation*:⁵

The Universe itself is a thought, a thought from which was born a dream, which is partially visible as matter. ... My son, you are infinite, you are eternal, within you are your dreams of creation.

He read syllable by syllable. I followed the expression on his face as it slightly changed with each syllable — now showing wonder, now attentiveness, now joy. But when I looked in the direction his finger was pointing, there were no letters, let alone syllables, to be seen out there in space, and so I interrupted this strange reading:

“Hold on a moment, Volodya. Does this mean you see some kind of letters out there in space? Why can’t I see them?”

He gave me a quizzical look. He thought for some time before saying hesitantly:

“Do you not see, Papa? Do you not see that birch tree over there, the pine, the cedar, the rowan-tree?”

“Sure I see them, but where are the letters?”

⁵Quoted from Book 4, Chapter 8: “Birth”.

“Those *are* the letters, the ones our Creator writes with!”

He began to read further, his finger pointing to each plant or tree in turn. And at last I grasped this incredible phenomenon. The whole area of the taiga surrounding the lake where my son and I were sitting (and where I had sat many times with Anastasia) was filled with growing things. The name of each tree or plant began with a particular letter, and some were known by different names. Name by name, letter by letter — and out came a syllable, then a word, and a sentence.

It was much later that I learnt that the trees, bushes and herbs throughout the whole area of the taiga around the glade were not just arranged randomly, but that they actually formed living, growing letters. It was an incredible book that, it seemed, one could read *ad infinitum*. It turned out that the very same plant names made up one set of words and sentences if read from north to south, but a whole different set if read from west to east. A third set resulted if one read strictly around the perimeter. And the names of the plants made up yet another series of words, sentences and images if one followed the movement of the Sun's rays, which acted literally as a pointer.

I understood why Volodya called these letters “happy”. In traditional books all the printed letters are pretty much uniform. But in this situation, the living letters, even those associated with the same species, were always different. Under different angles of the Sun's illumination, they greeted Man with their rustling leaves. Indeed, one could go on ‘reading’ them indefinitely.

But who *wrote* this amazing book and when, and how many centuries did it take to write? Generations of Anastasia's forebears? Or...? Later I heard from Anastasia this brief, laconic answer: *For thousands of years generations of my forebears preserved the letters of this book in their original order.*

I looked at my son and feverishly tried to find a topic of conversation on which we could reach a complete mutual understanding.



One plus one equals three

Arithmetic! Mathematics! Of course, there will be no disagreements over an exact science like that. If Anastasia has taught our son to count, then a conversation on that subject cannot include any contradictions or superiorities. Two times two is always four, in any language at any time. Encouraged by my ‘discovery’, I asked hopefully:

“Volodya, has your Mama been teaching you how to count, add and multiply?”

“Yes, she has, Papa.”

“Good. Where I live there is a science known as mathematics. It is very significant. A lot of things are based on calculations and computations. People have invented a good many devices to make it easier to add, subtract and multiply, and it would be difficult to get along without them today. I brought you one of them — it’s called a calculator.”

I took out a solar-powered Japanese pocket calculator which I had brought, switched it on and showed it to my son.

“You see, Volodya, this little device can do a great deal. You know, for instance, what you get when you multiply two by two?”

“You want me to say ‘four’, do you not, Papa?”

"That's right, four. But the fact that I want you to say it is not important. That's just what it is. Two times two is always four. And this little device too can count. Look at the little screen. When I press the '2' button, the screen lights up with the figure '2'. Now I press the multiplication sign and then the '2' again. Then I press the 'equals' sign to find out what the result will be, and the figure '4' lights up on the screen.

"But this is a very simple arithmetical calculation. This device can count in a way impossible for human beings. For example, 136 times 1,136. I only have to press the 'equals' sign and we can find out how much it is."

"154,496," Volodya blurted out, ahead of the calculator.

After that I began to multiply and divide four-, five- and six-digit numbers, but each time my son beat the electronic calculator. He named the correct figure immediately and without any trace of tension. The competition with the calculator resembled a game, but my son showed no sign of any real interest. He simply named the figures, all the while evidently thinking about something else.

"How do you do that, Volodya?" I asked in amazement. "Who taught you to compute so quickly in your head?"

"I'm not computing, Papa."

"What d'you mean, you're not computing? You're telling me the result, you're answering the questions."

"I am simply naming the figures because they are always invariable in a dead dimension."⁶

"Don't you mean 'exact dimension'?"

"You may call it that, but it amounts to the same thing. Figures always come out invariable if you picture time and space as frozen. But time and space are always in motion,

⁶The Russian word for *dimension* (*izmerenie*) can also be taken in the sense of *measurement* (which is how the author interprets it); hence in Russian the phrase 'exact dimension' in fact can also mean 'exact measurement'.

and their movement changes figures, and then calculations become more interesting.”

Volodya went on to name some incredible formulas or arithmetical operations which turned out to be way beyond my comprehension. I only remember that the formula was extremely long — in fact, it really didn’t have an ending. He quite animatedly told me the results of some arithmetical operations, but they invariably turned out to be transitional. Each time after naming a figure, Volodya would add excitedly:

“When interacting with time, this number produces...”

“Hold on there, Volodya,” I interrupted my son. “I don’t understand this ‘dimension’ of yours. One plus one is always two. Look, I’m taking here... one twig.”

I picked up a small twig off the ground and placed it before my son. Then I found another twig, put it beside the first and asked:

“How many twigs?”

“Two,” Volodya replied.

“Exactly — two, and it can’t be anything else, not in anybody’s ‘dimension’.”

“But in the *living* dimension the calculation is completely different, Papa. I have seen it.”

“What d’you mean, you’ve seen it? The calculation with this other ‘dimension’ — is that something you can show me on your fingers?”

“Yes, I can, Papa.”

He raised his little hand in front of me with his fingers compressed into a fist and began to demonstrate. First he unfolded one finger and said: “Mama”. Then a second finger with the words: “Add — Papa — equals...” and, finally, out came a third finger: “— Me.”

“You see, three fingers. In order for there to be only two, I would have to take one away. But I do not want to take away

any of these fingers. I want them to be even more, and in a living dimension that is possible.”

Neither did I want any one of the three fingers to be taken away. So long live this other ‘dimension’ — this *‘living dimension’*, as he puts it. And may the calculation increase. Oh, wow! One plus one equals three! Most extraordinary! Still, the most incomprehensible thing for me remains the book of the taiga with its living letters.



“I shall make a Universe Girl happy”

I looked at my little son, who could read and had revealed to me the most extraordinary and probably the ‘livingest’ book in the world. I realised it would take a very long time to read it in its entirety. Besides, I would need to know the names of all the plants. But for some reason I had a good feeling in my heart just from the fact that it existed — this book with “all sorts of happy letters” (the way my son expressed it). And he will read it.

But what then? What will happen when he grows up? He said he would be like me. That means he’ll go into *our* world. Into a world full of wars, drugs, violent crime and poisoned water. Why should he go there? And yet he’s got himself ready for it. He’s ready to go into our world when he grows up and do something good in it. *I wonder what?* I asked him:

“Volodya, when you grow up, what kind of task or job do you think will be the most important for you?”

"Mama Anastasia told me. First and most important when I grow up is... I need to make a particular Universe Girl happy."

"Who? What kind of Universe or Girl?"

"Every girl living on the Earth is the likeness of the Universe. At first I did not understand this. Then I read, I read the book, and understood. Every girl is like the Universe. Each girl has within her all the diverse energies of the Universe. Universe Girls should be happy. And I must be sure to make one of them happy."

"And how do you intend to carry out your project when you grow up?"

"I shall go where many people are living and find her."

"Who?"

"A girl."

"She will, of course, be extraordinarily beautiful?"

"Probably. But perhaps she will be a bit sad, and not everybody will think she is beautiful. Perhaps she will be someone who is ill. Where you live, Papa, many people are ill from 'anti-living' conditions."

"And just why would you pick a girl who is *not* the healthiest and most beautiful?"

"I am the one, Papa, who will make her the happiest, healthiest and most beautiful Universe Girl."

"But how? Though by that time, when you're grown up, you'll probably have *learnt* how to make another person — your girl — happy. But, Volodya, you don't know everything there is to know about the world in which I live. It could be... it could turn out, after all, that the girl you pick may not even want to talk with you.

"You know who today's girls notice? You don't know. I'll tell you. The pretty ones and the not-so-pretty, the sick and the healthy — they notice first and foremost men who have heaps of money, and a *car* — men who dress smartly and have a good social position. Not all of them, of course, but the

majority are that way. And where are you going to get heaps of money?"

"Heaps' — how much is that, Papa?"

"Well, for example, let's say at least a million. Better still, a million dollars. You know about currency units?"

"Mama Anastasia told me about the scraps of paper and coins which people love. She said people give out clothes, food and all sorts of things in exchange for them."

"They do. But where do they get the money, d'you know? To get this money, you have to work somewhere. No, just working isn't enough, if you want a lot... You have to get into business or invent something. For example, Volodya, could you really invent something people need, something they're really missing?"

"And what kind of invention are people missing the most, Papa?"

"What kind? Well, all sorts. A lot of regions are being hit by an energy crisis, for example. There's not enough electric power. People don't want to build nuclear power plants — they're dangerous, they can explode. But they can't get along without them."

"Nuclear? Where radiation from them can kill people and growing things?"

"You know about radiation?"

"Yes, it is everywhere. It is energy. It is good. Needful. Only it should not be collected in a large quantity in one place. Grandfather taught me how to control radiation. Only it must not be talked about openly — some people turn good radiation into weapons to kill other people."

"Yes. Better not to talk openly about it. I should think you would really be able to invent something and earn a good deal of money for your girl."

"Probably I shall be able to. But money does not make people happy."

“What do you think makes people happy?”

“The Space they make for themselves.”

I pictured to myself my son becoming a young man. Maybe knowing a lot of unusual things, all sorts of phenomena, albeit naïve. Capable of coping even with radiation, but still naïve in respect to the intricacies permeating our lives... and there he'll be, off to look for his girl to make her happy.

He'll try not to stand out amidst other people. That was always Anastasia's strategy when she left the taiga and went out among people. He will try not to stand out, yet all the same, he will never be able to completely blend in. He's preparing himself, he's acquiring a colossal amount of knowledge, he's trying to become physically fit and all for the sake of one lonely girl!

I thought Anastasia would prepare our son for great deeds and to this end would share her own knowledge and abilities with him. And now it turns out that he sees a man's main goal in life as simply making just one woman happy. My son's convinced that every woman is the likeness of the whole Universe. Could it really be like that? An extraordinary philosophy, but in any case the point is: my son is convinced of it and one of his chief aims in life will be to make just one girl happy — a girl he doesn't even know. Maybe she hasn't even been born yet. Maybe she can crawl already, or she's just taking her first steps. Or — maybe no girl will want to, or rather, maybe no girl is capable of loving him.

Initially, when he fulfils her wishes and brings her money, she may pretend to love him. Oh, how many women there are like that in our world! They're even ready to jump into marrying some oldster for the sake of his money. They've learnt how to feign love.

My son will grow up and meet some girl like that, he'll keep fulfilling her wishes, she'll keep telling him she loves him, but what will happen when he starts talking about the need to

create a Space of Love and plant a garden? Will she laugh at him? Will she call him crazy, or will she understand? Maybe she'll understand. But maybe... No, it's better to prepare him for the worst.

"You see, Volodya, when you find this girl and you manage to make her healthy and very beautiful — absolutely the most beautiful, as you say — something might still happen that you know nothing about. The prettiest girls in our world aspire to become models and actresses and go into show-business. They like it when all the men around them pay them compliments. So, just imagine she wants to dazzle the public like a queen, and here you start proposing to create a Space of Love. Maybe she'll hear you out, but that'll be it. She'll leave you and go off somewhere where there's lots of bright lights, compliments and applause, and she could even — God forbid! — leave you holding a baby! What'll you do then?"

Volodya replied unhesitatingly:

"Then I shall build a Space all on my own. First on my own, and then with the child she leaves me — and together we shall preserve Love in this Space."

"Preserve it for whom?"

"For myself, Papa, and for the girl, who, as you say, will go off into the world of artificial lights."

"Then why preserve a Space of Love specifically for her? Don't you see how naïve you are in such matters? You'll have to look for another girl. And be more careful the next time."

"If I look for another, then who will make the girl who left happy?"

"Let anyone who wants to try to, do that. It's not worth breaking your neck over. She's gone, and that's it."

"She will come back. And she will see the marvellous forest and garden. I shall make it so all the creatures serve and obey her. Every one and every thing in this Space will sincerely love her."

“She will probably come back all tired out. She will wash herself in pure water and have a good rest. She will become even more beautiful and will never want to leave her Space of Love ever again. Our Space. She will be happy. And the stars above her will shine brighter and happier than anywhere else. But if you, Papa, had not thought all this up, if you had not brought about such a situation with your thought about her leaving, she would not have left.”

“I? I brought it about?”

“Yes, Papa. After all, you are the one that spoke about it. It was your thought. Man creates all kinds of situations with his thought, and this is what you have created.”

“But you, your thought — can’t it change the situation? Can’t it counteract mine? You did say it was quick, almost as quick as Anastasia’s.”

“It could counteract it.”

“So go ahead, counteract it.”

“I do not want my thought to run counter to yours, Papa. I shall seek out another way.”



How to bridge the gap?

I could not talk with my son any longer. Everything I said he automatically checked against his ‘concept’, with which he easily distinguishes between truth and falsehood. He even discredited the conclusions of the historians outlined in the textbook. There was no question here of a father’s superiority over his son. The conversation did not endow me with any

more authority and probably erased the authority I had before thanks to Anastasia. Moreover, his unusual confidence in the power of thought frightened me and put a gap between us. We were so different. There was no father-son contact with the child. I could not feel in him my own birth son. On the whole he seemed like another being to me.

We didn't say a word to each other. And then I remembered Anastasia's words: *With children one must be absolutely sincere and truthful*. I even felt anger over the hopelessness of the situation. So, I'm supposed to be sincere? I'm supposed to be truthful? I tried to be that way, but what came of it? Indeed, if I were to be completely sincere and truthful, then in the present situation I'd have to resort to some pretty bad language. So I said, spilling it all out on one breath:

"Volodya, if everything is to be said absolutely sincerely, you and I cannot hope to have a father-son conversation. We are different, you and me. We have different concepts, information and knowledge. I do not feel as though you are my son. I'm even afraid to touch you. In our world a father can show affection to his son pure and simple, and even punish him or strike him for insubordination. But doing anything like that with you is something I can't even imagine. There's an unbridgeable gap between us."

My outburst at an end, I sat silently, not knowing what to say next or how. I sat and looked at my little son, who seemed to be lost in thought — and what strange thoughts he has!

At last he turned his curly little head in my direction, and reinitiated the conversation, but this time I could feel a note of sadness in his voice:

"Is there some kind of gap between you and me, Papa? You say it is hard for you to accept me as your own birth son? You spend a long time in that other world, where things are not exactly the same as here. I know, Papa, that parents there

sometimes beat their children... Everything is a bit different there. I have been thinking, Papa... Just a moment...

He quickly got up and ran off a little ways. He returned carrying a branch with dry needles and handed it to me.

"Take this branch, Papa, and beat me with it. The way parents beat their children in that other world which you spend so much time in."

"Beat you? Why? What have you thought up now?"

"I know, Papa, that over there, in the world you have to spend so much time in, parents beat only their own birth children. I am your birth son, Papa. You can beat me so you can feel yourself to be my birth father. Perhaps it will be easier for you that way. Only do not strike this arm or this leg — this arm will not feel pain and this leg will not feel at all — they are still a little numb. But all the rest of my body will feel pain. Only I probably shall not be able to cry the way children do. I have never cried in my life."

"Nonsense! Sheer nonsense! Nobody ever beats their children, not even in that 'other' world — as you call it — without a reason. Sometimes, yes, they punish them, and give them a light slap. But only when children do not obey their parents, when the kids don't do as they're supposed to."

"Yes, of course, Papa. When parents decide that their children have behaved improperly."

"Exactly."

"So, Papa, I want you to consider something in my behaviour improper!"

"What d'you mean, you want me to 'consider'? When behaviour's improper, it's clear to everyone that it's improper — it's not up to the parent to 'consider' it proper or improper. Everyone should understand that it is improper."

"And the children who are beaten should understand?"

"The children too. That is why they beat them, to make them realise that they were wrong."

"And cannot they understand this before being beaten?"

"They can't, obviously."

"Even when parents explain it to them, they cannot understand?"

"They cannot, and that's why they're at fault."

"And the one who did not explain it to them understandably is not at fault?"

"Well... no... that is... Now see how you've thrown me off completely with your misunderstanding!"

"Good! Now that I cannot understand, that means you can beat me. And there will be no more gap between us."

"Oh, why can't you understand? Punishment comes when, for example... Well, for example... Let's say Mama tells you in no uncertain terms: 'Volodya, don't do that.' And in spite of her telling you not to, you go ahead and do what she told you not to. D'you understand now?"

"I do."

"Have you ever done something Mama told you not to?"

"Yes, I have. Twice. And I will do it again, no matter how many times Mama Anastasia tells me not to do it."

My conversation with my son continued to unfold quite differently from the way I had planned. There was no way I could present modern civilised society — and, consequently, myself — to him in a favourable light. I got so upset over my son's latest arguments that I banged my fist on a tree-trunk. I spelled out to him — or perhaps more to myself:

"Not all parents, even in our world, punish their children by beating them. On the contrary, many of them look for a better system of child-raising. I tried to find one, but it didn't work out. The last time I saw you here, you were still quite little. I wanted to hug you and squeeze you. But Anastasia said I shouldn't interrupt a child's thoughts even to give him a pat on the head. She said a child's thought-process was an extremely important matter. And so I just watched you, and

you were always busy with something. And now I've come to the point where I don't know how to talk with you."

"And today, Papa, you no longer want to give me a hug?"

"I want to, but I can't — my head has been turned upside down with all these systems of child-raising."

"Then may I do it, may I give you a hug, Papa? After all, our thoughts are the same now."

"You? You want to hug me too?"

"Yes, Papa!"

He took a step toward me. I gradually lowered myself to my knees — it felt as though my whole body was sinking to the ground. He grasped me firmly around the neck with one arm and pressed his head to my shoulder. I could hear his heart beating. My own heart was beating fast and irregularly. I started finding difficulty in breathing. It must have been just a few seconds, though — a minute at the most — before my heartbeat began to even itself out, as though tuning in to the rhythm of another heart. My breathing became natural and gentle. In fact, my whole feeling of well-being suddenly changed. I wanted to say or cry out: *How wonderful everything is around! How splendid Man's life is! Thank you to whoever thought up this world!* And I felt like saying a whole lot of other good things. But the words came together only inside me. I stroked my son's hair and asked him, for some reason in a whisper:

"Well, tell me, son. What could you possibly have done that your Mama told you not to? And that you would still do even now?"

"It was once when I saw Mama Anastasia..." he replied, also in a whisper to start with, without raising his head from my shoulder. "It was when I saw..."

And at this point he detached himself from me, sat down on the ground and stroked the blades of grass with his little hand. "The grass is always green when it feels good."

For a while he didn't say a word. Then he raised his head and continued talking.



"I shall save my Mama"

"One time I did not see Mama for a long while," Volodya began. "I wondered where she was, and decided Mama must have gone to the neighbouring glade, the one next to ours. It is similar to ours, but it is not as nice there. I walked over to the neighbouring glade. There I saw Mama. She was lying on the ground without moving, and was all white. And the grass around her was all white too.

"At first I stood there wondering why this had happened — Mama's face and the grass around should not be all white like that. Then I decided to touch Mama. She managed to open her eyes, only just, but she did not stir. Then I took her by the hand and began to drag her out of the white circle. She helped me with her other hand, and we got ourselves out of the white circle.

"When Mama got back to her normal self, she told me never to touch her if this should happen again. She said she herself could cope with it, but that I could not. After being in the white circle and dragging Mama out, my arm and leg grew numb and are taking a long time to recover. Mama gets better very quickly, but my arm and leg have still not fully recovered.

"When I saw Mama once again in the same circle... When I saw her lying there all white, I was not going to touch her

myself. I cried out, I called the strong she-bear to help, the one I slept on when I was little. I told the bear to drag Mama out of the circle. The bear stepped onto the white part of the grass, and fell down, and now she is no more. Only her children remain.

“The bear died at once, as soon as she stepped on the white grass. Everything dies on the white grass.

“Then once again I entered the white circle and began to drag Mama Anastasia out. The two of us pulled ourselves away from the dead grass. This time my arm and my leg did not grow as numb as before, only my whole body was trembling a little. Now it does not tremble any more. You see, Papa? My body does not tremble, it obeys me. And I shall soon be able to raise my arm when I want to. I can already lift it a little. Before I could not raise it at all.”

I listened to my son's story in astonishment. I remembered how once I had seen Anastasia in a similar situation — I too had instinctively tried to pull her out of the white circle. I remembered the elderly philosopher Nikolai Fiodorovich talking about it.⁷

But why does she put herself in that kind of danger? Even risking her own son? Can it be so important to her — burning within herself some sort of invisible energy directed at her?

A number of times on TV there have been reports on unusual circles with perfect geometrical shapes. They have appeared in various countries — usually in grain fields. Right in the middle of ordinary grain crops people have discovered circles with the stalks trampled to the ground. Not just trampled at random but with all the stalks pointing in the same direction and forming perfect geometric figures. Scientists are

⁷See Book 1, Chapter 28: “Strong people” and Book 5, Chapter 18: “The philosophy of life”.

studying these mysterious phenomena, but so far haven't been able to come up with any explanation for them. In Anastasia's case the grass has also been trampled down in a circle, but in contrast to what's been shown on TV, the grass here has gone all white besides, as though it hadn't got enough sunlight.

Anastasia says that this is human-generated negative energy. Maybe it is, but why has it been focused so strongly on Anastasia? What kind of people are aiming it at her? Forgetting myself, I said aloud:

"Why does she struggle with it? Whom does the struggle benefit? Who is made better by it?"

"Everybody benefits a little," I heard my son's voice say. "Mama says that if the energy of evil lessens — if she is able to reduce it by burning it up inside her so that it is not reflected back into space — there will be less of it. And those who produce it will mellow somewhat themselves."

"Show me, how many of these white circles are there? And *where* are they?"

"Next to our glade there is a very small glade. The white circles are always appearing there. Afterward the grass becomes green again, but it has not yet greened over completely, and you can still see the circles. If you wish, come with me and I can show them to you, Papa."

"Let's go."

I quickly rose to my feet and took my son's hand. The child trotted quickly along on his little legs, though I noticed that he was limping slightly, and so I endeavoured to walk a little more slowly.

From time to time Volodya tried to look into my eyes. He chatted away the whole time, telling me about something as we walked. But all I could think about were the strange white circles and Anastasia's inexplicable behaviour, and the reasoning behind her actions, about this whole unusual phenomenon.

To somehow keep the conversation going with my son I asked him:

“Volodya, why do you sometimes call her Mama, and sometimes Mama Anastasia?”

“I know a lot of Mamas who lived earlier on the Earth. Mama Anastasia told me about them. I can call them grandmothers, or great-grandmothers, but I can also call them mamas. My grandmothers gave birth to Mama. I can also call them mamas. When I hear them being talked about, I can feel them, and see them, and picture them, and sometimes I picture them all on my own. But so as not to get confused, I sometimes call my mama Mama Anastasia. All mamas are good, but for me Mama Anastasia is the closest and the best, and she is more beautiful than the flowers and the clouds. She is very interesting, and cheerful. I hope she is for ever. As soon as I chase my thought up to speed, I shall always be able to bring her back.”

I wasn't listening carefully enough to grasp what he was trying to say. By this time we had arrived at another little glade, and I saw four whitish circles on the grass. The circles were about five or six metres in diameter. They were barely noticeable, but one of them was whiter than the rest — it had probably been made quite recently.

Now I realised why Anastasia had not come to meet me and why she wasn't with me at the moment. It meant that she was lying helpless somewhere. And she didn't want us to take pity on her, or become upset by her appearance.

I looked at the white circles, and my thoughts kept racing and intertwining. Of course, a lot of people can turn pale from troubles which befall them unexpectedly. Almost all people turn pale when anger is unexpectedly directed at them. But here? Can it be possible to feel it just like that, at such a great distance away? Can such a huge amount of hateful human energy be concentrated into a single stream?

So huge that not only Man, but all the growth around him turns pale?

Apparently so. There they are — the traces of the most wicked attempts... And once again I remembered her words, which I cited in the fourth book:

*All anger on Earth, leave your deeds and make haste to me, join fray with me, try your utmost. ... I stand alone before you. Try to defeat me. To defeat me, all of you come meet me together. The fight will be fightless...*⁸

I thought these were just words. But everything she says comes true. The books, just like she said, and the bards' songs, and the poems... She's not just whistling in the wind. But why did she say: "The fight will be fightless"? The upshot is that she tries to simply burn up the anger inside of her. And she tries to do this alone! As far as I'm concerned, I think one should fight them out and out! Smash their rotten mugs in! But she's all alone. *No! You shall not be alone, Anastasia! I can at least try... I can at least take a little of this filth upon myself. And I shall fight it. Oh, if I could only speak the way she does... I'd tell them!...* I probably got a little too carried away and blurted out:

"Hey you, malice-mongers, come'n try to get me, and I'll burn at least a few of you!"

Little Volodya all at once let go of my hand and ran on ahead, then looked me intently in the eye with amazement. Then he stamped his little foot and, grasping hold of his injured arm with his healthy one, he raised both arms above his head and cried out, imitating my tone of voice:

"Hey, come'n try to get me too, you malice-mongers. You see, my arm is getting better. Mama Anastasia is not alone. I

⁸Quoted from Book 3, Chapter 24: "Who are you, Anastasia?".

am here too, and my thought will be racing faster and faster. Hurry and come on, you malice-mongers, leave what you are doing and hurry over to me. Look at how I am growing!"

And he got up on his tiptoes in an attempt to raise his arms even higher.

"So, my fine warriors, my dashing young braves! Who are you about to make war on today, my gallant knights?" came Anastasia's quiet voice.

I turned around and caught sight of Anastasia, sitting under a cedar tree. She was evidently very tired — her head was even resting against the tree-trunk. And her shoulders and arms were sinking, and her hands were resting on the ground. Her face was pale, and her eyelids slightly lowered.

"Papa and I were standing up against malice, Mama!" Volodya responded on my behalf.

"But to fight against malice, you have to know where to find it, what forms it takes. It is essential to know everything about your enemy," Anastasia said quietly, and with difficulty.

"Mamochka, you rest here while Papa and I try to do that. If we do not do it properly, you can tell us later."

"Papa has had a long journey, little one. He should have a rest first."

"I've had a rest, Anastasia. In any case, I'm not all that tired... Hello there, Anastasia! How are you?"

For some reason I was overwhelmed by the sight of her helplessness and couldn't move. I started talking disconnectedly, not knowing what to say or do next. Volodya came over to me, took me by the hand, and went on talking to his mother.

"I shall give Papa some refreshment after his journey and bathe with him in the pure water in the lake. And I shall collect some cleansing herbs. You, Mamochka, just rest here in the meantime. Do not waste your energies on conversation. I shall take care of everything myself. Then Papa and I shall

come to you. I want you to recuperate your strength as quickly as possible..."

"I shall go bathing with you too," Anastasia declared. "Wait, and I shall go with you."

Supporting herself with her hands against the cedar trunk, Anastasia tried to get up. She managed to raise herself a little, but again sank back down to the ground, her hands slipping against the trunk. Her whisper was barely audible:

"Oh, how could I have failed so badly?! I am unable even to rise to greet my son and my love?!"

Once more, leaning against the cedar trunk, she began the challenging task of raising herself off the ground. She probably would not have made it this time either. But all at once something incredible happened. The huge cedar tree Anastasia was leaning against suddenly began to extend the needles of its lower branches out toward her. The needles began emitting a barely noticeable pale-bluish glow. Slowly, almost imperceptibly, the glow enveloped Anastasia. Then I heard a crackling sound coming from above, not unlike the kind one hears when standing under high-voltage transmission lines.

I looked up and saw that the needles of all the surrounding cedar trees had also started glowing with the same faint bluish light. But that wasn't all. They were all pointing in the direction of Anastasia's tree. This tree's upper branches were receiving the light emanating from the neighbouring cedars. And the glow of its lower needles kept increasing in intensity.

This phenomenon lasted approximately two minutes. Then there was a pale blue flash, and the light coming from the needles was extinguished. The needles looked to me as though they had become slightly withered.

Anastasia was scarcely visible in the bluish radiance still enveloping her. After it had dispersed, or gone into her — I could not tell — I saw...

There beneath the cedar tree, back to her normal self, full of life, stood Anastasia, looking unusually beautiful, smiling at me and our son. Looking up, she quietly said "Thank you!" Then... Can you imagine a grown woman showing off this way?

Anastasia sprang into action, making a dash over to the largest of the white circles. Upon reaching its edge, she made another leap in the air, this time quite high. A triple somersault landed her in the very centre of the circle. Another leap, and this time she did a leg-split just like a ballerina. With a trill of her alluring laughter, she twirled in a dance over the white circles.

All around, the forest seemed to come to life and echo her joyful excitement. Squirrels leapt from branch to branch around the perimeter of the glade. Through the bushes some kind of creatures' eyes gleamed like precious stones. Two great eagles flew down one after the other from the sky and circled over the glade, rising and descending by turns.

Anastasia continued laughing and dancing like an acrobat and a ballerina. And gradually the grass beneath her feet began to turn green. And even the whitest circle became barely noticeable. My heart kept feeling lighter and lighter from her dancing, her laughter and everything around. And then all at once...

All at once my little son ran out and did a double body roll across what remained of the white circle. Then, quickly regaining his feet, he leapt in the air and spun around, trying to imitate his mother's dance. Even I couldn't refrain myself, and joined in the fun, dancing or just jumping up and down for joy alongside my son.

"Let's go! To the water! Who can catch up to me?" exclaimed Anastasia as she made a headlong dash for the lake, with Volodya and me in hot pursuit.

Slightly panting from all the jumping, I began to lag a little behind. But I saw how Anastasia leapt and somersaulted in

the air before plunging into the lake. A few moments later Volodya took a flying leap from the shore and his bottom hit the water with a loud smack.

I began taking my clothes off on the run, tossing them on the ground along the way. I plunged into the water still wearing my undershirt, trousers and boots. As I surfaced, I caught Anastasia's shrill trill of laughter. Our son was laughing, too, with a surfeit of emotion, slapping the water with his hand.

I was the first to come out of the water. I began to peel off my wet clothes and wring them out. Upon reaching the shore Anastasia immediately put on her light dress right over her wet body. Then she helped me spread out my trousers over a bush so that they would dry more quickly in the breeze.

I fetched a track suit from my backpack and put it on. Anastasia stood beside me, and her dress was already dry. I wanted to give her a hug, but for some reason could not bring myself to go through with it.

She came up very close to me, and I could feel the warmth emanating from her. I felt as though I wanted to say something nice to her, but nothing came to mind. All I could muster was:

"Thank you, Anastasia!"

She smiled, put her hands on my shoulders, rested her head on my shoulder and responded:

"And thank *you*, Vladimir."

"Great!" Volodya's cheerful voice rang out. "I shall be off now."

"And where are you off to?" Anastasia enquired.

"I shall go and see my elder grandfather. I shall give him permission to bury the body, and I shall help him. So I am off."

Volodya quickly departed, with hardly a limp to be noticed.

CHAPTER THREE



An invitation to the future

“What did he mean when he said he would give his grandfather permission to bury the body?” I asked in some bewilderment.

“You will see for yourself, and understand,” replied Anastasia.

A little while later I saw Anastasia’s great-grandfather, alive, but no signs of any funeral. That was how he remained in my memory — alive and unfathomable.

Anastasia was the first to sense her grandfathers’ approach. We were walking together across the glade at the time. All of a sudden Anastasia stopped, and gestured to me to stop as well. As she turned in the direction of the tallest and mightiest cedars, I followed her gaze, but saw no one. I wanted to ask her what was going on, but could not. She took my hand and gave it a squeeze in a silent plea to refrain from uttering a sound.

It wasn’t long before I caught sight of the figure of Anastasia’s great-grandfather making his way among the majestic cedars. The majestic elder was wearing a long light-grey shirt which went down below his knees.¹ As he entered the glade at an unhurried but confident pace which betrayed no sign of ageing, I noticed our son — his great-great-grandson, Volodya — trotting along beside him, holding his hand tight. The old man’s own son, Anastasia’s grandfather, followed at a little distance behind.

¹This is typical of many Russian peasant-style shirts.

It seemed that everybody, including me, felt some kind of solemnity surrounding the approaching encounter, and only the child accompanying the elder was behaving his natural and unaffected self. Volodya kept chatting away the whole time to his great-great-grandfather. Occasionally he would run slightly ahead and turn to look him in the eye, or suddenly stop, let go the old man's hand and bend down to the grass to inspect something that had captured his attention, whereupon the old fellow would stop too. Then Volodya would take his hand once more and begin telling him animatedly about what he had seen, all the while leading him over to where we were standing.

As they drew near, I couldn't help noticing that the usually severe- and majestic-looking elder was sporting a faint smile. His bright face was radiant with grace and, at the same time, a degree of solemnity. Even as he stopped but a few steps from us, his gaze was still aimed somewhere far off in the distance. We were all speechless — only Volodya's voice was to be heard, speaking at a fairly rapid pace:

"Here, Grandpakins, here right before you are my Papa and Mama. They are good people. Even though your eyes cannot see them, Grandpakins, you can still feel everything. But I can see them with my eyes. You can look at what is good through my eyes, my dear Grandpakins, and that will be good for you too."

Then, turning to us, Volodya all at once announced even more joyfully:

"Mama and Papa, a little while ago, when we were all swimming together, I realised something, and I have allowed the body of Grandfather Moisey² to die. We have already found a spot for me to bury the body of my Grandfather Moisey."

²*Moisey* (pronounced: *ma-yi-SAY*) — a Russian man's name, the equivalent of *Moses* in the Bible.

Volodya pressed his whole head and body against Grandfather Moisey's leg. The majestic grey-haired elder carefully and tenderly stroked his great-great-grandson's head. The love, tenderness, understanding and joy inherent in their mutual relationship was only too palpable. It made the conversation about burial all the more bewildering to me. In line with the way I was brought up, I felt like stopping my son and telling him his great-great-grandfather looked terrific and still had many years ahead of him. That is what we always say, even to an elderly person who is very ill, and I wanted to say that to him — in fact the words were already on the tip of my tongue — when Anastasia suddenly gave my hand another squeeze, and I stopped myself from speaking my mind.

Grandfather Moisey then turned to Anastasia and said:

“Granddaughter Anastasia, the Space you are creating, how is it being limited by your thought?”

“My thought and my dream have merged into one, without encountering any limitations,” replied Anastasia.

Whereupon Grandfather Moisey asked her another question:

“Human souls are accepting the world you are creating... Tell me, what energy is driving your creation?”

“The same energy that grows a tree and unfolds the buds to turn them into the flowers we see.”

“What kind of forces might interfere with your dream?”

“When I dream, I do not visualise any interference. All the challenges I can see on my path ahead can be overcome.”

“You are free in everything, Granddaughter Anastasia. Order my soul to embody itself as you see fit.”

“I cannot permit myself to order anybody's soul. The soul is free — the work of the Creator. But I shall dream, my dear Grandfather, that your soul find a worthy embodiment in the most splendid garden you have ever seen.”

A pause ensued. Grandfather Moisey did not ask any new questions, whereupon Volodya once more began talking apace:

“Neither shall *I* order you, Grandpakins. Only I shall urge you most strongly to embody yourself soon once more upon the Earth. You will appear once more, young as before and will be my best friend. Or you will become someone else for me... I am not ordering... I am simply talking... My dear Grandpakins Moisey, let your soul be always within me and beside me.”

Upon hearing these words the majestic elder turned to Volodya, and slowly got down on one knee in front of him, then on both knees, bent down his grey head, raised the child's little hand to his lips and kissed it. Volodya put his arms around the elder's neck and started whispering something quickly in his ear.

Then Grandfather Moisey got up from his knees with only one small child helping this very old man. Even now, when remembering this scene for the umpteenth time, I still can't figure out how it happened. They simply held hands, and the great-great-grandfather rose to his feet without leaning on anything.

Upon standing, he took a step in our direction and made a bow. Then, without uttering another word, he turned and held out his hand to Volodya. Off they walked, hand in hand, chatting away to each other. The younger grandfather followed a few paces behind, without interrupting their conversation.

I now realised that Anastasia's great-grandfather was going away for good. He was going away to die.

I could not take my eyes off the receding figures of the child and Grandfather Moisey. Earlier Anastasia had told me about her attitude toward modern cemetery rituals and funerals, and I even wrote about that in my previous books.³

She and, of course, all the other members of her family who had either lived or were currently living in the taiga, believe that there should be no cemeteries. Cemeteries are like refuse dumps, places where people toss out the lifeless bodies of the deceased as useless garbage. People are afraid of cemeteries, they believe, because things happen there that go against the laws of nature. They believe that the relatives of the deceased, through their very thoughts about their departed loved ones as gone forever, prevent them from reappearing in a new earthly embodiment.

In going over in my mind the various burials I have witnessed, I'm inclined to agree. There are simply too many falsehoods involved. People practically kill themselves over a deceased family member, but after just a few years... well, you go to a cemetery, and you rarely find a grave of someone who died ten or twenty years ago well tended. In fact at some untended gravesites workers are already digging new pits.

In the meantime the people who are buried are forgotten by everyone. Nothing remains of their brief sojourn on the Earth, and nobody even needs their memory any more. If that is how they end up, why were they born in the first place? Why did they live? Anastasia says the bodies of the deceased should be buried in their own domain with no special headstone to mark the burial place. The grass and flowers, trees and bushes that come up will be the continuation of the life of their bodies. That way the soul upon leaving the body is afforded greater opportunity for splendid reincarnations.

In the kin's domain the thoughts of the deceased before they die will have been creating a Space of Love. Their descendants will stay on to live in this Space, in contact with

³See Book 4, Chapter 31: "But who is to blame?" and Book 5, Chapter 1: "Two civilisations".

everything growing therein, which means keeping in contact with the thoughts of their parents as they take loving care of what their parents have created. And the Space itself will take care of those living therein, consequently maintaining one's earthly life forever.

But what about people who live in the cities? How are they to get along without cemeteries? Well, perhaps their lifestyle will give them pause to reflect — at least in their old age — on how they shouldn't live a life devoid of thought for the future, for eternity.

And I am in agreement with Anastasia's philosophy. But it is one thing to agree in thought, quite another to witness the departure of a great-great-grandfather in real life. Though in this case he — or, rather, his soul — will not die. It will evidently stay somewhere in the vicinity or very quickly embody itself in a new life — most certainly a good one. After all, neither Anastasia nor our little son, nor her grandfather, nor even Great-Grandfather himself, is projecting any kind of tragedy, even in their thinking. They have an entirely different approach to death from ours. For them it is not a tragedy, but simply a transition to a new and splendid existence.

Stop! Even Great-Grandfather himself showed no sign of grief. Quite the opposite. So that's it! That's the ticket! "When you go to sleep overwhelmed by heavy, dark and unpleasant thoughts, you will most probably have a nightmare. If you go to sleep with bright thoughts, you will have pleasant dreams," says Anastasia. And again: "...death is not a tragedy, it is only a dream — shorter or longer, it makes no difference. Man should enter into any dream contemplating what is beautiful — then his soul will not suffer. Through his thoughts Man can create a Paradise — or anything else — for his soul."

And Great-Grandfather knew this. He did not suffer. But what was it that brought him such obvious joy during those

final hours? Something happened. He wouldn't have been smiling like that just for no reason at all. But what *did* happen? I turned to look at Anastasia and saw...

There she was standing a little distance away from me, her arms outstretched to the Sun, and whispering, it seemed, some kind of prayer. The Sun's rays would hide themselves behind a cloud, then shine brightly, reflected in a single tear rolling down Anastasia's cheek. But her face showed no sign of sadness, only peace. After whispering, she listened, as though somebody were answering her. I stood and waited, not daring to approach her or even utter a word. It was only when she turned, caught sight of me and headed over my way that I asked:

"Were you praying for the peace of your great-grandfather's soul, Anastasia?"

"My great-grandfather's soul will rest in great peace, and its earthly life still lies ahead when the soul itself desires it. I was actually asking about our son, asking the Creator to furnish him with greater strength.

"Our son, Vladimir, has been doing works undertaken by few people today. He has now accepted within himself all of Great-Grandfather's strength, which Great-Grandfather imparted to him with his soul. Because he is still in the process of maturing, he will find it difficult to contain the multitude of diverse energies within him as a single whole."

"But why," I asked, "after all this happened, did I not notice any particular change in our son?"

"Our son, Vladimir, uttered some special words before Great-Grandfather knelt in front of him. He uttered words whose meaning is comprehensible only to those who are able to fathom the process of the Creator's work. Possibly the child did not fully understand this, yet he told Great-Grandfather sincerely and confidently that he was capable — through his own self — of helping him and his soul stay on the Earth. I

was not able to say the same for myself. I do not feel that kind of strength within me.”

“I noticed that after hearing these words Great-Grandfather began simply radiating with joy,” I observed.

“Yes, few indeed are those who have heard words like that in their grand old age. You see, Great-Grandfather received from the child’s own lips an invitation to the future — an incarnation of the Future.”

“It looks as though they had a strong love for one another.”

“Our son, Vladimir, had begged Great-Grandfather to keep on living when he could not go on living any longer. And Great-Grandfather did live — he could not refuse the child’s request.”

“But how is such a thing possible?”

“It is very simple. But not automatically so. After all, doctors, too, are able to bring back people from a state of unconsciousness or oblivion. And not just doctors, but someone close to this person may call or stir them out of a faint or a state of unconsciousness, and they will live. Great-Grandfather’s will and his love allowed him to prolong his life at his great-grandson’s request. Great-Grandfather is the descendant of priests who did tremendous works through the centuries. Once he even stopped a huge explosion through his will, through his gaze, but it made him blind.”

“What d’you mean, through his gaze? Is it possible for one’s gaze to stop an explosion?”

“It is possible if the gaze is consciously directed with confidence in Man’s power and unshakable will. Great-Grandfather knew where the disaster was about to happen and went there. He was just a little late with his foresight and an initial explosion did take place. But then he stood facing the source of life-threatening danger and through his gaze was able to tame the manifestations of the dark forces already whirling through space. Just one explosion happened, and that not at

full strength, and two others could have taken place. But if Great-Grandfather had flinched even for a moment...

"You see, Vladimir, he stopped the explosion. Only he went blind."

"But why are you so concerned about our son's abilities which he has inherited from his great-great-grandfather?"

"I thought that the abilities he had inherited from you and me were sufficient. I taught him to conceal his additional abilities so that he would not appear strange to people. I wanted our son to go out and live in the world and not stand apart from others in his appearance. After all, there is a lot one can do without standing out from others.

"But something too extraordinary has happened. Who our son is now, and what his purpose in life is — that is something we must definitely try to decipher. And so I was asking the Creator to give him the strength to remain, at least for just a little longer, a simple child."

"You're concerned about this now, Anastasia. But I think in many respects it is you and your method of upbringing that are at fault here. You talk a lot about the soul, about Man's purpose in life. You have taught the child to read that extraordinary book about co-creation. So he's gone and formulated his own peculiar world-view.

"Why should a child at that age have to know about Soul, about God? You see, he calls me Papa, and at the same time he says he has a father. I realise he's calling God his Father. Even I have a hard time understanding that, but you've gone and given him an information overload. It's the way you've brought him up that's to blame, Anastasia."

"Remember, Vladimir, how I replied to Great-Grandfather that I could not order anyone's soul. And our son heard what I said. And yet some power higher than I has allowed him to act otherwise. But you should not worry. I shall be able to understand what has happened, even though our son may

possibly look at me now in a different light. It will not be long before his strength exceeds both of ours combined.”

“Well, okay. Every generation should be stronger and smarter than the one before.”

“Yes, you are right, of course, Vladimir, but there is an element of sadness when someone is stronger and more insightful than his own generation.”

“Eh? I don’t understand what kind of sadness you’re talking about, Anastasia.”

She didn’t reply, only hung her head, and her facial expression became sad. She is rarely sorrowful or sad. But this time... I understood... I understood the great tragedy of this Siberian recluse — Anastasia. She is all alone. Incredibly alone. Her world-view, her knowledge, her abilities are so vastly different from those of other people. And the more pronounced they are, the more tragic is her loneliness. She lives in another dimension of conscious awareness. This other dimension may be marvellous, but she is all alone there. Of course she could come down to other people’s level, she could be like everyone else. But she has not done this. Why? Because to do that she would have to betray herself and her principles — perhaps even betray God. And then Anastasia decided to do something amazing. She began calling others into this splendid dimension. And there have been those capable of understanding her. And I, it seems, am just beginning to understand her, to really feel... Six years have passed and I am only beginning, just barely, to understand. And she has been patiently waiting all this time, calmly explaining everything without getting angry. Perseverant, unshakable in her hope.

Christ Jesus was probably the same way. Of course he had his disciples and people were constantly coming to hear him. But who could have been a *friend* to him? A friend who could finish his sentences and help him in a pinch. But not a single kindred spirit was at hand. Not one.

God! How do most people perceive Him? As an unreachable, amorphous, feelingless being! All they can say to Him is "Gimme this!" or "Judge that!" But if God is our Father, if He has created the world around us, then, quite naturally, the fundamental desire of our Parent can only be for a meaningful existence for His children, along with their understanding of the essence of creation and the opportunity to co-create together with them. But how can we talk about a meaningful existence when we constantly trample down everything God has created around us — trample on His thoughts — and yet all the while engage in various forms of worship to someone, only not Him?

But He doesn't need to be worshipped. He is waiting for our co-operation. But we... Well, we can't even comprehend such a simple truth as: if you're the son of God and can understand your Father, take just one hectare of land and create a Paradise on it, bringing joy to your Father. But no! All mankind is striving for something like crazy, but what? Who is it that is constantly making idiots of us all? And what does He, our Father, think when He sees all this earthly debauchery? He watches and waits for His earthly sons and daughters to wake up and come to their senses. He watches and causes the Sun to illuminate the whole Earth, so His children can breathe.

How are we to comprehend the essence of being? How are we to make sense of what is really happening to us? Is it mass psychosis? Or the deliberate influence of some kind of forces? What forces? When will we be free from them? Who are they?

CHAPTER FOUR



A dormant civilisation

This conversation took place on the second day of my stay.

Anastasia and I were sitting quietly together in our long-time favourite spot by the lake. Evening was coming on, but the cool evening freshness had not yet set in. A barely perceptible breeze fanned our bodies from constantly changing angles, as though designed to delight us with the many and variegated fragrances of the taiga.

With just a trace of a smile on her face, Anastasia contemplated the mirror surface of the lake before us. She seemed to be waiting for me to ask her the questions I wanted answers to. Only somehow I wasn't able to reduce my questions to a brief and concrete formulation. It appeared that what I managed to formulate in my mind did not reflect the main thing I really wanted to know. So I approached it circuitously:

"You see, Anastasia, here I am writing books using many of the words you have given me, even though I don't understand all your words right off, but it's not so much the words but the reaction to them that has me baffled most of all.

"Before I met you I was a simple entrepreneur. I worked and, like everyone else, wanted to make as much money as I could. I could afford to enjoy a drink and have a rousing good time, but nobody laid into me or my company's workers with the kind of criticism that the media is now overwhelming me with.

"Strange as it may seem, back then nobody faulted me for earning money, but as soon as the books came out, some personages began right off publishing articles saying I was nothing

but a gold-digger, if not a charlatan and a bigot. It'd be okay if it were just me, but they've also gone and insulted my readers too, calling them bigots and fanatics. And goodness knows what they write about you. Either they argue that you don't exist at all or they say you're the queen of the heathens.

"It's funny how everything's turned out: here in Siberia there are a lot of minority ethnic groups, with different cultures and beliefs, some of them still practise shamanism, and nothing bad is ever said about them — on the contrary, they say these peoples' cultures need to be preserved. And here you are, all alone — well, apart from your grandfather and great-grandfather, and now your son — you live all alone here. You don't ask for anything, and yet the words you say provoke a storm of emotions. Some people absolutely delight in the words you say and get all excited, and start acting on them, while others attack you with unabashed fury and anger. Why is that so?"

"And you, Vladimir, can you not answer this question yourself?"

"Myself?"

"Yes, yourself."

"I've got very strange thoughts running through my head. I get the impression that out there in human society there are some kind of unknown people or forces who will do everything they can to make people suffer. These forces thrive on wars, the drug trade, prostitution and disease. And on their constant increase. How else to explain it? They don't attack books about murders or magazines with half-naked women, but there's something about books on Nature, or books on the soul, that isn't to their liking. And in your case it's even more peculiar. Here you are calling upon people to build their Paradise domains for happy families, and many people are strongly behind you in this endeavour.

"And not just in their words. People are starting to act. I myself have seen people who have taken land and begun

working it, as you said, building their own kin's domain. These include young and old, rich and poor, and yet somebody's really uptight about that. And the media's constantly trying to distort what you say. They resort to outright lies, to put it bluntly. I can't understand how the words of a single woman living in the taiga and apparently not bothering anyone can be so powerful.

"And why would anybody try to engage in direct conflict with your words? There's also the claim that behind those words of yours lurks some kind of great power — occultism, maybe."

"And what do *you* think — is there a power behind them or are they just words?"

"I think there must be some kind of occult power in them, yes. That's what some of the esoterics are saying."

"Be careful, Vladimir, and try not to take in what others say. Try listening instead to your own heart and soul."

"I'm trying, only I haven't got enough information."

"What information, specifically?"

"Well, for instance, what ethnic background are you Anastasia? What religion are you and your relatives? Or maybe you don't have any ethnic background?"

"I have," replied Anastasia, rising to her feet. "But if I tell you now, the dark forces will rise up and scream in fright. Then they will try to come down with all their might — not just on me, but to crush you too. You will be able to withstand it once you have got beyond noticing their attempts and give your thought over completely to the marvellous reality. But as long as you consider yourself defenceless in the face of their anger, you should withdraw your question and forget about it until the right time."

Anastasia was now standing in front of me, her arms hanging loose at her side. I gazed up at her from below and couldn't help noticing how proudly, splendidly and unassailably she

carried herself. Her tender and enquiring look was awaiting my response. I had no doubt that what she was about to say was indeed capable of provoking some kind of extraordinary reaction. I had no doubt because over the years I have known her I have seen a feverish reaction to her words on the part of many people. And for that reason I didn't doubt the possibility of danger either, but I responded:

"I'm not afraid. Even though I'm sure it's all going to come about just as you say. Maybe I'll be able to hold out myself, but then I'm not the only one... We have a son now. I don't want anything to threaten him."

At this point Volodya suddenly appeared and went over to Anastasia. He must have been quietly standing somewhere nearby and listening to our conversation, without interfering. But now that the topic had turned to him, he probably felt it was time to make himself known.

Volodya took Anastasia's hand in his own little hands, pressed his cheek against it, lifted up his head and said:

"Mamochka Anastasia, go ahead and answer Papa's question. I can take care of myself. History need not continue to be hidden from people on my account."

"Yes, that is true," observed Anastasia, stroking the child's little head. "You are strong, and you are getting stronger with each passing day." Then, raising her head and looking me straight in the eye, she pronounced the letters more distinctly than usual, as though introducing herself for the first time:

"I am a *Ved-russ*, Vladimir."

I actually felt a kind of extraordinary sensation within me from the word Anastasia pronounced — it felt like a mild electrical current was running over my whole body like a pleasant heat wave, as though imparting some kind of news to every cell of my being. And something unusual, it seemed to me, had happened in the space around me too. The word itself meant nothing to me, but for some reason I rose to my feet

upon hearing it. I stood there, as though trying to remember something.

Once again, this time quite joyfully, Volodya spoke up:

"You, Mamochka Anastasia, are a Vedruss beauty, and I too am a Vedruss..."

Then he looked at me with a happy grin and said:

"You are my Papa. Just like me, you are a Vedruss, only dormant. I'm talking too much again, eh, Mama? I'll go now. I've thought up something marvellous for you and Papa. Before the Sun sets behind the trees I shall create what I have thought up!" And catching an affirmative nod from Anastasia, off he went trippingly into the forest.

I looked at Anastasia standing there in front of me and thought to myself: *The Vedruss must be one of the Yugra minorities still living in the Far North and Siberia.*¹

In 1994 in Khanty-Mansiysk Province there was an international documentary film festival devoted to the Yugra minorities. At the request of the provincial administration many of the festival participants were quartered aboard my ship on the Ob River. I had the opportunity to talk with them, watch the films in the competition and travel with the film-makers to some of the more remote Siberian settlements where shamans were still practising their craft. I couldn't remember much about the culture and customs of these minority peoples. But I did recall feeling a tinge of sadness over the fact that these

¹*Yugra* — the original name of the *Khanty*, one of the two major aboriginal groups in the Province of Khanty-Mansiysk, located around the northern reaches of the Ob River, just before it flows into the Arctic Ocean. Together with the neighbouring *Mansi*, the Khanty are classified as part of the Siberian branch of the Finno-Ugric peoples, which include Finns, Estonians and Hungarians. Since the first recorded arrival of Russian explorers and colonists in the 11th century, the Khanty have co-existed with the Russian state, often with a greater degree of autonomy than other parts of the Russian empire or federation.

extremely small populations were dying out. And people were treating them as some kind of exotic curiosity which would soon be disappearing completely from the face of the Earth.

I did not recall hearing anything from the participants at this film festival (which could really be considered a major national event) about the Vedruss people, so I asked Anastasia:

“Have your people died out, Anastasia? Or rather, are there just a very few of them left? Where were they settled previously?”

“Our people have not died out, Vladimir, they are dormant. Our people happily thrived on the territories now known as Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, England, Germany, France, India, China and many other states both large and small.

“Up until quite recently, only five thousand years ago, in the real world our people were thriving on lands from the Mediterranean and Black Sea to the farthest northern latitudes.

“We are Asians, Europeans and Russians, as well as those who recently called themselves Americans — in fact, god-people, all from a single Vedruss civilisation.²

“There was an age of life on our planet known as the Vedic Age.

“During the Vedic Age mankind reached a level of sensitive knowledge allowing it to create energy images through collective thought. And then it underwent a transition into a new era of existence, known as the Image Age.

“With the help of energy images, created by collective thought, mankind was afforded the opportunity of co-creating in the Universe. It could have had the ability to create Earth-like life on other planets. And it *would* have, if it had not committed any mistakes in passing through the Image Age.

²*Ved* is a Slavic root signifying ‘knowledge’ or ‘to know’. The words *Vedic* and *Vedas* are derived from this root.

“In the Image Age, however, which lasted for nine thousand Earth years, mistakes were repeatedly made in the co-creation either of a single image or several images simultaneously.

“A mistake occurred if there remained in the Earth’s human society people with insufficient purity of thought, with an insufficient culture of feelings and thoughts.

“Such mistakes had the effect of obscuring the opportunity to create in the expanses of the Universe, and led mankind into occultism.

“The Occult Age of human life has lasted for one thousand years now. It began with an intensive degradation of human consciousness. Ultimately, a degradation of consciousness and an insufficient purity of thought, coupled with knowledge and opportunity at the highest level, would always lead mankind to a global disaster.

“This was repeated many times over billions of Earth years.

“Now we are in mankind’s Occult Age. And, as always, a disaster of global proportions was supposed to take place. It was supposed to, but the deadline has passed. We have passed the end of the Occult Millennium. Now it is up to everyone to take stock of their purpose, their essence and where the mistake was made. We should help each other in mentally retracing the course of our history in the opposite direction and pinpoint the mistake. Then an era of joyous life on the Earth will be ushered in — an era such as no one has ever witnessed before in global history. The Universe is anticipating it with bated breath and great hope.

“In the meantime the forces of darkness are alive and prevalent, feverishly trying to control people’s minds. But for the first time they failed to notice the Vedruss’ unusual behaviour back five thousand years ago.

“When an image was born by a perverted consciousness upon the Earth — an image which desired to exercise control

over everybody, that was when the first war began. It was under the influence of this image that people started killing each other. This has happened many times on the Earth just before a global disaster. But this time... For the first time the Vedruss civilisation did not enter the fray on a non-material plane.

"Instead, the Vedruss fell asleep on their territories both large and small, switching off a part of their consciousness and feelings.

"Man's life on the Earth seemed to carry on as before: children were born, houses were built, the decrees of the attackers were obeyed. It seemed as though the Vedruss had submitted to the dark forces, but therein lay a great secret: by falling asleep, the Vedruss, unconquered, remained alive on all planes of being. And this happy civilisation is dormant right to this day, and will continue to sleep until those who are awake search out the mistake in the image creation. That same mistake that led the Earth's civilisation to its present-day situation.

"Once the mistake has been identified with absolute precision, the dormant ones may hear the words of those who are awake and begin to rouse each other out of sleep.

"Just who thought up this particular move, I cannot say. It is probably someone very close to God.

"You, as a Vedruss yourself, should try to wake up, at least a little, and take a look at the course of history.

"Our people went to sleep on various continents. Three thousand years ago they were thriving only on what is now Russian territory. At that time the age of the dark forces had already come upon the whole Earth. And the Vedruss continued their happy existence only on the 'island' now known as Russia.

"They needed, very much needed to hold out another thousand years. They had to decide how to convey their knowledge to future generations, figure out what was happening on the Earth and determine how a repetition of the mistake could be avoided in the future. They managed to hold out

another fifteen hundred years on this 'island'. They fended off the attacks, but not on a material plane. The darkness had already taken control of people's minds over the whole Earth. The priests placed themselves above God and decided to create their own world of the occult. They had already managed to intoxicate a third of the world.

"But all the forces of darkness could do no harm to our people on this 'island' that is today called Russia.

"It was only fifteen hundred years ago that this last 'island', too, fell asleep. The civilisation of the Earth, the people who knew God, fell asleep in order to awaken to the dawn of a new reality.

"The forces of darkness supposed that they had succeeded in destroying this people's culture and the aspirations of their soul forever. This is why they are trying so hard to conceal the history of the Russian people from those living on the Earth today.

"In reality there is much more to the story. In covering up the history of the Russian people, which can serve as a stepping-stone into the world of the beautiful, they are actually trying to cover up the joyously living civilisation of the Earth — cover up the culture, knowledge and feeling of knowing God which are inherent in that glad civilisation your forebears were a part of."

"Wait, Anastasia! Could you tell me a bit more specifically about this extinct — or, as you put it, dormant — civilisation using simpler terms, terms easier to understand? And can you prove the existence of this civilisation?"

"I can try, using simpler words. But it will be a hundred times better if each one tries to visualise it for themselves."

"But is it possible for everyone to see what happened ten thousand years ago?"

"Yes, it is. Only in varying degrees and detail. But everyone can get an overall feeling of it, and even see one's forebears and one's self in this joyous world."

"How can everyone do that? How can I do it, for example?"

"It is all very simple. To start with, Vladimir, try to evaluate and compare events you are familiar with just with your own sense of logic. When questions come up, find your own answers to them."

"What d'you mean, by *logic*? How can one learn about the history of Russia, let's say, by logic? Anyway, you said that our Russian history and culture have been destroyed, or hidden from all the people of the Earth... But how can I — or anybody else, for that matter — verify what you say just using logic?"

"Let us try reasoning through this together. I can do a little to help you get in touch with history."

"Okay, then. What needs to be done to start with?"

"To start with, you should answer yourself a question."

"Which one?"

"A very simple one. Remember, Vladimir, the history textbook you brought for our son. It is called *A history of the ancient world*. There are chapters in it discussing the history of Ancient Rome, Greece and China. They describe what Egypt was like five thousand years ago. But nothing is said about what Russia was like during this time. Never mind five thousand years — Russia's history and culture even from a thousand years ago are kept in the strictest secret. The textbook is written in the Russian language, aimed at Russian children, but there is not a word in it about the Russia of only two thousand years ago. Why?"

"Why?" I echoed. "Indeed, a most peculiar situation. A Russian textbook on the history of the ancient world and nothing said about Russia itself. Not a word about the history of the Russian people, either during the time of Ancient Rome and Egypt or even later. Strange! Very strange... as though there were no Russian people living during those times."

In trying to recall what I knew of history, I remembered hearing about the existence of the ancient philosophers of

Rome, Greece and China. I never read their works, just heard about them. I also knew that their works were accepted by society as brilliant and outstanding. But I could not recall a single Russian philosopher or poet of that time. Indeed, why?

Aware that Anastasia wanted me to try to figure out the answer myself, I said:

"Neither I nor anyone else can answer this question, Anastasia. It's a question that's probably not possible to answer."

"It *is* possible. Only one must not be lazy in one's logical reasoning. You see, we have come to our first conclusion: the history of the Russian people is unknown not only to the world at large but to the Russians themselves. Do you agree with this, Vladimir?"

"Well, maybe not entirely unknown. We still have *descriptions* of what happened a thousand years ago."

"The description was written under censorship and with significant distortion. Besides, the commentaries are the same for every historical event. Russia's past millennium — the Christian era — is like a single day of history. We have Christianity in Russia still today, but can you tell me what preceded it?"

"They say that before Christianity, Russia was a heathen land. People worshipped various gods. But the description is very superficial. There are no writings or even any legends about that period. There are no descriptions either of the political system or of people's way of life."

"So, you have reached Conclusion Number Two: the Russian people had a different culture then. Now, use your logic and tell me under what circumstances do attempts arise to hide or distort history?"

"Well, there's a clear answer to that question. People try to falsify history when it's necessary to show the benefits of following a new order, a new authority, a new ideology. But to completely conceal any trace of it... Wow! That's incredible!"

"The incredible happened, Vladimir. It is an incontestable fact. Now, tell me something else — and do not slacken in your thinking, please. Did this fact come about all by itself, or is it the result of a deliberate effort on somebody's part?"

"Judging by the fact that people have always burnt books when they wanted to stamp out knowledge or ideology, I would say that someone deliberately stamped out all knowledge about pre-Christian Russian culture too."

"Who do you think would have done that — who?"

"Most likely the ones who were imposing a new culture and religion on Russia."

"One might say that. But possibly there was somebody behind it, somebody controlling the new religion and those who imposed it? Someone with their own agenda?"

"But who? Who can control religion? Tell me!"

"You are still looking for answers from the outside, you are too lazy to search for them within yourself. I can give you an answer, but an outside answer may seem to you incredible — it may provoke a degree of doubt. Everyone can hear the answer within themselves, once they have liberated their soul and logic and awakened even a wee bit from sleep."

"It's not that I'm lazy. It's just that searching for answers within myself will take a lot of time. Better you tell me yourself what you know about history. If I start having doubts, I'll question you further. I shan't just take your story for granted, but I shall verify it by logic, both now and later on, as you suggest."

"Let it be as you wish. But I shall merely give you a rough outline of the whole, and let everyone try to fill in the details as they perceive them. Today's reality, along with the past and the future, is something that needs to be determined only within one's self, with one's own soul."

CHAPTER FIVE



The history of mankind, as told by Anastasia

Vedism

People have been living on the Earth for billions of years. Everything on the Earth was created perfect right from the start. Trees, blades of grass, bees and the whole animal world.

There is a direct connection between everything living on the Earth and the entire Universe. The apex of creation is Man. And in the great pristine Harmony of all things Man was created harmonious.

Man's purpose is to learn about all his surroundings and create perfection in the Universe. To create the likeness of the world of the Earth in other galaxies. And with each new creation of his to add more splendour to earthly creations.

The way will open for Man to create on other planets when Man is able to overcome temptation — when Man is able to hold in unity the grand and diverse energies of the Universe inherent in himself. And when he does not allow one of them to take precedence over the rest.

The day when the whole Earth is a Paradise garden will mark the opening of the path of creation in the Universe. And once Man becomes aware of the whole harmony of the Earth, he will be able to contribute his own splendour.

Man takes it upon himself to take account of his actions once in every million years. Whenever he makes a mistake, whenever he allows one of the many diverse energies he

contains to dominate at the expense of the rest, a global catastrophe takes place. Then everything starts again from the beginning. This has happened many times.

One of mankind's million-year periods may be divided into three ages: first, the *Vedic Age*, second, the *Age of the Image*, and third, the *Age of the Occult*.

The first age of human society on the Earth, the Vedic, lasts 990,000 years. During this age Man lives in Paradise like a gladsome child, maturing under parental care.

During the Vedic Age God is known to Man. All God's feelings are inherent in Man, and through them Man is able to obtain any advice he needs directly from God. And if Man should suddenly make a mistake, God is free to correct it simply by giving a hint, without disturbing the general harmony or infringing on Man's freedom in any way.

In the Vedic Age Man does not raise questions about how or by whom the world, the Universe, the galaxies — along with his marvellous planet called Earth — were created. Everyone is completely aware that everything around, either visible or invisible, has been created by their Father, namely, God.

The Father is everywhere! All that grows and lives — are His living thoughts, His programme. And one can use one's own thought to commune with the Father's thoughts. And one can contribute to His programme, provided one first understands it in detail.

During the Vedic Age Man did not bow down before God, nor was there the multitude of religions which sprang up afterward. There was a culture to life. People lived a Divine way of life.

There were no diseases of the flesh. Feeding and clothing himself in a Divine manner, Man simply did not think about food and clothing. Thought was otherwise occupied — with the excitement of discovery. And no rulers reigned over human society. There were no boundaries marking off states as today.

Human society on the Earth consisted of happy families. The various continents were inhabited by families. They were all united by their aspiration to create a Space of Splendour.

There were many new discoveries, and each family, upon making a splendid discovery, felt the need to share it with others.

Families were formed by the energy of Love. And everyone was fully aware that a new family would create one more oasis of splendour on their native planet.

There were many rituals, holidays and carnivals among the people of the Vedic Age, each imbued with great meaning, sensitivity and a conscious awareness of the real Divine existence on the Earth.

Each ritual served as a grand school and a grand examination for each Man that took part in it. An examination in the eyes of others, in the eyes of one's self, and, consequently, in the eyes of God.

I shall tell you about and show you one of these rituals. It was a wedding rite — or, rather, the recognition of the union of two people in love. Look and see. Try to compare the level of knowledge and culture with that of today.



A union of two — a wedding

The wedding rite — a bonding of two hearts — took place with the participation of the whole village, sometimes several neighbouring (or even distant) villages together.

The lovers-to-be could meet in various ways. It could happen that two young people from the same settlement might fall in love. More frequently this occurred at one of the major festivals where a number of villages got together, when two gazes met and a spark of feeling was ignited in their hearts.

It did not matter whether he approached her or the other way round. They could tell a lot about each other's feelings simply by looking into each other's eyes. But there were words too, which, when translated into today's language, might sound something like this:

"With you, my beautiful goddess, I could create a Space of Love to last forever," he would tell his intended.

And if the girl's heart responded in kind, she might answer:

"My god, I am ready to help you in your grand co-creation."

Next the young lovers would jointly select a location for their future home.

They would go together and visit the area around the settlement where *he* lived, and then visit a corresponding area near *her* village. And there was no need for the lovers to tell their parents of their plans. Everyone in both settlements knew what was going on and was fully aware of the grand happening that would soon take place.

After mutually agreeing upon a site where they would make their future life together, the lovers would often retreat there, just the two of them.

Sometimes they would spend the night there under the open sky or in a shelter they had constructed from tree branches. They would greet the dawn and bid farewell to the day there. After returning briefly to their parents' houses, they would hurry back to their chosen site. It called them, and drew them to itself, much as an infant inexplicably draws to itself a pair of loving parents.

The parents did not ask the young lovers any questions. They simply waited in eager and joyful anticipation for their

children to ask questions of them, all the while watching as their son or daughter spent time in deep meditation.

And the children once more went off to their grand retreat. This might go on for months, or even a year or two. And all during this time there would be no physical intimacy between the lovers.

People in the Vedic settlements knew that these two lovers' hearts were creating a grand design, inspired by the energy of Love.

Right from birth both *he* and *she* had been absorbing from their parents the lifestyle, knowledge and mindfulness of the Vedic culture. They could share their deep knowledge either of the stars burning in the night sky or of the flowers unfolding their petals with the rising of the Sun, or of the purpose of bees, or the diverse energies existing in space.

From early childhood both *he* and *she* had been bearing witness to the marvellous domains, oases and Paradise gardens their parents had created in love, and now they were aspiring to co-create their own.

On their chosen plot of land, a hectare or more in size, the lovers laid out a plan for their *real* life ahead. The task before them was to mentally formulate a design for their home and work out an arrangement for a wide variety of plant life, where everything could work in mutual support and harmony.

Everything would be arranged to grow on its own, without requiring any physical effort on Man's part. There were a whole lot of factors to be taken into account here, including the disposition of the planets, as well as the day-by-day flow of air currents.

Come spring and summer, plants would exhale ethers and give off a delightful fragrance. The young lovers would try to arrange them so that whenever a breeze blew a bouquet of many different ethers would waft into their dwelling.

All this foreshadowed the birth of a grand and extraordinary complex. It consisted of Divine creations. Besides, the place the lovers selected was to be transformed into a scene of splendour which would delight the eyes. Not on a canvas, but on living ground — a living design was being created in thought, one that would last for ever.

Even today people can imagine how involved and concentrated thought can become when one is endeavouring to come up with a design for one's own home.

A *dachnik*,¹ too, will understand how, especially in the spring, one's thought can get absorbed in what one's plot of land will look like in the future. And a talented artist, in planning out a picture, also knows how he can get carried away by his thoughts.

All these aspirations were now concentrated in the two loving hearts. Their knowledge was enhanced by the energy of Love, fostering new inspiration. This is why they did not even think about what we call today the pleasures of the flesh.

Once the design was complete in their thoughts, the lovers first paid their respects to the bridegroom's home village, where they went around to every house and invited the residents to come for a visit. Each household awaited their arrival with great excitement and anticipation.

The people of the Vedic culture knew that when lovers came to see them, a new energy of Divine Love would visit their domain, albeit just for a moment. And the marvellous Space of each domain would smile at the energy of young love. There was no question of imagination or occult beliefs here. After all, even today anyone finds the company of a good person more pleasant than that of an angry one. Lovers cannot be angry, especially when they come visiting as a couple.

¹*dachnik* — see footnote 1 in Chapter 2: "Conversation with my son".

But in every family in the village there was also a feeling of anxiety. Whenever the young couple dropped in on a garden, a courtyard or a house, they would say just a few words to the residents. Just a sentence to each one. Something like: *Oh, what a splendid apple tree you have!* or *Your cat has a knowing look!* or *Your bear is a real worker, very considerate!*

To any resident hearing the lovers praise a tree growing in the garden or the household cat, this was a sign of respect shown by the younger generation to their elders' way of life. The appraisal was always sincere, for the one giving it was indicating that he too would like to have a tree or a bear of similar worth.

It was with great pride and joy in the face of the whole village that each resident aspired to present the young couple with the object of their praise as a gift. And all would wait with anticipation for the day the couple had selected, when they would present their gifts to the bride and groom.

In the meantime the couple would also go from house to house in the bride's village. Sometimes it took three days to visit every family in the two settlements. Sometimes more than a week. When the couple finished making their rounds and the selected day arrived, people both young and old would rise at dawn and begin hastening to the site of the young couple's new home for a visit.

People would take up a position around the perimeter of the couple's selected domain, marked out by dry branches. In the middle, next to the shelter, a little mound rose out of the earth, decorated with flowers.

Look now and you will behold a most extraordinary scene!

There he is! Look! Here is a young man coming out to greet the residents of two villages. He is magnificent, a virtual 'Apollo'! With hair of russet brown and eyes of bright blue, he ascends the mound. Now on top of the mound, Radomir² — that is his name — is excited. The eyes of all the

people present are fixed on him alone. And in the ensuing silence he begins his speech.

In front of everyone assembled he sets forth the design of a new Space which he has co-created with his beloved. With the aid of hand gestures, Radomir tells where the apple tree will grow, as well as the cherry tree and the pear tree. He shows the location of future groves of pine, oak, cedar and alder, along with what berry bushes will grow in between, what grasses and herbs will send forth their pleasant fragrances. And how easy it will be for bees to build their home among the trees. And where that workhorse of a bear will hibernate during the winter.

He speaks quite quickly, with great inspiration, setting forth the carefully thought through design. He goes on speaking for about three hours, and the whole time the people listen with rapt attention. And each time the young man points to a spot where some living thing will grow, according to his grand design, someone from the group of people listening will go over and stand on the future site of the apple tree, pear tree or cherry tree. Sometimes this individual is a woman, sometimes a man or an elderly person, but it could also be a child with eyes full of awareness, wisdom and joyful contentment.

Those stepping forth from the assembly are already holding in their hands saplings of the tree or plant designated for the selected spots where beauty is to unfold.

As each one steps forth, the people bow to him, inasmuch as he has shown himself worthy of the young couple's appreciation — as they did the rounds of the village domains — for being able to bring forth beauty. Which means he has been

²*Radomir* — an ancient Slavic name derived from the roots *rad* (joyful) and *mir* (peace). The word *rad*, in turn, is a derivative of *ra* (Sun).

found worthy of appreciation on the part of the Creator — the Father of all, the all-loving God.

That is not a conclusion reached through superstition. It is quite logical.

People of the Vedic culture were wont to treat the young couple designing the splendid oasis as deities. Such treatment was not unfounded. After all, the Creator had performed His creations in an impulse of inspiration and Love. And these young lovers, likewise inspired by Love, have now created a splendid design.

Look — the young man has finished speaking. He comes down from the mound and goes over to where his bride is standing. She has been following the whole proceedings with great excitement and emotion. He grasps her hand and leads her to the mound, where they take up a position together.

And the young man utters these words in front of everyone assembled:

“I have not created this Space of Love in isolation. Here is my marvellous inspiration standing beside me before you all.”

The girl — it would be better to refer to her as a *maiden*³ — initially lowers her eyes in the face of the whole gathering.

Every woman has her own particular charm. But there come special moments in the life of every woman when she rises over everyone else. Such moments are not found in today's culture. But back then...

Look! Standing on the mound, Liubomila⁴ (as she is called) has raised her eyes to greet the people around her. The cries of excitement of the whole crowd have merged into one. The girl's face has broken into a smile — a bold smile, not a saucy

³*maiden* — The Russian word *deva* (here translated ‘maiden’) is identical to the Sanskrit word denoting the nature spirits which help plants to grow.

⁴*Liubomila* — an ancient Slavic name derived from the roots *liub* (love) and *mil* (dear).

one. She is overflowing with the energy of Love. Her cheeks glow more intensely than usual. The maiden's clear eyes and body vibrant with health reach out to envelop the people and the whole space around them with a radiant warmth. For a moment the whole scene falls silent, still. The young goddess shines before the people in all her beauty.

And so there is no question of haste as the maiden's parents, accompanied by the whole family, both young and old, solemnly make their way to the mound where the young couple are standing. They pause at the mound and bow to the couple, then the maiden's mother asks her daughter:

"All the wisdom of our family line lies in you, my daughter. Tell me, do you see the future of the land you have chosen?"

"Yes, Mama, I see it," replies the daughter.

"Tell me, daughter dear," the mother continues, "do you like everything about the future you have been shown?"

A young maiden might answer this question in a variety of ways. Most often she would say:

"Yes, Mama. Here will be a splendid Paradise garden, a living home."

But look and see, this particular temperamental girl, her cheeks flush with a bright glow, comes forth with a non-traditional response:

"The design is not bad, I really do like it. But, you know, still I should like to add just a little something."

Quickly jumping down from the mound, she all at once runs through the crowd to the edge of her future garden, where she stops and says:

"Here is where an evergreen should grow, with a birch beside it. When a breeze blows from that direction, it will first meet the branches of the pine, then the birch, and after that the breeze will ask the trees of the garden to sing a tune. It will not be repeated exactly the same way each time, but it will always be a delight to the soul. And here," the maiden

adds, running off a little to one side, "here flowers are to grow. First there will be a flush of red, then over here a little later violet will spring up, and burgundy over there."

The maiden, all aglow like a fairy, starts dancing around her future garden. And once more the people remaining in the circle set themselves in motion, hurrying about to carry the seeds in their hands to the spots on the ground the high-spirited girl has pointed out.

Upon finishing her dance, she once more runs up to the mound. Here, standing next to her chosen one, she says:

"Now the Space here will be splendid in its sheen. The earth will produce a most marvellous scene."

"Tell everyone, my daughter," her mother once more addresses her, "who will be crowned to reign over all this marvellous Space around? Of all the people living on the Earth, upon whom could you bestow the crown?"

The maiden takes a sweeping look at all the people standing around holding saplings and seeds in their hands. Each of them stands in a spot indicated by the young man according to his plan and the maiden's outline of the splendid scene to be. But no one is yet planting a seed in the ground. The sacred moment for that has not yet arrived. And at this point the maiden turns to the young man standing beside her on the mound, and says, almost in song:

"He is worthy to wear the crown whose thought is able to create a future that will be splendid all around."

With these words the girl touches the shoulder of the young man standing beside her. He gets down on one knee before her. And the girl places on his head a most beautiful crown, a garland woven from sweet-smelling grasses by the maiden's own hand. Then, running her fingers three times through her fiancé's hair with her right hand, she takes hold of his head with her left and draws it a little closer to herself. Upon her signal the young man stands up. Then the girl runs

down from the mound, and bows her head ever so slightly in a sign of meekness.

Right at this moment the young man's father, accompanied by his whole family, is making his way over to the newly crowned groom. Approaching the mound, he stops and pauses in respect. Then the father begins speaking, his gaze fixed on his son:

"Who are you whose thought is capable of creating a Space of Love?"

Whereupon the young man replies:

"I am your son, and I am the son of the Creator."

"A crown has been placed upon your head, a sign of a great mission to come. You who are wearing the crown, what will you do as you reign over your domain?"

"I shall create a future that all around most splendid will remain."

"Where will you gain the strength and inspiration, my son, and crowned son of the Creator?"

"In Love!"

"The energy of Love is capable of wandering through the whole Universe. How will you manage to see the reflection of universal love on the Earth?"

"There is one girl, Father, and for me she is the reflection of universal love on the Earth."

With these words the young man comes down to where the girl is standing, takes her by the hand and leads her back up to the mound.

Holding hands, they watch as the two families merge into a single group, sharing hugs and jokes and laughter, from the youngest child to the eldest present. Everything becomes quiet once more when the young man holds up his hand and proclaims:

"My thanks to all who heard me in this place. My soul has spoken of the creation of a new Space. My thanks to all who

have held the energy of Love in such high esteem. May what has been conceived by the soul's dream now sprout from the earth!"

These words have the effect of setting all the people standing around in joyful motion. And with pride and joy and great emotion the people plant the seeds and saplings in the ground. Each one plants just one sapling in the spot indicated by the young man as set forth in his plan. Those not assigned a specific spot set about to walk around the perimeter of the plot which has already been marked out, and to the song of the *khorovod*⁵ throw the seeds they have brought with them into the ground.

Within the space of a few minutes a marvellous garden has been planted — the Space which has been created through a dream.

And now the people retreat once more beyond the plot's perimeter. Only two families remain surrounding the mound where *he* and *she* — the young lovers — are still standing.

Drops of rain from the skies are falling onto the ground. The very warm rain is unusual and lasts but a short time — these are tears of joy and tenderness falling from the Creator's eyes to water the marvellous Space co-created by His children.

What could be dearer for a parent than the marvellous creations of His children?

And once again the young man with the crown holds up his hand, and when all is quiet, says:

"Let all the creatures given to Man by the Creator live together with us in friendship!"

Whereupon the girl and the young man come down from the mound and head over to the shelter where they stayed while working out the design.

⁵*khorovod* (pronounced *bur-a-VOT*) — a circle dance accompanied by choral singing, traditionally popular among Russians, Ukrainians and Belarusians.

After these words, out from the circle of people standing around someone approaches the couple, accompanied by an old dog and a pup. The dog is one that greeted the couple in a friendly way on their tour of the domains and which they have taken a great liking to.

The visitor bows and presents the bride with the puppy. At his signal the old dog goes and lies down at the young man's feet. This dog has been trained to help Man teach all the other animals."

The young man orders the dog to sit by the entrance to the shelter, and presently the girl lets the puppy inside. Other people approach the shelter one by one, carrying in their arms a kitten or a lamb, or bringing a colt or a bear cub on a lead.

People quickly fashion tree branches into a wicker fence to attach animal pens to the shelter. And soon the dwelling which just a short time ago was used by people as sleeping quarters is now filled with young animals. And there is tremendous significance in this. For in mixing with each other this way, these animals will forever live together in friendship, caring for and helping each other. No mysticism in this. It is the law of the Creator of Nature. After all, you can find examples of this even today. If a puppy and a kitten grow up together, they will remain friends as adults.

One of the other characteristics of the Vedic period was that people were fully aware of the purpose of the various creatures. And all animals served Man.

Man did not bother feeding the animals; on the contrary, they fed *him*. During the Vedic age both Man and his household pets were vegetarians, and never ate meat — they would not even think of it. The tremendous variety of plants around were able to supply Man's taste abundantly — not only his, but that of the animals surrounding him.

In this instance the bride and groom are presented by the residents of the two villages with the best they have.

After accepting the gifts, the young couple once more ascend the mound:

"Our hearty thanks to everyone," the bridegroom expresses their gratitude to those gathered. "Thank you all for co-creating this Space. My descendants will care for it over the centuries to come."

"Our thanks to the mothers who bore the creator," says the bride.

And, turning to the young man, she adds:

"For the joy of the Creator of the Sun, the Moon, the sprinkle of stars in the sky and our most beautiful Earth, we shall co-create everything you are able to think of."

"Together with you, my splendid goddess, and with people!" the young man answers, and adds:

"You alone are capable of inspiring my dreams."

Once again the young couple come down from the mound. They are immediately surrounded by their respective families, all congratulating them.

And the people dance a *khorovod* around the plot, accompanied by a joyful song.

By this time it is getting on toward evening. The young people each go back to their own home. For two nights and a day they will not see each other.

Upon reaching home, after having spent so much effort creating, the young creator falls into a deep sleep. His beautiful bride does the same in her own bed.

Those who remain at the spot where the co-creation took place in love will go on singing songs in a *khorovod*. Older couples will go off by themselves with resurrected memories of how it all happened to them on a similar day of their own.

And over the course of the following night and day the best craftsmen from both villages will build the couple a little house to the accompaniment of songs and the *khorovod*. They will fit the rows of timbers tight together, the moss and

grass between them making a sweet-smelling bouquet. And by the end of that day the women of the villages will place the best fruits of their harvest in the new home. The two mothers will cover the bed with a linen counterpane. And by the second night every last one of the visitors will be gone from the domain.

In the meantime, after a good night's sleep, the young man awoke on this day to see the Sun rise over the Earth, illuminating his parents' house with its glad rejoicing. His first thought was for the crown he had been given the day before. He took this and put it on his head, smiling at everyone, the picture of bliss.

Accompanied by his brothers and sisters he went over to a nearby stream to wash in fresh spring water. Passing through the garden on his way back to the house, Radomir caught sight of his mother.

With a restrained smile the mother began admiring her son.

Whereupon the young man, bursting with excitement, could no longer restrain himself at the sight of his own mother. He picked her up in his arms with delight. Spinning around like a child, he exclaimed:

"How marvellous is life all around, my dear Mama! Mama!"

"Oh!" his mother exclaimed, breaking into a laugh. Grandfather smiled behind his moustache. Grandmother then approached the happy pair, carrying a beautiful carved wooden ladle, and said:

"Young god of ours, stop right there. You must spare your gladsome energies. Drink this tea of calming herbs, so that your energy does not burn you. Its time will come the following day."

After drinking the tea, the young man began conversing with his grandfather about the Universe and the meaning of

life. But the tea soon inclined him to sleep. And the young man whom his grandmother called a “young god” had soon nodded off to sleep on the hand-crafted counterpane.

What was happening? Why did the grandmother call her grandson a ‘god’? Was she exaggerating, delighting in her admiration of the young man? Not at all! It was simply the case that her grandson had done deeds worthy of God’s name.

God had created the Earth and everything living and growing upon it. And with all the knowledge he had assimilated from his forebears, the young man was able to distinguish the purpose and function of a multitude of creations, much to the delight of the Creator. This enabled him to create from them a marvellous living oasis, one capable of bringing joy not only to him and his beloved, but also to the generations of their children, and to people who would over the centuries look upon this splendid domain which was created with love.

Could any of all people’s deeds on the Earth have delighted God more? What better and more significant thing could a Man do within the space of one human lifetime on the Earth?

In the Vedic culture the wedding rite was no occult ritual. As an aspiration to the likeness of the Divine being it is of tremendous practical significance.

In showing his knowledge and aspirations to the people gathered, the young man in love was, in effect, being tested in front of them. His deeds showed that he included the knowledge of all the generations of his family beginning with its pristine origins. And he added his own contribution too. His creation was appraised as worthy by all the people, and it was with great joy that they planted trees and herbs in the spots he indicated. And the marvellous co-creation will flourish each spring in ever more beautiful form.

Yet for all this, not a single neighbour would feel the slightest envy at the sight of it, since everyone has been involved

in co-creating this marvellous Space of Love. Each one now has their own little shoot they planted in the new splendid domain. When domains like this begin to multiply, the whole Earth will be clothed in God's own flourishing garden. And in the Vedic culture everyone knew that Man has been given life eternal, and that a splendid life repeats itself when those living now aspire to beauty and perfection!

Domains! Domains of the Vedic culture! Domains that were to be known in subsequent occult books as 'Paradise', as people lost their vast store of knowledge and imagined that this Paradise could be perceived only over the distant horizon beyond the clouds. And all to enhance the significance of so-called 'modern science' and covering up the poverty of their own thought.

There's no point in debating this without practical proof. But debate-settling actions can be quite simple. Let all those 'worthy' scholarly luminaries now living on the Earth try, for example, to set up just a single oasis for a single family — a task which, in the Vedic culture, every young man in love had to cope with.

A domain which is home to a happy family should be able to satisfy all the food requirements of everybody living in it, hour by hour.

Disease should not be permitted to have even a foothold. The changing reality of the scene before Man should moment by moment gladden his gaze. It should delight the ear with an infinite variety of sounds, and the nostrils with flowering fragrances.

And provide ethereal food for the soul, nursing the newborn and preserving love for ever. And so no member of the family should be wasting their energies on mundane concerns — their thought should remain free. Thought is given to all people for creative purposes.

The world of academe takes pride in its illusions:

"See, our ships are flying into space for the benefit of mankind!"

"For mankind's benefit, you say?"

"See all those bombs going off? They are to protect you!"

"But are they really to protect us?"

"See how this learned doctor has saved your life!"

But up to that point life was in the process of being annihilated, moment by moment, by everyday concerns. They saved the life of a slave to prolong his suffering.

The world of academe is in no position to create even the similitude of a splendid domain because, again, there is a law of the Universe which says: A single Creator inspired by love is stronger than all the sciences combined, which are deprived of love.

Now the newly-wed young man has slept his second night, his deep sleep undisturbed by anything. Only the image of his beloved sparkled and flashed like the stars. In his sleep this image merged with the Space they had created, the might and infinite variety of the Universe.

Radomir awakes before dawn. And without a word to anyone, he puts on his garland and picks up a shirt that has been hand-embroidered by his mother. Then he goes to the spring-fed stream.

The moon illumines his path through the pre-dawn darkness, while garlands of stars twinkle in the heavens. After washing in the stream, he puts on his shirt, and quickly makes his way to his sacred creation. The heavens begin to brighten.

And there he stands alone on the spot where the two villages recently celebrated their joy — the place he created through his dream.

The power of the feelings and sensations within a Man at such a moment can scarcely be comprehended by anyone who has not experienced them at least once for himself.

It can be said that these sensations and feelings are Divine in nature. And they increase in quivering anticipation of the first ray of dawn, in which... *There she is! His marvellous Liubomila!* Illumined in the dawn's rays, she runs to greet him and their co-creation.

This vision incarnate runs to meet Radomir. While perfection, of course, knows no real limit, it seems as though time has suddenly stopped for the two of them. Enveloped in the

mist of their feelings, they enter their new house. The table is spread with delicacies, and a tempting fragrance of dried flower-wafts from the embroidered counterpane on the bed.

"What are you thinking about right now?" she asks him in a heated whisper.

"About *him* — our future child," and Radomir gives a quiver as he looks at Liubomila. "My, how beautiful you are!" No longer able to contain himself, he very tenderly touches her shoulder and cheek.

Both are enveloped in the warm breath of Love and carried away to unknown heights.

Nobody in a million years will ever be able to describe in detail what happens between *him* and *her* when, merging into one in the impulse of mutual love, two people work out the likeness of themselves and God.

But the god-people of the Vedic culture knew precisely that after the inexplicable miracle takes place, merging two into one — each of them still retains their individuality. And at the same time, for one inexplicable moment the Universe quivers at the sight: the soul of a newborn child runs trippingly, barefoot, through the stars to the Earth, *embodying in himself the union of two — plus a third — as one*.

This act of sanctifying the union of two people in love during the Vedic age can by no means be considered a manifestation of the occult. It was an entirely rational act, corresponding to their way of life. The ever-increasing feeling of love for one another in every family coupling bore witness to the level of this culture.

In our modern day this feeling of mutual love in married couples always tends to dissipate after a while. The energy of Love is no longer within them. And this is something accepted as a given by human society. But this scenario is unnatural to Man. It tells us that the lifestyle people lead today is unnatural.

A loving couple in the Vedic culture realised not with their mind but with their heart and soul that the spark of the feeling of Love is a call to a Divine co-creation.

Take note of what the couple originally aspired to. Together, in an impulse of inspiration, they mentally worked out their design — the design of a Space for their love. It was in this Space they had created that their child was conceived. Three significant feelings of love merged into one for eternity. After all, a Man — for reasons he cannot explain, even to himself — retains a strong reverence all his life for his family domain — his Motherland, for his child and for the woman with whom all this was co-created. It is only three feelings of love, not a single feeling all by itself, that can live for eternity.

The birth of a son or daughter to a Vedic-age family was also the occasion for a grand celebration and a life-significant rite. And there were many other celebrations back in those days. And there was absolutely no marital infidelity. Millions of happy families made the Earth a delightful place. It is the ranks of historians today, in their efforts to please the powers that be, who say that Pristine Man was once stupid, that this Man killed animals, ate their meat in a frenzy and dressed himself in their skins. A monstrous lie is necessary to people trying to cover up their monstrous deeds.



Raising children in the Vedic culture

Mankind is ever looking for a perfect system of raising children. It endeavours to seek out the wisest teachers, and

then hands over its children to be raised by them. And you, Vladimir, in preparing to talk with your son, spent five years seeking out the best system of child-raising. A system capable of explaining everything to you and teaching you how to communicate with your own birth son. And you kept on asking advice from recognised teachers and various scholars. But not one piece of advice, not one system did you find satisfying or indicative of perfection. Doubts came to you with increasing frequency: *If there did exist a perfect system of education, many people would surely be using it. And somewhere on the Earth there would be living a people that is truly happy. But it seems that in every society all you find is the same or different kinds of problems. You have to search for a happy family — it is like looking for a needle in a haystack. So that means there is no miraculous system of child-raising, and there is no point in searching, since there is nothing to search for.*

Forgive me, please: I had no other choice but to keep track of your thought the whole time. I was trying to determine through you what leads people away from what is so obvious.

And then one day I felt you thinking: *Lack of trust and fear of making a mistake are what make people hand over their children to schools and academies so that afterward they can blame their teachers — anyone but themselves.*

On another occasion I saw how you turned pale and became scared stiff at the thought that children are raised by their parents' and society's lifestyle. Your thought was true and accurate. But you were afraid of it, you kept trying all along to forget about it. But you did not succeed in forgetting what is all too obvious.

Then you tried disagreeing with your own thought. You reasoned like this: *How is it possible to become a scholar, an artist or a poet? How can one learn about astronomy or history without studying at a special school?*

But you were thinking in terms of subject categories of knowledge, and they are not the most important in raising children.

Much more important is the culture of feelings, which are capable of compressing all knowledge into a tiny nucleus. You were in a position to understand this since you yourself are a vivid example of what I have been saying. After all, you were able to write a book without studying in a special school.

You and I spent only three days together in this glade, and now you are a writer, known in various lands. You can step out in front of a huge audience including prominent teachers, scholars, poets and healers. And you can go on speaking to them for as long as three hours or more. And people listen to you with rapt attention. You are often asked questions such as: *How can you hold an infinite store of information in your memory? How can you recite pages of your books from memory without a copy in front of you?* You generally responded to such questions with a mumble. But you concluded within yourself that I must have been working some kind of invisible charms on you. In fact, everything that happened to you is a good deal simpler than that.

During those first three days you were with me here in the taiga, on all three days it was the Vedic school that was exercising an influence on you. And it is certainly not pushy or intrusive, and it does not have any treatises or dogmas. It is capable of transmitting all information through feelings.

At times you would get angry, or get excited and laugh, or become fearful. And every time a new feeling arose in you, new information was taken in. That information was truly vast in scope. It is being revealed only later on, when you remember the feelings it aroused in you at the time.

Feelings, after all, represent a tremendous amount of concentrated information. And the clearer and stronger the feeling, the more knowledge of the Universe it contains.

For example, remember that very first night in the taiga, when you awoke and saw the she-bear beside you. Right off you were frightened. Please take note and think about those words "right off you were frightened".

But what *is* this feeling of fear? Let us try translating it into informational terms. What do we get then? You thought: *Here beside me is a huge beast of the forest. It weighs considerably more than my body weight. Its paws are far stronger than the muscles of my arms. A beast of the forest can be aggressive, it can attack me and tear my body apart. I am defenceless. I had better jump up and run.*

To make logical sense of this whole tremendous amount of information requires not just a moment, but a considerably longer time. But this same information, when compressed into a feeling — in this case, fear — allows one to react instantaneously to the situation. When one experiences a vivid feeling, a large amount of information passes through Man in a flash. It would require a whole scholarly treatise just to describe it, which could take years to work out without the aid of feelings.

A correct complex of feelings sequenced in the right order can multiply a Man's existing store of knowledge by a thousandfold.

For example, your fear of the bear passed as instantaneously as it arose. But what made it go away? After all, it was not natural for it to go away. You were still in the taiga as before, still defenceless, and the bear was not far away — besides, there might be a multitude of other beasts out there in the forest.

But that sense of fear in you was instantaneously replaced by a feeling of security. You felt this sense of protection even more strongly than when you were on your boat, or in the city, surrounded by armed guards.

This feeling of protection came over you just as instantaneously. It came over you just as soon as you saw that the bear took pleasure in carrying out my orders, reacting to my

words and gestures. The feeling of protection enabled you to perceive information in a whole new way. A detailed description of everything that happened to you could fill a great many pages of a scientific treatise. And in your books you have devoted quite a few pages to the animals' relationship to Man. But the theme is infinite in scope. In terms of feelings, however, it can be expressed in the twinkling of an eye.

But something still more significant took place. Within the space of just a few seconds two opposite feelings turned out to be in perfect balance. I became to you someone in whose presence you could feel completely protected, even though at the same time one you could not fully explain and even found a little frightening.

The balance of feelings is very important. It is a confirmation of Man's equilibrium, yet at the same time, as though constantly pulsating, feelings engender more and more streams of information.

The culture and way of life of each family in the Vedic civilisation, as well as the way of life of the whole human society of the time, constituted a most remarkable school for the raising of the next generation, an intense régime of self-perfection for Man, advancing him to the act of creation in worlds of the unfathomable Universe.

In the Vedic age children were not raised the way they are in our schools today, but through participation in merry festivals and rites. These were either celebrations within a single family or ones where the whole community took part, or several neighbouring communities together.

More specifically: the multitude of celebrations during the Vedic age were crucial tests for both children and adults, and a means of information exchange.

The way of life in the family and the preparation for these celebrations afforded the opportunity to acquire a tremendous systematic store of knowledge.

Children were taught without the compulsion they feel when they are made to sit and listen to a teacher against their will. The learning process unfolded moment by moment for both parents and their children, cheerfully and not obtrusively. It was something desirable and fascinating.

But it did include some methods that would be considered unusual today. Ignorant of their tremendous significance for Man's education, modern scholars might call parents' actions during Vedic times superstitious or even occult-like.

For example, *you* thought that way and were very concerned when you saw our son, still so very young and helpless, as yet unable to stand on his own two feet, being picked up by the mighty eagle. The eagle held the little boy in its claws, and circled over the glade, rising and descending by turns.⁶

That happened with children in all Vedic families, though they did not always employ eagles for this purpose. They might be able to show the Earth from on high from the top of a mountain, if there happened to be a mountain close to where they lived. Occasionally a father might take his infant son or daughter and climb to the top of a tall tree. Sometimes they would build a special tower for this purpose. And yet the effect was more dramatic when an eagle circled over the ground with an infant in its claws. In just a moment or so the child would experience a whole gamut of feelings, and in that very moment he would take in a whole multitude of information. And when he was older, he could discover this information within him through these feelings whenever he wanted, whenever the need arose.

Remember, for example, I showed you what a perfect design the handsome Radomir created together with his bride Liubomila for their domain. I told you that the most recognised scientists in the world today are unable to create

⁶See Book 3, Chapter 15: "A bird for discovering one's soul".

anything like that. They would not be able to do it even if they all joined together as one.

But how could the young man bring about such a miracle back then? Where did he acquire the knowledge of all the plants, the significance of the winds, the functions of the planets and so much else besides? After all, he never sat at a traditional school-desk. He did not study science. Then how did the young man learn the purpose of each and every one of 530,000 species of flora? He might make use of only nine thousand of them, but he could accurately tell the interrelationship each species had with the others.

Naturally Radomir had been observing his father's and their neighbours' domains right from childhood. Yet he never wrote anything down, and did not consciously memorise anything. He never asked his parents what grew for what purpose, and they would never vex him by preaching at him. And yet this young man in love still managed to create his own domain, and even a better one than his parents had.

Please do not be surprised, Vladimir! Try to understand. You see, Radomir did not set forth a logical plan for his garden, although indeed it turned out that way in his domain. What happened was that Radomir outlined through his feelings a splendid picture for his loved one and his future offspring. And in this his flight with the eagle over his family domain contributed to his impulse of love, to his inspiration.

During the time the infant Radomir looked down from the height of the eagle's flight on the landscape of the domain, a picture was being imprinted on his subconscious just as on a reel of movie film. He was still not able to appreciate the beauty of the scene with his mind. *But his feelings!* His feelings were able to scan all the information from the variegated countryside below into a permanent imprint. And through his feelings, not through his mind or intellect, he was able to perceive what he saw as beautiful.

Not only that, but there amidst the beautiful landscape seen from the sky stood his very own Mama, smiling at him. What can be more marvellous for a little one than his mother's smile? And his mother was waving to him. Yes, that was *her*! The one whose breasts contained warm, life-giving milk. For a suckling child, nothing could be more marvellous than that. And from the height of the eagle's flight everything the young Radomir beheld seemed to him to be a single whole, inseparable from his Mama. In the twinkling of an eye the knowledge of this part of creation entered into him with a flash of exhilaration.

Young people displayed great competence in such modern sciences as zoology, agronomy and astronomy. People also appreciated their artistic taste.

Of course, there were also professional teachers in the Vedic age.

During the winter, elderly people who were especially learned in various disciplines would come to the community. Each settlement had a common meeting-hall, where they could set forth their wisdom. And if one of the children listening to them suddenly showed a special interest in astronomy, for example, the teacher would go and talk to the child's parents in their home. The teacher would always be warmly welcomed in the home. This scholar would talk about the stars with the child as many hours and days as the youngster wished. And there is no definitive answer to the question as to who learnt more from whom during these discussions. After all, it was with considerable respect that the great elderly scholar asked questions of the child. He could argue with him without being preachy. In the Vedic age there was no need to record the discussion, or the conclusions or discoveries arising therefrom. Free from daily routine and the multitude of concerns that occupy us today, the human memory could take in a great deal

more information than the best computers that have been invented in our times.

Besides, any discoveries made, provided they were rational, were at once shared with everyone to use and put into practice.

The parents and other members of the household might also listen to these scholarly discussions, and sometimes even contribute to them, albeit tactfully. But still, it was the child who was inevitably the centre of attention. When a budding astronomer came to what the adults judged to be a wrong conclusion, they might say something like: "Excuse me, I can't understand you."

The child would try to explain. And it often happened that the child would prove himself right.

As spring approached each year, all the residents of the settlement would gather in the common meeting-hall and take note of their children's most recent achievements. Reports were given during these days. A six-year-old lad, for example, might astound everyone, telling about the meaning of life like a philosopher. Children might show everyone the marvellous things they had made. Others might delight the gathering with a song or an unusual dance. You could call these acts a kind of test, or simply a time of fun for all — the label was unimportant. What was important was that everybody derived joy from the act of creating. The stream of positive emotions and revelations during this event were joyfully put into practice. To the question as to who remained the most important figure in the raising of children, one could confidently answer that it was the culture and way of life lived by families in the Vedic age.

What lessons can be drawn from that culture for children of our present day? Which of our current systems of child-raising is the best, can we say? Judge for yourself, none of them is perfect. Mind you, when we distort the history

of mankind, we cause children to lie to themselves. And we force their thinking into a completely false way. And that is why we suffer and cause our children to suffer too.

Above all, everybody ought to know the truth about themselves. Without truth, life bogged down in false dogmas is like a hypnotic sleep.

The sequence of three pictures in children's textbooks needs to be rearranged. The history of people living on the Earth needs to be presented to children correctly, for a change. First of all one must verify in one's own heart the accuracy of what has been reported. And then once children have learnt the essence of this history undistorted, a new path must be selected in consultation with them.

Children's books about the history and development of the Earth and its people tend to feature three pictures that are far from harmless. Consider what these pictures impress upon them from a very young age:

The first picture shows an impression of Primitive Man. Take a look at how he is portrayed: he stands there all covered with thick hair, with a beastly grin and a dumb expression on his face, holding a wooden club and surrounded by the bones of the creatures he has killed.

The second picture features a Man clothed in armour, carrying a sword, a dazzling decorated helmet on his head. He is off to conquer cities with troops under his command, while a crowd of slaves bows low before his hand.

In the third picture Man is shown with a noble face and an intelligent expression. He is healthy-looking, and dressed in a suit, and surrounded by a multitude of appliances, contrivances and mechanical gadgets to boot. Happy and delightful is the overall impression of modern Man.

All three pictures are false, as is the sequence in which they are arranged. This whole lie is stubbornly, rigidly and deliberately drilled into our children. Later I shall be able to tell you

who is responsible and why they find this lie so indispensable. But first I want you try to verify the accuracy of these three pictures using your own sense of logic.

Judge for yourself: the trees, bushes and grass you can still see today in their primitive form. Even though they are billions of years old, you can still look at them and delight in their perfection.

What does all this tell us? The works of the Creator were made perfect right from the very beginning. And so? Did He make Man, the favourite of all His creations, to be some kind of monstrosity? Of course not! Right from the beginning, Man, the most perfect work of the Creator, was the most glorious creation on the Earth.

The first picture ought to show history as it actually was: it ought to show a family of happy people, with a look on their faces expressing both intelligence and child-like purity. And love on the faces of both parents. Human bodies in harmony with their surroundings, striking in their beauty and graceful power of spirit. A flourishing garden all around. Creatures always on the alert to render service with gratitude.

The second picture, too, should present to children an image of historical fact — two armies in monstrous armour rushing at each other, their commanders standing on a height of land, being entreated by priests. Some of their faces show fear and disorientation, while those of others, after yielding to the priests' entreaties, are inflamed with a beastly fanaticism. In just a moment a senseless slaughter will begin. People will start killing their own kind.

The third picture shows people in today's world. We should see a group of people of pale and sickly countenance in a room filled with an array of artificial things. Some have extremely obese figures, others are bent over, faces are full of heaviness and gloom. The kinds of faces you see on most passers-by along big-city sidewalks. Through the window one

can see cars exploding on the street. And dirty ashes raining down from the sky.

All three of these true pictures of history should be shown to the child and the question asked: "Which of these lifestyles would you like to live?"

The pictures are only arbitrary illustrations. Of course the child should also be told the true account, sincerely and skillfully presented. The child should know the whole history of the human race without misleading distortions. Only after that can his actual education begin. The question should be asked: "How can we change the situation today?"

And the child will come up with an answer — not right off, not in the twinkling of an eye. But he will find it! Another thought will take over — a creative thought. Oh, the raising of children!... You see, Vladimir, just a single sincerely asked question, together with the parents' desire to hear their child's answer, is capable of uniting parents with their children — of making them happy — for ever. This joint quest for happiness is infinite. But even the beginning of the quest can be called a state of happiness.

Everybody today should learn their true history.



Rituals

At a later period the occult priests undertook tremendous efforts to distort and besmirch the significance of the ritual acts of Vedic times. They started a rumour, for example, that the Vedic people mindlessly worshipped the element of

water. And that they held a yearly sacrifice of young girls who had not yet known love, throwing them into a lake or a river. Or that, tying them to a raft, they pushed them off from the shore and despatched them to their doom.

The element of water — a lake or a river — was indeed connected with many acts among the Vedic people. But it had a completely different significance — in support of life, not death. Let me tell you about just one of these. It is still practised today in a superficial form. But the resemblance is only superficial. In today's variant its great rational and poetic significance has been replaced by obscurity and occultism.

In various countries today there is a celebration involving water, whereby wreaths or small rafts with beautiful lanterns or candles are set afloat on a water surface and pushed away from the shore in a plea to the water to grant good fortune. But let us see where this particular celebration originated and how rational and poetic a significance it had in its pristine form.

In Vedic times it sometimes happened that one or two girls (how many is of no importance) did not find someone they could love within their own community. And even at large festivals involving several communities they did not succeed in choosing their intended. This would not have been on account of a limited selection. Indeed, they were presented with a whole array of splendid young men with intelligent countenances — almost like gods, who shone in their celebratory performances. But while the heart and soul of the girl in question were filled with great expectations, they were not visited by love. The girl was dreaming of someone, but of whom? She herself did not know. Even today, no one can explain the mystery or freedom of choice inherent in the energy of Love.

This is why on a designated day the girls would go down to the river, and in one of the little bays set a small raft afloat. Its

edges were decorated with a garland of flowers. In the middle stood a small jug of wine or fruit infusion. Pieces of fruit were placed around the jug. The drink was to be prepared by the girl herself, and the fruit to be plucked by her from the trees she had planted by her own hand in her family garden. She might also place on the raft a woven linen headband, or some other object, but it had to be something made with her own hands. Lastly she would place on the raft a little *lampadka*.⁷

Around a fire burning on the shore the girls danced their *khorovod* and sang about a beloved of whom they were not yet fully aware. Then, taking one of the branches burning on the fire, they lit the wick of the *lampadka*. They pushed their rafts out of the bay into the mainstream of the river, where the current would catch it and tenderly convey it down to the river's farthest unknown reaches.

And each girl followed her raft with a hopeful gaze as it receded into the distance, until only the little light of the *lampadka* was still visible. But the girls' hearts were aflame with the fire of hope. A feeling of joy and tenderness grew within, directed to one whom they were yet to know.

Hastening back to their homes, the girls retreated to their rooms and excitedly began preparing for the anticipated meeting. He, the desired one, might come with the dawn or at sunset time — the hour did not matter. But how did it happen? What would draw him to her? Was the meeting the result of mysticism or rationality? Or perhaps of the knowledge to which the Vedic people had access through their feelings? Decide for yourself which way.

After all, the girls' rafts were carried along by the current on specific days. All the communities, even the distant ones, were aware of these particular days.

⁷*lampadka* — a small vessel filled with tree oil and a wick which could be lit.

Their journey might last a day, or two or three. On all these days and moonlit nights young men who had not yet known love were waiting hopefully in their loneliness all along the river's bays.

Upon seeing the little lights in the distance being carried along by the current, a young man would at once leap into the water and swim toward the little lights of love he had seen. The current did not inflame the young man's heated body, but tenderly cradled it with the transparent water of the stream. Closer and closer came the little lights and now the young man could make out the outline of the rafts — each one prettier than the next, it seemed. He chose one of them. It was not clear why this particular one fell under his special esteem.

He drew the raft from the middle of the stream to the shore, either pushing it with his hand or nudging it along by pressing his cheek to its side. It seemed as though the river current was engaging him in play. But his body was constantly being arrayed with strength, more and more, and he scarcely noticed the river's play. Besides, his thought was already on the shore.

Placing the little raft carefully on the land, the young man snuffed out the *lampadka*, took an excited drink from the jug and quickly headed home to prepare for his journey. He took with him whatever he had found on the little craft. Along the way he took a taste of the fruit, and was thrilled by its taste.

By and by he arrived at the village from where the raft had been launched, and was able to accurately determine which garden and tree whose fruit had sweetened his journey.

Aha! — some might wonder — *one cannot escape mysticism entirely: how on earth could young men of that time find their future loved ones with such accuracy?*

One could say that it was Love leading them by a path known solely to Love. But I can simplify the explanation — the *lampadka* also played a role. Notches had been cut in the

small vessel carrying the brightly burning wick floating in the oil, so that everyone could tell how long the *lampadka* had been alight. The speed of the river's current was also widely known. It was a very simple calculation, and quickly executed. For a young man of the Vedic age, it was no task at all to find in the village the particular tree from which the fruit he had eaten had been plucked.

Pieces of fruit resemble each other only superficially. The fruit of trees and plants of the same species, even two trees growing side by side, can show marked differences in shape, colour, fragrance and taste.

There is only one thing that cannot be explained with complete accuracy. How was it that *he* and *she* always fell in love with each other upon meeting for the first time? And their love was extraordinarily passionate.

"It is all quite simple," a philosopher of the present day might say. "Their feelings for each other were already being set afire by their own dream even before they met."

But back then a wizened wise-man would have responded to such a question with a wink: "Our river has always had a mischievous streak in her!"

Of course, if he wanted to, the wise-man could always go into the details of each moment of the ritual I have told you about and explain the purpose of each one of those moments. He could write a great treatise on it. But no wise-man would bother wasting his thought on such a venture. The whole point is, Vladimir, that they... *They did not analyse life, they CREATED it!*



Feeding life in the flesh

People living in the Vedic age did not know a single disease of the flesh. Even at the age of a hundred and fifty or even two hundred years they maintained a lively spirit, a joy of living, and remained completely healthy. They had no doctors or healers such as exist in great numbers today. Diseases of the flesh were impossible because the way of life in one's own domain, the natural Space of Love which they themselves had established, completely regulated their intake of food. Man's body was supplied with everything it needed in the required quantity and at the time most favourable for its consumption, and at the most favourable planetary alignment for the intake of food.

Take note, Vladimir: in Nature it is no arbitrary phenomenon that during the whole spring, summer and autumn seasons the various plants mature and bring forth their fruit in a particular sequence.

First come the blades of grass — the dandelions, for example. They are also pleasing to the taste, especially when mixed with winter fare.

Then we see early currants maturing, wild strawberries and raspberries — both earlier in the full sun and later in the shade; sweet cherries; later sour cherries and a great many other fruits, herbs and berries, all of which, at the appropriate moment of their own choosing, attempt to attract human attention by their unusual shape, colour and fragrance.

There was no science of nutrition back then. What and how much one should eat and at what time — that was not something anyone even thought about. And still Man consumed everything needful for his body, with an accuracy down to the last gram.

Each berry, little herb and piece of fruit has its own day, hour and minute when it is the most beneficial to the human body — when it will complete the process of its own growth in conjunction with the celestial bodies. By this time it will have taken account of the specifics of what lies under the ground and of other plants growing around it, as well as of the Man that has bestowed his gaze upon it, and then evaluate and determine what his greatest needs are. And on that very day when it is ready to serve Man, Man will honour it by his acceptance, and allow perfection itself to become his food.

I have said that a woman with child should spend all nine months of her pregnancy in her own garden, in the Space she has created together with the one she loves. This is no occult mystery — it manifests the great rationality of the Divine being. Judge for yourself: in Nature there are many plants that can even painlessly terminate a woman's pregnancy — garlic, for example, oregano, the male fern, birthwort and many others. On the other hand, there are plants capable of helping the foetus develop harmoniously in the mother's womb. Which ones should be taken and in what quantity is not something anybody will ever be able to tell. *He* is the only one who knows — the one inside the mother's womb. And he is taking care of not only himself but his mother too. That is why it often happens that after having a child a mother becomes healthier, younger-looking.

In order for this to occur, the pregnant mother must definitely be in her own garden, where every blade of grass is acquainted with her and every piece of fruit grows exclusively for her. She has also come to know each one's taste and fragrance. Her desires are quite natural and are in the best position to determine what kind of food she needs to take in and in what quantity.

Such accuracy is not possible in someone else's domain or garden, even if the vegetation in that garden is many times richer

and more diverse. Besides, another factor making the ideal food intake impossible in another garden is that before consuming a particular berry or piece of fruit the woman will try it first.

Take an apple, for example. If she wishes to eat it, she plucks it from the tree and takes a bite. After swallowing the bite she at once feels that here is something her body does not need and has thereby caused harm to herself and to her child. Why does this happen? The fact is that even outwardly similar pieces of fruit can be made up of different substances. In her own garden, having tasted fruit from the various trees on a number of occasions, she could not make such a mistake. In another garden mistakes are inevitable.

What kind of law or knowledge provided such fine-tuned assistance in feeding Man at that time? It was the absence of laws and treatises! Man could depend only upon the Divine. Today they say that Man is in unity with — is at one with — Nature. But what is this unity right now — have you ever thought about it? In today's day and age Man consumes mainly artificial food — only what the system offers him as convenient to itself. And the schedule of consumption of food is also artificially determined by this artificial system.

Back then, in the Vedic age, everything was determined for Man by his God-given feelings. And the slightest sensation of hunger was satisfied by the Space of Love back then. After all, Man's feelings, in harmony with his Space of Love, could determine down to the minute — as accurately as the most perfect mechanical device ever invented or the smartest instructions ever penned — what food Man should take in and when.

Whenever Man walked through the Space of his own co-creation, his free thought could create or work out plans on the scale of the Universe. Temptingly beautiful fruit surrounded him. Intuitively he would pluck and eat a sample, or two, or three, without having his thought distracted by these sweet delicacies supplied him by God.

Back then, Man did not think about food. He fed himself in much the same manner as we today breathe. The Space he had created, in conjunction with his intuition, accurately worked out how and when the flesh should be fed.

In the wintertime the whole multitude of plants freed itself from its fruit and foliage in preparation for rest. Winter was for the creation of the spring to come.

But even in winter Man did not waste his time thinking of food, even though he did not prepare any comestibles in advance. All this was done for him by household creatures with great effort and love. Squirrels amassed a whole collection of nuts and mushrooms. Bees collected honey and flower pollen. Every autumn the bear would dig root-crop storage cellars.

Upon awakening in the spring, the bear would come to the Man's dwelling and either give a low roar or knock lightly with his paw upon the door. The bear would summon the Man, who would in turn show him which of the cellars should be dug up. Perhaps the bear had forgotten where he had stored away the food. Perhaps he was longing for communication with Man. Any member of the family might come out to him in response, but most of the time it was the child. After giving the hard-working beast a pat on the muzzle, he would go to the place designated by a marker and stamp his foot on the ground. The bear then began scraping the earth away in that spot and opened up the stores. Upon seeing his accomplishment he would jump all around for joy before delivering the stored food up to the surface with his paw. But he would not be the first to partake of the food — he would wait until Man began carting off at least some of the goods to the house.

Man himself could also prepare provisions, but this was not so much work as an art form. Many families would produce their own wine and infusions from different kinds of berries. Such wine was not strong and intoxicating like vodka. The result was a most healthful drink. Useful food provided to

Man by animals included milk, only not from just any animal. Man selected only those that were considered kind, tender and keen of mind — those who demonstrated an eagerness to offer Man what they produced.

Let us say one of the children or the elders of a household went up to a goat or a cow and touched its udder, and the animal suddenly began moving away. Man would not attempt to drink the milk of any animal that did not want to share it with him. This did not mean that the animal did not love the Man. It often happened that animals subconsciously determined that at that moment the composition of their lactic mixture would not be useful to the Man.

People of the Vedic civilisation would feed themselves from the various kinds of food growing only on their own plot or produced by their household animals. This approach was not determined by any kind of superstition or law. Rather, it was the result of a vast store of knowledge.

Though there is a difference between ‘knowing’ (*znat*) and ‘being fully aware of’ (*vedat*) something.⁸ ‘Being fully aware of’ is not just to ‘know’. It is to feel with one’s whole being — body and soul — a multitude of phenomena, the purpose of each Divine creation, as well as His system.

And every Man of the Vedic culture was fully aware that what he consumed as food not only fed the body, but filled the soul with conscious awareness. At the same time it conveyed information directly to him from all the worlds of the Universe.

⁸The words *znat*’ and *vedat*’ in Russian are often used interchangeably in the sense of ‘know’, whereas in fact there is a significant distinction between them, as Anastasia points out here. While *znat*’ specifically refers to ‘knowing’ through the mind or logic, *vedat*’ (from an ancient Sanskrit root) covers other kinds of knowing as well — inspiration, intuition, emotional feelings etc.) — in other words, not just ‘knowing’ per se, but being *fully aware* of all dimensions of a subject through the various channels of knowledge available.

This is why these people were many times superior to their modern-day counterparts in terms of inner energy, keenness of mind and quickness of thought.

The animals and plants living in Man's family Space reacted to Man as to a god. The animals, herbs and trees were constantly thirsting for a tender look or a kind touch on Man's part.

And this power of the energy of feelings was what prevented unwanted weeds from growing in the garden or vegetable plot. Many people are now aware how a household plant can suddenly shrivel up when it meets with disfavour on the part of someone in the family. On the other hand, a feeling of love and communication directed toward the same plant can cause it to flourish.

This is why the Vedic people never went near their garden with a hoe. Even today, we have expressions such as 'give someone the evil eye'. It originated in those times. People could create a lot through their energy of feelings.

Suppose a Man is walking through his domain. Everything around catches his kindly gaze. He might look at a weed, and think: *Why are you here?* The weed would quickly wither from sorrow. On the other hand, if one were to smile at a cherry tree, it would cause its sap to run through its veins with twice the energy as before.

And if someone among the Vedic people happened to set out on a long journey, that Man would not bother to take along a supply of food. He would be able to find more than enough along the way to feed himself. Whenever he came to a settlement, he would see the splendid domains and ask for food and drink. It was considered an honour to serve tasty fruit, vegetables and drink to a traveller.



Life without violence and crime

Among the people of the Vedic civilisation, over the thousands of years of its existence, there was not a single act of violence or theft, or a mere fight. Even insulting words were absent from people's vocabulary. Yet at the same time there were no laws to punish such behaviour.

Laws can never protect one from evil deeds. But the knowledge and culture of the Vedic peoples completely ruled out conflicts in interpersonal relationships.

Judge for yourself, Vladimir: you see, every family living in their domain was aware that should any kind of unpleasantness happen to anyone, even a stranger, on the territory of their own domain or nearby, even on the very edge of the settlement, the whole Space would then suffer.

The universal energy of aggression would have an effect on every growing thing and on everyone living in that Space. It would upset the balance of energies. The energy of aggression might grow and leave its impression on adults and children alike, and infect their offspring with illness.

By contrast, if a passing traveller leaves a feeling of joy behind, the Space will radiate even greater beauty.

Not only that, but a Man visiting another settlement would be physically incapable of eating food plucked from a tree without the owner's permission or picked up from the ground in a garden upon which he had intruded.

People of the Vedic culture had a highly refined sensitivity. Their physiological makeup would immediately notice a significant distinction in the taste of pilfered food from that served by someone's generous hand. The whole range of foodstuffs sold in our modern supermarkets has nowhere near the fragrance and taste of the pristine produce of the Vedic age. Completely indifferent to Man, it has no feeling or

soul. It does not belong to anyone and is beholden to no one. It is simply merchandise for sale.

If modern Man could actually taste and compare the food known in Vedic times, he could never eat the produce of today.

A newcomer could not, would not even think to take what was owned by somebody else without asking. Every single object, even a stone, contains information within itself known only to the family living in that particular domain.

In the Vedic civilisation, every domain was a fortress that loomed impenetrable to evil in whatever form. At the same time it served as a mother's womb for the family dwelling therein.

Nobody back then built high walls for fortification. The territory of each domain was protected by a living green hedge — a hedge which, along with everything living within its boundaries, protected the family from a whole host of harmful influences on the human body and soul.

I already mentioned to you that the bodies of deceased family members were buried only in the garden or among the trees of their own domain.

Those people were fully aware that while the human soul is eternal, the material body, too, cannot disappear without a trace. All objects, even those which appear to be soulless, carry within themselves a great deal of information from the Universe.

In the Divine nature nothing ever disappears into oblivion. It only changes its state and its fleshly form.

The bodies of the deceased were not covered with headstones, and even the places of their burial were not marked in any way. The Space created by their hands and soul served as a great monument to them.

And, changing their state, the now soulless bodies gave rise to trees, herbs and flowers. New children were born and

walked among them. Oh, how everything around just loved the children! The spirit of their ancestors lingered over the Space, loving and protecting the children.

Children treated the Space of their Motherland with love. Their thought created no illusion about life being finite. On the contrary, the life of the Vedic peoples was infinite.

The soaring soul passes through all the dimensions of the Universe, and after visiting a number of different planes of being, it is once again embodied in conventional human form.

Upon waking in the garden of his Motherland, the child will once again give a bright smile. The whole Space responds to his smile. And the little rays of light, the breeze rustling the leaves on the trees, the flowers and the stars in the distant sky will sigh: "We are at one, embodied by you, child of Divine being."

Even today people cannot figure out why elderly people living on foreign strands ask to be buried in their Motherland.

Such people intuitively suspect that only their Motherland can bring them back to the Earth in a Paradise garden, while a foreign strand rejects their souls. To have their bodies buried in the Motherland has been the aspiration of people's souls for millennia. But can a cemetery be called a piece of the Motherland in any nation?

Cemeteries are a markedly recent phenomenon, designed to tear human souls apart in hellfire, demean and subjugate them, make them into lowly slaves.

Cemeteries are like... Well, they are like cesspits, where people go to get rid of their useless junk. The souls of the dead are tormented over cemeteries, while the living are terrified of cemetery plots.

Picture to yourself, by contrast, a kin's domain of Vedic times. Bodies of many generations are buried there. Every little herb aspires to tenderly care for those living therein, to be useful to Man's life in the flesh.

But every herb and every fruit in the garden can suddenly become poisonous when faced with aggression on the part of a newcomer. That is why nobody even thought of taking anything without asking.

The domains could not be seized by force. They could not be bought for any amount of money. Of course, who would dare trespass upon a place that is capable of destroying the trespasser?

And each individual here endeavoured to create their own marvellous oasis. The whole planet grew more beautiful with each passing year.

When modern Man surveys a city from on high today, what does he see, pray tell? The whole ground covered with an accumulation of artificially erected stones. Dwellings spread in all directions — upward and outward. Here, there and everywhere lie miles and miles of vast expanses blanketed by stone landscapes. There is no clean water anywhere, and the air is polluted. How many happy families can dwell under their own piles of stone?

If one compares modern families with those of the Vedic culture, the answer is: not a single one. And one could go further: amidst these piles of artificial stone people do not dwell — they sleep.

And yet in this hypnotic sleep a single living cell still strays like a tiny nucleus through the body. Sometimes at rest, sometimes in motion, this living cell touches teeming multitudes of others, attempting to awaken those that are asleep. Its name is *Dream*! And it will awaken them! Then human families will once again create marvellous oases upon the Earth.

As it was before, so will it be again. And in looking down on the Earth from on high, Man's gaze will once again be much charmed by a multitude of living scenes. And each of these marvellous scenes will mean that the Earth has been touched in that spot by the hand of an awakened Vedruss. And once

again a happy family of people will be dwelling in their own plot of the Motherland — people who have learnt to know God and the meaning and purpose of life.

The Vedic people knew why the stars are in the sky. Their numbers included a great many poets and artists. There was never any rivalry among the communities. There was no cause for crime or violence. And there was a complete absence of hierarchical structures. The Vedruss culture flourished on the territories of our modern nations of Europe, India, Egypt and China, and there were no lines of demarcation dividing the various areas of land. There were no rulers, either important or petty. The sequence of grand celebrations provided a natural order of things.

People of the Vedic age possessed a knowledge of creation far in advance of modern Man. Their inner energy allowed them to enhance the growth of some plants and arrest that of others. Household animals endeavoured to carry out Man's commands not to obtain food, which they already had in abundance, but to receive from Man a reward in the rays of the energy of grace emanating from him.

Even today a word or gesture of praise from Man is pleasant to everyone — to people, animals and all growing things.

But in earlier times people's energy was immeasurably greater — all living things were drawn to it as to the Sun.

CHAPTER SIX



Imagery and trial

Toward the end of the Vedic Age of human life a great discovery began to take place — a discovery unparalleled over the whole course of the history of human civilisations on the Earth.¹

People became acutely aware of the power of collective thought.

And here we must clarify: what, exactly, *is* the thought of Man? The thought of Man is an energy unparalleled anywhere in space. It is capable of creating marvellous worlds on the one hand or, on the other, weapons capable of destroying the planet. And all the matter that we see today, without exception, has been created by thought.

Nature, the animal kingdom, Man himself, have all been created with great inspiration by the Divine thought.

And the proliferation of artificial objects, machines and mechanical devices which we see today are the creations of Man's thought. You may think that it is Man's hand that has produced them. Yes, today, hands must be employed. But to begin with, everything down to the last detail is created by thought.

It is believed today that Man's thought is more perfect now than in the past. But that is far from being the case.

For each member of the Vedic civilisation it was many millions of times superior to that of modern Man in terms of the

¹This chapter is a continuation of Anastasia's narrative on the history of mankind, which, with one or two interruptions, carries through to the end of Chapter 8.

speed and fulness of information involved. This can be seen in the knowledge we have taken from the past about using plants for medicines and food. But Nature's devices are far more perfect and complex than anything artificial.

It was not just that Man summoned a whole lot of beasts to serve him. It was not just a case of defining the function of all growing things. Once he realised the power of collective thought, he found that he could use it to control even the weather, or cause springs to well up from the depths of the Earth. If he were not careful in handling his thought, he could make a bird fall from the sky while in flight. Or affect life on distant stars — either to plant gardens on them or to utterly destroy them. This is no fiction, but fact, and it was all given to mankind.

Everyone today knows how Man, having launched himself on the path of technocracy, has been attempting to build space ships capable of reaching the stars.

People have gone to the Moon, but only by wasting valuable resources and energies and with great harm to the Earth. But they have changed nothing on the Moon. This kind of approach is short-sighted — it is doomed to failure and is dangerous for everyone on the Earth as well as for other planets.

There is another approach which is much more effective. Through thought alone it is possible to grow a flower on the Moon, create an atmosphere capable of supporting human life, plant a garden there and find one's self with one's beloved in that garden in the flesh. But, before that can happen, thought must transform the whole Earth into a flourishing Paradise garden. And that has to be done through collective thinking.

Collective thought is indeed powerful — in the whole Universe there is no energy that can interfere with its operation. Matter and today's technology are the reflection of collective thought. It is this collective thought that has invented all the mechanical devices and armaments we have today.

But remember I was saying that in those Vedic times every living Man's thought had far greater power and energy than now. Objects such as rocks weighing many tonnes could be moved by as few as nine people gathered together. To make it easier to use collective thought for the benefit of the majority without wasting time getting a whole lot of people to congregate in one place, people invented images of various gods and began to control Nature with their help.

The Sun-god appeared in its own image, likewise the gods of Fire, Rain, Love and Fertility. Everything needed for life was created by people through images on which human thought was concentrated. It performed many useful acts. Rain, for example, was necessary for watering the ground, and so one person directed his thought just to the image of the Rain-god. When rain was really essential, then a whole lot of people concentrated their energy on the image of rain. When enough energy had been accumulated in the image, the clouds gathered and the rain fell, watering the harvests.

Unlimited opportunity has been given to Man by the Divine Nature. If mankind could only overcome the temptations associated with unlimited authority and hold all the energies of the Universe in perfect balance within themselves, then gardens — as the fruit of human thought — would appear in other galaxies. And Man would be capable of happifying other worlds with his thought.

What is called the Age of the Image was now coming into bloom. In it Man not only created, but felt himself to be a god. But then what else could the son of God turn out to be?

In what is called the Age of the Image, Man exists in the likeness of God and begins to create his own images. This period lasts nine thousand years. And God does not interfere in Man's deeds. All the diverse energies of the Universe are set in motion and actively try to seduce Man.

Particles of all the diverse energies of the Universe are to be found in Man. They exist in great numbers, and play opposite roles. But all the particles of the diverse energies of the Universe ought to be perfectly balanced in Man, brought together in a harmonious whole.

If one of these particles dominates, the rest are denigrated and their harmony is disrupted, and then... Then the Earth is transformed and becomes inharmonious.

Images can lead people to a many-splendoured creation, but if their inner unity is surrendered they can also lead to annihilation.

But what, exactly, is an *image*?

An image is an entity of energy invented by human thought. It can be created by a single Man or by several together.

A clear example of the collective creation of an image may be seen in stage-acting. One Man describes the image on paper, while another portrays the described image on the stage.

What happens to the actor who portrays the image invented? For a time the actor exchanges his own feelings, aspirations and desires for those inherent in the invented image. In the process the actor may change the way he walks, his facial expression, his usual clothing. In this way the invented image acquires a temporary embodiment.

The ability to create images is something only Man is endowed with.

The image created by Man can remain in space only so long as it is held in Man's thought — either by a single Man or by several at once.

The greater the number of people feeding the image with their feelings, the stronger it becomes.

The image created by the collective thought can possess colossal destructive or creative potential. It has a reciprocal connection with people and is capable of shaping character

and behaviour on the part of groups of people both large and small.

In exploiting the great possibilities they have discovered within themselves, people became carried away with creating the life of the planet.

But it happened, back in the early stages of the Age of the Image in the life of Man, that there were six people — just six — who found themselves unable to hold within their bodies, hearts and minds the balance of those energies of the Universe which God gave to Man upon creating him. Perhaps they needed to make their appearance to test all mankind.

At first it was in just one of the six that the energy of grandeur and self-importance predominated — then in another, and then in a third, and finally in all six.

They did not meet together at first. Each one lived independently. But like attracts like. And they ended up concentrating their thought on how to become masters of all the people of the Earth. There were six of them, and in public they referred to themselves as priests.

Through the process of reincarnating themselves over the centuries, they are still living to this day.

Today all the peoples of the Earth are governed by just six people — these are the priests. Their dynasties are ten thousand years old. From generation to generation they have been transmitting their knowledge of the occult to their heirs, along with the science of imagery, which was also partially known to them. They have taken great pains to hide the Vedic knowledge from other people.

Among the six there is one who is considered chief, and he is called the High Priest. Today he considers himself to be the chief ruler of human society.

Through a few sentences I have uttered which you have recorded in your books, as well as through the reaction of many

people to them, the High Priest has begun to suspect who I really am. Just in case, he attempted to destroy me by using a negligible amount of power. He did not succeed. He was surprised. And he has tried again, applying a greater amount of force, still not completely convinced of who I am.

Now I have uttered the word *Vedruss*, thereby exposing myself completely. The current High Priest living on the Earth today is afraid even of the word *Vedruss*. You can just imagine how shaken he is, since he knows what lies behind it. Now he will muster his soldiers — bio-robots to a man — along with the forces of all the dark occult sciences, to bring about my termination. And he himself will be working minute by minute on a plan of annihilation. Let him do that — it means he will not have time to be busy with his other plans.

You were telling me about the angry attacks in the recent press, Vladimir. Now you will see them intensify even more. And they will be even more cunning and sophisticated. You will see slander and provocation. You will see the whole arsenal of devices which the dark forces have been using over the millennia to bring about the devastation of our people's culture.

But what you will see at the beginning is only the tip of the iceberg. Not all people can witness the occult attacks at first hand. But you will understand them, you will feel them, you will see them. Do not be afraid of them, I beg of you. What is fearsome is powerless to affect a fearless Man. Whatever you see, you should forget immediately and forever. No matter how omnipotent a monster may seem, once it is forgotten it ceases to exist altogether.

This is an unusual fact, and I can tell you are doubting. Do not be hasty to give in to your doubts. Think it over calmly.

After all, even a small group of people who have gathered together for the purpose of building something inevitably has a leader — we may call him a ruler.

A small enterprise has an official in charge. A large enterprise has several people in charge, under a chief executive officer. There are many rulers over all sorts of territories which are known by different names: provinces, regions, states, communities, republics etc. The particular name is not important. Each nation has a ruler, who is aided by a whole host of assistants.

The *ruler of a nation* — is that the limit? That is what people often think. Does that mean nobody is governing the whole human society living on the Earth? And are there no claimants wishing to ascend the throne of the Earth?

There have indeed been claimants. There still are. You know from recent history many names of military commanders who have tried to dominate the world by force. But not one of them has ever succeeded in taking power over the world. Whenever they found themselves close to seizing universal authority, something would inevitably happen, resulting in the destruction of both the pretender to world dominance and his army.

And the nation aspiring to world domination, which before had been considered strong and flourishing, suddenly dropped to the level of a run-of-the-mill state.

That is the way it has always happened over the past ten thousand years. But why? All because there is already a secret ruler in the world, and has been for a long time. He toys with nations and their rulers, along with individual people.

He calls himself the High Priest of the whole Earth, while his five assistants refer to themselves as priests.

Consider one other fact, Vladimir. Think about how in various parts of the Earth over the millennia wars between people have never ceased. In every country crime, disease and various disasters are increasing day by day, but there has been a strict (indeed, the strictest) prohibition on discussing a particular question: *Is human civilisation really on the path of*

progress, or is human society being further degraded with each passing day?

There can be but one simple answer to such a question. Only first take a look and see how the priests acquired their authority and how they have managed to maintain it to date.

Their first step leading to the accomplishment of their secret purpose was the creation of the Egyptian state. The Egyptian state is more familiar than others to historians of to-day. But once you eliminate personal commentary and mysticism and look only at the facts, you will be able to uncover many secrets.

Fact Number One — history calls the Pharaoh the supreme ruler of Egypt. And the many military achievements and defeats of the pharaohs of old have been well documented. Even today their magnificent tombs astound the imagination and prompt scholars to probe the mysteries they hold. Nevertheless, the grandeur of the pyramids distracts us from the most important secret of all.

Not only were the pharaohs considered as rulers over all the people, but they were worshipped as gods. It was to them that the people turned with pleas for an auspicious crop year, pleas for rain and an absence of pernicious winds. History can tell us about many of the factual accomplishments of the pharaohs, but after learning all these historical facts, you should ask yourself: could any of the pharaohs really have been a ruler over a large nation-state, let alone a god over the people? And once you weigh all the evidence, you will realise entirely on your own that the pharaoh was nothing more than a bio-robot in the hands of the priests.

Now here are the facts — they are also known to us from history.

During the age of the pharaohs there also existed priests in magnificent temples, and one of them was the High Priest. There were always several candidates for the pharaohship in

training under their supervision. The priests would inculcate in the young boys whatever the priests desired — among them the notion that the pharaoh was chosen by God. Along with this they told them that the High Priest himself could hear God speaking to him in a secret temple. Later the priests would decide which of the candidates would become the next pharaoh.

And so the day of the coronation arrived. The new pharaoh, clothed in special robes and holding the symbols of office in his hands, took his place majestically on the throne. In the eyes of the people he was an omnipotent king, a god. Only the priests knew that it was their own bio-robot that sat on the throne. And having studied the new pharaoh's character from his childhood, they knew exactly how he would rule, they knew what gifts he would offer up to the benefit of the priesthood.

There was the occasional attempt on the part of certain pharaohs to come out from under the High Priest's authority. But none of them ever succeeded in becoming a free Man. After all, the power of the priests was just as invisible as the pharaoh's royal robes were visible to all. You see, the priests' authority did not require any verbal proclamation or manifest communication for its enforcement. After all, in exercising their power over any individual ruler the priests did not relent, even for a moment. And it was exercised over the masses in turn with the aid of invented suggestions as to what constitutes the order of the Universe. If only the pharaoh could have liberated himself from the images inculcated in him by the priests and reflect by himself in peace, perhaps he would have been able to become a real Man. But there was no way the pharaoh could free himself from the day-to-day cares and concerns — this had been part of the plan right from the start.

And what concerns there were! Couriers, scribes and local governors by turns brought in a daily flood of information

from all over the vast nation. Situations calling for immediate solutions. And then a war would break out, absorbing the ruler's full attention. And the pharaoh would take his chariot and keep following his daily trajectories, respecting or rejecting the deeds of his subjects, often not getting enough sleep himself. The priest, on the other hand, would spend his time quietly reflecting, and in this lay his greatest advantage.

The priest directed his efforts to gaining single-handed control of the world as a whole. And even more than that — he meditated on how to resurrect his own world, distinct from the world God had created.

And did he care in the least about the stupid boy-pharaoh, not to mention the crowds which were subject to the pharaoh? For the priest they were all merely toys.

The priests studied the science of imagery in secret, while the masses of people remembered less and less about the law of Nature.

It was these priests, Vladimir, who channelled the energy of the interaction between people and the living Deity — the creations of Nature — into the temples they had invented. They fed on it — the energy of the people — giving nothing in return.

What had been surely clear to everyone in the age of the Vedic culture now became obscure and surreptitious. The people became stupefied, as though under a hypnotic spell, and unthinkingly followed the commands in a kind of semi-sleep. And they began to destroy the world of the Divine Nature, while building an artificial world for the priests' benefit.

The priests held their science under their strictest secretive control. They did not even dare write it all down on scrolls. They invented a language of their own for communication with each other — and this is a fact you can also learn from history. They needed a different language lest someone

should inadvertently overhear their conversation with each other and become party to their secrets. And so even today these simple truths which have now become shrouded in a cloak of secrecy are passed down to new generations of the priesthood.

Six thousand years ago the High Priest, one of the six, decided to take control of the whole world.

He reasoned as follows: *There is no way I can seize power by military force, with the pharaoh's armies — even if I taught the commanders how to make use of weapons more advanced than others possess. Besides, what could an army of raving mindless dullards do? Go and plunder gold, but there is so much of that as it is. There are slaves aplenty, but there is an unfavourable energy emanating from them, and it would not be proper to accept food from the hands of a slave. The food would be savourless and harmful to health. I must bring human souls into subjection, and direct all their love and tremulous affection back to myself. But in this case it is not an army that is needed, but scientific thought. The science of imagery — that is my invisible army. The deeper I become acquainted with it, the more faithfully this army ought to serve me. The less that is known by the crowd, immersed as it is in occultism and unreality, the more it will be in subjection to me.*

The High Priest devised his plan. Even today it finds its reflection in the historical events of the past six thousand years.

You and everyone else are aware of recent events. The only difference is in their interpretation. But you should try and give your own, and then the truth will be made known to you. Look and see.

There in the council of those six priests the plan was laid out, and was later revealed to many — it is mentioned in the Bible, in the Old Testament. By order of the High Priest the priest Moses led the Jewish people out of Egypt. The people

were offered a most marvellous life in the Promised Land, prepared by God especially for them.

The Jewish people were declared to be God's chosen ones. The tempting news set minds afire, and a part of the people followed Moses, who for forty years led his people about from region to region in the wilderness. The priest's assistants constantly preached sermons about their being a chosen people and inspired the people to make war and plunder cities, all in His (God's) name.

If anyone should happen to awake from his psychosis and demand a return to his former life, he was declared a sinner to be reformed, and given a deadline by which he had to be reformed. If he failed to do this he would be killed. The priests acted not in their own names, but by pretending they were carrying out the deeds of God.

What I am telling you is no fantasy or dream. This may be clearly seen by everyone for themselves by looking for answers in the Old Testament of the Bible — a great historical book. A reliable portrayal of historical events can be learnt by anyone who wakes at least a little from the millennia-old hypnotic sleep and reads how and by what means the Jewish people were programmed and turned into troops of the priesthood. Later Jesus tried to deprogram his people and to use his manifest gift for acquiring new wisdom to prevent the priests from carrying out their designs. In his journeys among wise-men, he endeavoured to glean inklings into the science of imagery. And after he had learnt a great many truths, he decided to save the Jewish people, his own people. He succeeded in creating his own religion — one which could serve as a counterbalance to the terror.

His religion was not for all the nations upon the Earth. It was intended only for the Jewish people. He himself mentioned this more than once. His words were written down by his disciples, and you can still read them to date.

See, for example, St Matthew's gospel, Chapter 15, verses 22–28:

A Canaanite woman from that vicinity came to him, crying out, "Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me! My daughter is suffering terribly from demon-possession.

Jesus did not answer a word. So his disciples came to him and urged him, "Send her away, for she keeps crying out after us."

He answered, "I was sent *only* to the lost sheep of Israel."²

What does it mean: "I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel"? Why are Jesus' teachings only for the Jews? Why did he consider the Jewish people to be lost?

I tell you, Vladimir: Jesus knew that as a result of the forty-year programming in the Sinai wilderness, the majority of the Jewish people were lost in a hypnotic dream. This part of the people as, indeed, Moses himself, thus became a tool in the hands of the High Priest. They were his foot-soldiers, whom he compelled to seize power over all the Earth's people to satisfy his own vainglory.

And they will be running their battles in various parts of the Earth for thousands of years. Their weapons will not be primitive swords or bullets, but cunning and the creation of a way of life subjecting all the world's peoples to occultism — in other words, to the selfishness of the priests.

And they will do whatever it takes.

But any battle presupposes the presence of two opposing sides, you may well be thinking. And if so, then where are the victims? In any battle there have to be victims on both sides.

²Matth. 15: 22–24 (*New International Version*; emphasis added by the author).

You could probably find evidence of these battles yourself through searching by the dates mentioned in the various historical sources. But to make it easier for you to locate these fearful dates I shall cite just a few of them right now. If you wish, you can look up their historical confirmation for yourself.

Everybody knows today, including you, Vladimir, how children and elderly people are perishing from terrorism in Israel. It was not all that long ago that what you call the Great Patriotic War³ took place. And it is well documented how during that war the Jews — old people and children, mothers and young pregnant women, young men who had not yet known love — were systematically burnt in ovens, poisoned with gas and buried alive in common graves.

Not just one person, not an hundred, not mere thousands, but millions of people were brutally slain during this brief period. Historians lay the blame squarely on Hitler. But who was to blame back in 1113, in Kievan Rus',⁴ when popular hatred of the Jews suddenly boiled over? Jewish houses in Kiev and other parts of Rus' were plundered and burnt, while Jews — even children — were killed. The people of Rus', caught up by a brutal rage, were ready even to topple the ruling princes from their thrones. And when the princes gathered together within council, they decided to pass a law expelling all Jews from the whole territory of Rus' and henceforth letting none in. An order was given to rob and kill any who surreptitiously entered therein.

³*Great Patriotic War* (Russian: *Velikaya Otechestvennaya voina*) — the common Russian term used to refer the events of the Second World War that directly involved Russia or the Soviet Union.

⁴*Kievan Rus'* (pron. ROOSS) — the name given to the East Slavic state dominated by the city of Kiev between 880 and the mid-12th century.

In 1290 there was a sudden move to effect the physical extermination of all Jews in England. The rulers were obliged to eject the whole Jewish population from the country.

In 1492 Jewish pogroms began in Spain. A threat of physical annihilation hung over all Jews living in Spain, and once again they were obliged to leave the land.

Right from the moment when the Jews left the Sinai wilderness they became the target of hatred by peoples of various countries. The hatred kept increasing, and here and there manifested itself in cruel pogroms and murders.

I have cited just a few dates of these fearful pogroms — ones that you can easily verify for yourself in histories people have written down. There have been many more conflicts besides for the Jewish people. Any one of them by itself is naturally not as significant as the instances everybody knows about. But when the range of small-scale conflicts is examined as a whole, it takes on an unprecedented scale and proportion, perhaps the most extreme of all the most terrifying phenomena in human history.

If something like that has happened throughout the millennia, one could conclude that the Jewish people are to be blamed in people's eyes. But what are they to be blamed for? Historians both ancient and modern have said that the Jewish people have conspired against authority. That they have aspired to deceive everyone, from the least unto the greatest. In the case of the poor, to try to trick them out of at least a little, in the case of the rich, to bring them to utter ruin. And this is evidenced by the fact that among the Jews there are many wealthy people capable of even influencing governments.

But there is one question you should ask yourself: How righteous are the ones who have been deceived by the Jews? The ones that had amassed such wealth, did they acquire it all by honest means? As for those condemned to be in authority,

can we believe them to be so smart if they could be so easily deceived?

Besides, most rulers are dependent on someone else, as the Jews have demonstrated quite clearly. One could go on exploring this topic for a long time, but the answer is simple: in the Occult world *everybody* lives by deceit. Then should we only condemn the one who has succeeded in achieving more than the rest?⁵

And as far as the Jewish people are concerned, we could easily substitute any one of the other peoples we know today. Any one — if they were subjected to the same totally unprecedented programming as the Jews were during their forty years of wandering in the wilderness, heeding only occultism and not seeing what had been created by God.

Jesus tried to remove this programming and save his people. He came up with a new religion for them — one different from what they had before. For example, in contrast to the previous saying: “an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth”, he said: “whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also”.⁶ In contrast to the verse which said: “God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto Himself” he called his people “the servants of God.”⁷

⁵Vladimir Megré has always emphasised in his writings and public speeches that any individual should be judged by his actions and not by his religion, ethnicity, nationality or race. The raising of the ‘Jewish question’ in this chapter is aimed solely at exposing the roots of (and thus helping to alleviate) the inter-ethnic conflict and the anti-Semitic feelings so prevalent in today’s Russia and elsewhere in the world. See also Book 7, Chapter 16: “To Jews, Christians and others”.

⁶See Exod. 21: 24; Matth. 5: 38, 39 (quotation from the *Authorised King James Version*).

⁷Quoted from Deut. 7: 6; I Peter 2: 16 (*Authorised King James Version*); see also Rom. 6: 22.

Jesus could also have told the truth to his people. He could have told them about Vedic times, about how Man was able to live happily in his domain, in contact with the creations of the Father-Creator. But the Jewish people were already programmed. They believed only in occult deeds, their consciousness was oppressed by the world of the unreal. And so Jesus decided to act in an occult manner himself. He founded an occult religion.

The High Priest at the time was able to guess Jesus' intention. The High Priest racked his brains for many a year before he found what he considered the smartest solution: *There is no point in fighting Jesus' teachings. Through the minds of the soldiers I have selected from among the Jews I must spread them through all the peoples of the Earth, while maintaining the old religion for Israel.* And so it happened, exactly as the High Priest had conceived.

And two essentially different philosophies began to co-exist.

According to one, the Jews are a chosen people, as Moses taught, and all other peoples ought to be subject to them. According to the other, expressed in Jesus' words, all are equal before God, and people should not try to take precedence over others; instead one should love one's neighbour and even one's enemy.

The priest realised that if the Christian religion, which calls everyone to love and humility, should succeed in spreading throughout the world, and at the same time Judaism, which elevates one over the rest, is preserved, the world would be subdued. While the world might bow before the Jews, they are but foot-soldiers. The world would actually be bowing before the priest.

And the priest's preachers went out into the world as earnest teachers of the new doctrine.

The doctrine of Jesus? Not quite. The priest had by now added a great deal of his own teachings to it. What happened

thereafter you already know. Rome fell. It was not external foes, however, that destroyed the great empire. Rome was destroyed from the inside after adopting Christianity. The emperors were under the impression that Christianity would enhance their power and authority. They were quite flattered by one of the postulates, namely, that all power was derived from God, and that the ruler was ordained to the Emperor's throne by God's grace.⁸

In the fourth century A.D. Christianity celebrated its victory in Rome, both officially and in actual fact. In great delight the High Priest gave a silent, non-contact command to the Byzantine emperor. And Christian Rome burnt the Library of Alexandria* to the ground. Altogether 700,033 volumes were lost. Bonfires of books and ancient scrolls burned in many cities. The burnt books were largely from the heathen period, but they also included the few that recorded the knowledge of Vedic people. These were not burnt — they were salvaged, concealed and studied in turn by a narrow circle of the devoted, and only afterward were destroyed.

It seemed to the High Priest that now that people were getting further and further away from a knowledge of their pristine origins, he would encounter no more obstacles on his path. Feeling bolder, he issued yet another tacit command, resulting in an anathema being issued at the Second Council of Constantinople⁹ against the doctrine of reincarnation. For

⁸ Compare Rom. 12: 1: "...there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God." (*Authorised King James Version*).

* *The Library of Alexandria* [footnote appearing in the Russian edition] — the most famous library of antiquity, containing every single work in existence at the time. In Cæsar's time its collection numbered something on the order of 700,000 items. In 391 A.D., during the time of bloody wars between the heathens and the Christians, the Temple of Sarapis, which housed the library, was destroyed. — *Slovar' antichnosti* (Dictionary of antiquity), Progress Publishers [Moscow], 1989.

what reason? — you may ask. To keep people from thinking about the essence of earthly life.

To keep them thinking that a happy life exists only beyond the Earth's borders. And many peoples of the Earth began believing precisely that.

The priest was truly delighted. He knew what would happen next. He construed that since nobody had experienced other-worldly life, Man would have no idea of how to reach Paradise the Good or how to avoid ending up in a fearsome Hell. So now he would offer to Man a little occult hint which would favour his own plan.

And so the priests have kept on giving out hints to the world which bring benefit to themselves. But they were not able to immediately obtain full power over the world, even when it seemed to them that the strongest bastion of heathen culture, Rome, was destroyed. Even then, there still remained on the Earth one small island which was impervious to the priests' usual charms. Even back before Rome, even before the appearance of Jesus' teachings, the High Priest had aspired to destroy the culture of the last Vedic state — Rus'.

⁹*Second Council of Constantinople* (also known as the *Fifth Ecumenical Council*) — an assembly held at Constantinople (5 May–2 June, A.D. 553), summoned by the Byzantine Emperor Justinian and attended mainly by Eastern bishops. Its purpose was to head off 'contamination' of official Christian doctrines by 'heretical' Christian-based teachings such as reincarnation and Nestorianism (a belief in Jesus as two persons, human and divine).

CHAPTER SEVEN



The secret war with Vedic Rus'

The war with Vedic Rus' began long before Jesus' appearance on the Earth, long before the fall of Rome. This thousand-year war was not waged with iron swords. Occultism executed its military raids on a non-material plane.

Preachers of the occult religion came to Russia — dozens of their names are mentioned in various ecclesiastical books. But they actually numbered in the tens of thousands. They were not to blame for their ignorance. They were fanatics, which means their mind was unable to fathom even the millionth part of creation. As foot-soldiers to the priest, reverently carrying out his orders without so much as a murmur, they attempted to explain to people how to live. They tended to say exactly the same things they had said when preaching to once-majestic imperial Rome.

They tried introducing ritual. And proposed the construction of temples, instead of paying attention to Nature or earthly existence. Then the kingdom of heaven would come for everyone. I shall not burden you by reciting their sermons. If you wish, you can still read their words today. I shall tell you why for thousands of years they did not succeed in doing anything with Vedic Rus'.

Every other person living in Rus' at that time was a poet and a wit. And there were bards in Rus' — they were called *bayans*¹ back then. And this is how it all took place in those times. For decades the priest's foot-soldiers waged a propaganda campaign to the effect that God had to be bowed down to. And here and there people began to listen and reflect on

the message. Upon seeing this, the bayan would simply laugh and make up a parable, which he would then sing. And the parable would quickly spread throughout Rus'. And over the next ten years or so Rus' would have a good laugh at the priests' sermons.

The priest was furious and launched new attacks. But once again in Rus' a parable would be born, and Rus' would laugh once more. Of all the many parables of those times I shall tell you just three.



In which temple should God dwell (Anastasia's first parable)

In one of the many populated settlements on the Earth people went happily about their daily life. In this particular community lived ninety-nine families. Each family lived in a splendid house decorated with fanciful woodcarvings. The garden around the house brought forth fruit every year in abundance. Vegetables and berries grew all by themselves. Every year people met the spring with joyful greeting and delighted in the summer. A series of cheerful friendship celebrations brought forth songs and *khorovods*.² In the

¹ *bayan* (pron. *bab-YAHN*) — see footnote 4 in Book 4, Chapter 33: “School, or the lessons of the gods”. On the role of bards, see Book 2, Chapter 10: “The ringing sword of the bard”.

² *khorovod* — See footnote 5 in Chapter 5: “The history of mankind, as told by Anastasia”..

wintertime people rested from their daily exhilarations. And they looked up to the heavens and tried to decide whether they might be able to weave the Moon and the stars into even better patterns.

Once every three years in July those people gathered in a glade at the edge of their community. Once in every three years God would respond to their questions in an ordinary voice. Even though He remained invisible to ordinary eyes, each one could feel Him. And He, together with all the residents of the community, decided how best to build their life in the days to come. The people's conversation with God might be philosophical, but sometimes quite simple and even funny.

So, for example, one middle-aged man stood up and addressed God this way:

"C'mon, now, God, for our celebration this summer, when we all gathered together with the dawn, You decided to drench us all with a monsoon? The rain poured down like a waterfall from heaven, and the Sun began to shine only around noon. What, did You sleep in till noon?"

"I was not asleep," God replied. "At this morning's dawn I thought about how to make your celebration truly glorified. I saw how some of you on their way to the celebration were too lazy to wash themselves with clean water. How so? Such reprobates would spoil the show with their appearance. And so I decided to first wash everyone, and then have the clouds sweep in and allow the rays of the Sun to caress the water-washed bodies with tenderness."

"Well, okay, if that is how..." the man agreed, brushing off food crumbs from his moustache and wiping the blackberry stains around his son's mouth.

"Tell me, God," asked an elderly and pensive philosopher, "there are many stars shining in the sky overhead. What does their fanciful alignment mean? If I should select a star that

is pleasing to my soul, and then when I get bored with my earthly life, could I remove there with my family?"

"The alignment of the heavenly bodies twinkling in the dark tells about the life of the whole Universe. An alertness in your soul, but without tension, allows you to read the Book of the Heavens. This Book will not open for idleness or curiosity, but only for pure and meaningful thoughts. And yes, you can settle on a star. And each of you can choose for yourself a planet in the heavens. There is only one condition that you must observe. You must become capable of producing on your selected star creations more perfected than those produced on the Earth."

A very young girl jumped up from the ground and tossed her light-brown braid of hair over her shoulder. Raising her little face with its turned-up nose heavenward, she placed her hands saucily on her hips and suddenly declared to God:

"I have a complaint to make to you, God. For two years now I've waited patiently to tell you about it. Now I shall tell you. Some kind of disorder or abnormality is taking place on the Earth. All the people are living as people — falling in love, marrying and being happy. But am I to blame for something? Every year, just as soon as spring arrives, my cheeks break out into freckles. There is nothing that'll wash them off, and I can't paint them over. Did you think this up as some kind of a joke, God? I demand that as of next spring not a single freckle ever appears on my face again!"

"Oh, My daughter! Those are not freckles, but spring speckles that appear on your beautiful little face each spring. But I shall call them as you wish. If you find your freckles to be such an annoyance, I shall remove them come next spring," God answered the spunky girl.

But then a handsome young lad got up at the other end of the glade, and meekly addressed God, though not in a loud voice:

"We have a lot of work ahead of us in the springtime. You, God, try to take part in everything we do. Why would you waste your time on removing her freckles? Besides, they are so beautiful that I cannot picture a more beautiful image than a young maiden with freckles in the spring!"

"So what am I to do?" God thoughtfully responded. "The maiden asked, and I promised her..."

"What's this about 'what to do'?" the girl once more broke into the conversation. "You heard the people say it's not freckles, but other more important things, that we should be concerned about... But while we're on the subject of speckles, I'd like to ask for two more — right here, on my right cheek, so that it's all symmetrical."

God smiled — this was evident from the fact that all the people were smiling. Everybody knew that it would not be long before a new splendid family would be lovingly born into their community.

So the people lived with God in that remarkable community. And then one day a hundred wise-men came to see them. The hospitable residents always greeted guests with all kinds of good things to eat. The wise-men tasted their splendid fruit and were amazed at its extraordinary flavour. Then one of them said:

"Oh, people, what a splendid, orderly life you lead! You have abundance and coziness in every home. But your communication with God lacks sophistication. There is no glorification or adulation of Deity."

"But why?" the residents tried to protest in alarm. "We talk with God the way we talk with each other. We talk and reason with Him every three years. But every day He rises with the Sun. As a bee He busies Himself around the gardens beginning in every spring. Every winter He covers the ground with snow. His tasks are clear to us, and we are glad for all the seasons."

"You are doing things the wrong way," said the wise-men. "We have come to teach you how to talk with God. All over the Earth an array of temples and palaces has been built in His honour, where people can talk with God every day. And we shall teach you to do the same."

For three years the residents of the settlement heeded the words of the wise-men. Each of the hundred insisted on his own theory about how to best construct a temple to God, and what should be done in the temple each day. Each of the wise-men had his own theory. The residents of the community had no idea which of the hundred wise theories they should choose. Besides, how could they choose without offending the wise-men? And so they decided to heed them all and build all the temples proposed. One for each family. But there were only ninety-nine families in the village, and there were a hundred wise-men. When they heard the decision of all the residents, the wise-men became very concerned. It meant one of them would not get his temple built, and would not receive the anticipated offerings. And they began arguing among themselves as to whose theory of worshipping God was the most effective. And they began dragging the residents into the dispute. The dispute heated up, and for the first time in many years the villagers forgot about their time of communication with God. They did not gather as before in the glade on the appointed day.

Another three years went by. Ninety-nine magnificent temples were scattered about the settlement, and it was only the villagers' huts that had lost their lustre. Some of the vegetables lay uncollected on the ground. And the fruit of the garden began to become infested with worms.

"This is all because," the wise-men preached in the various temples, "you do not have full faith. Bring more and more gifts to the temple, try harder and bow down to God more often."

But there was one wise-man — the one who had been left without a temple — who whispered first to one, then to another:

“You have been going about everything the wrong way, people. All the temples you have built are of the wrong construction. And you do not worship the right way in your temples, you are not saying the right words as you pray. I am the only one who can teach you how you can communicate with God every day.”

Just as soon as he managed to bring someone over to his side, a new temple would be erected, and one of the existing ones would fall into disrepair. And again one of the wise-men, the one newly deprived of the people's offerings, tried to surreptitiously slander the others in front of the villagers.

A number of years passed. Then one day the people remembered about the gatherings they used to have in the glade where they heard God's voice. Once again they gathered in the glade and began asking questions in the hope that God would hear them and give an answer as before.

“Answer us, how did it happen that our gardens are bringing forth worm-infested fruit? And why do our vegetables no longer yield an abundant harvest every year? And why do people quarrel, fight and argue amongst themselves, but cannot possibly choose the best faith? Tell us in which of the temples we built for you do you dwell?”

For a long time God did not answer their questions. And when a voice finally sounded in space, it was not a happy voice, it sounded weary. God answered those gathered:

“My sons and daughters, the reason for the desolation in your houses and the gardens around them is that I am simply not able to do everything by Myself. Everything has been designed by My dream right from the start in such a way that I can create splendour only in conjunction with you. But you have in part turned away from your homes with their

gardens. Creation is something I cannot ever manage on My own — there must be co-creation by the two of us together. Moreover I want to say to you all: you yourselves include love and freedom of choice, and I am ready to follow your aspirations with My dream. But you must tell me, My dear daughters and sons, in which of the temples I am to dwell. Before me you are all of equal worth, so where abouts should I reside so that no one feels left out? When you have decided on your own in which of the temples I should make my home, I shall be glad to follow your collective will.”

After responding to all with these words God fell silent. The people of the once beautiful village are continuing their conflict even to this day. Their houses are filled with desolation and dust. Around them the temples rise higher and higher, even as the conflict grows bitterer and bitterer.

“Well, Anastasia, that is quite an unrealistic, fairy-tale parable you told. There must have been some pretty dumb people in that settlement. Didn’t they realise that God wants to work with each one of them to care for their garden? Besides, you say that those dullards in the settlement are still arguing, even today. And where is that settlement, in what country? Can you tell me?”

“I can.”

“Then tell me.”

“Vladimir, you along with people from different lands are living in this very settlement right now.”

“Eh? Oh, I see, precisely: we are the ones! We are still engaged in a dispute about whose faith is better. While our gardens are full of worm-infested fruit!”



The best place in Paradise (second parable)

Four brothers came to a gravesite to honour the memory of their father who had died many years before. The brothers wanted to know whether his soul was dwelling in Paradise or in hell. They were all eager for their father's spirit to appear before them and tell how it was doing in the next world.

Their father's image appeared before them in a wondrous radiance. The brothers were awed and their hearts were afire when they saw this miraculous vision. When they finally regained their composure, they enquired:

"Tell us, Father, does your soul dwell in Paradise?"

"Yes, my sons," their father replied, "my Soul delights in a wondrous Paradise."

"Tell us, Father," the brothers started asking, "what fate awaits our souls after our own flesh dies?"

And the father responded to each of his sons in turn with a question of his own:

"Tell me, my sons, how do you appraise your deeds to date upon the Earth?"

And each brother answered his father in turn. The elder son began:

"I have become a great military leader, Father. I have defended my native land against its foes, and never allowed an enemy foot to tread upon it. I have never offended the poor and infirm. I have endeavoured to take good care of the soldiers under my command. I have always honoured God, and therefore I hope to enter into Paradise."

The second son replied to his father:

"I have become a prominent preacher. I have preached goodness to the people. I have taught them to worship God. I

have reached great heights and achieved high standing among my peers, and therefore I hope to enter into Paradise.”

The third son replied to his father:

“I have become a prominent scientist. I have designed a great many devices to benefit people’s lives. I have raised a large number of handsome buildings for mankind. Each time I start a new construction project, I give praise to God and celebrate and honour His name, and therefore I hope to enter into Paradise.”

The youngest brother answered his father:

“I, Father, cultivate a garden and work daily at raising vegetables. From my splendid garden I send fruits and vegetables to my brothers and try not to do anything dishonourable or displeasing to God, and therefore I hope to enter into Paradise.”

The father replied to his sons:

“Your souls, my sons, will indeed dwell in Paradise after your flesh dies.”

The vision of their father faded. Years went by, the brothers died and their souls met in the Garden of Paradise, only the soul of their younger brother was not among them. The three brothers then began to call out to their father, and when he once again appeared before them in his wondrous radiance they asked him:

“Tell us, Father, why is the soul of our little brother not among us in this Garden of Paradise? It has been a hundred earthly years since we last spoke with you at your gravesite.”

“Do not be concerned, my sons,” replied the father. “Your little brother’s soul, too, is dwelling in the Garden of Paradise. Only he is not here with you right now because your little brother is at this moment communicating with God.”

Another hundred years went by, and once again the brothers met in the Garden of Paradise. But again their younger

brother was not with them. And again the brothers called for their father. When he appeared, they asked:

"See, another hundred years has gone by, but our little brother has not come to meet us, nor has anyone seen him in the Garden of Paradise. Tell us, Father, where is our little brother now?"

And the father answered his three sons:

"Your little brother is communicating with God, and that is why he is not among you."

And the three brothers began asking their father to show them where and how their younger brother was communicating with God.

"Take a look," the father replied. And the brothers saw the Earth, and there was the marvellous garden which their little brother had cultivated during his life. In this wondrous earthly garden their brother, looking so much younger, was explaining something to his child. His beautiful wife was busying herself nearby.

The brothers asked their father in astonishment:

"There is our little brother in his earthly garden as before, not in the Garden of Paradise as we are. What is he to blame for before God? Why has his flesh not died? Several centuries have passed in Earth years, and here we see him as a young man? Does that mean God has somehow changed the order of the Universe?"

And the father answered his three sons:

"God has not changed the order of the Universe, which He established right from the start in great harmony and inspired love. Your brother's flesh has died, and on more than one occasion. But the place of one's soul in the Garden of Paradise is best created by one's own hands and soul. Just as for any loving mother and father the child of their own creation is always the most glorious. According to the Divine order of things, the soul of your little brother should assuredly be

granted entrance to the Garden of Paradise, but seeing this garden is on the Earth, it is immediately incorporated into a new body in the earthly garden so dear to it.”

“Tell us, Father,” the brothers went on, “you were saying that our little brother is communicating with God, but we do not see God with him in his garden.”

And the father responded to his three sons:

“Your little brother, my sons, is looking after God’s creations — the trees and the grass — they are the Creator’s own materialised thoughts. In treating them with love and conscious awareness, your brother is thereby communicating with God.”

“Tell us, Father, shall *we* ever return to the Earth in fleshly form?” the sons asked their father. And they heard him answer:

“Your souls, my sons, now dwell in the Garden of Paradise. They can take on earthly form only if someone creates a garden for your souls on the Earth similar to the one in Paradise.”

The brothers exclaimed:

“Gardens are not created with love for *other* people’s souls. We ourselves, once we are given a fleshly form, shall cultivate a Garden of Paradise on the Earth.”

But the father replied to his sons:

“You were given that opportunity already, my sons.”

After this response the father began to quietly withdraw. But once again the three brothers cried out and asked their father:

“Dear father, show us *your* place in the Garden of Paradise. Why do you withdraw yourself from us?”

The father stopped and replied to his three sons:

“Look there! Do you see that leafy apple tree flowering beside your little brother in his garden? Under that apple tree is a little cradle, and in that cradle is the beautiful body of a tiny infant that has just wiggled its little hand as it begins to

awake. My soul is alive in that little body. After all, that was the marvellous garden I began creating myself..."



The wealthiest groom (third parable)

I shall make a few changes in this parable to put it in a modern-day context.

In one village lived two neighbours. The families were friends with each other, and enjoyed working their land. Every spring gardens bloomed on the two plots, and their little groves of trees grew taller.

Into each family a son was born. After their sons had matured, one day, while gathered around a festive table, the fathers took a firm decision and handed everything over to their sons' control.

"Let those sons of ours now decide what to sow and when," one of them said to the other. "And you and I, my friend, shall not oppose them, or even give them hints or questioning looks."

"Agreed," replied the other. "Let our sons even make changes around the house if they wish. Let them choose the clothing they like, and let them decide what livestock and other things to buy."

"Fine," replied the first. "Let our sons become self-sufficient. And let them choose worthy brides for themselves. We shall go together, my friend, to seek brides for our sons."

And this is the decision that emerged from the two friends and neighbours' conversation. Their idea was supported by their wives, and the families began living under their grown-up sons' administration. But thereafter the two families' lives significantly diverged.

In one family the son became an active member of the community and paid his respects to everyone, which led to his being defined as the 'first citizen' of the village. The other son seemed to be slow and serious of mind to all around; he came to be called the village's 'second citizen'.

The first neighbour's son felled and sawed up the trees of the grove his father had planted and hauled them to market. He bought himself a family car in place of his horse, along with a small tractor. The first son here was considered very enterprising. The new entrepreneur calculated that the coming year would see a sharp increase in the price of garlic, and he was not mistaken. He pulled up all his plantings and sowed his fields with garlic. His father and mother did their best to help him in everything — they had made a promise and it was not forsaken.

The family sold the garlic at a profit. They set about building a huge mansion using the most modern materials invented and hired construction workers. And the enterprising son did not relent — he spent from morning 'til night trying to figure out what the most profitable crop would be to plant in the spring. And by winter's end he had calculated that this spring's most profitable crop would be onions. And again he sold his harvest at a profit, and bought himself a fancy new car.

One day the two neighbours' sons met along the road. One was driving a car, the other a wagon harnessed to a frisky mare. The successful entrepreneur stopped his car and the two neighbours had a conversation.

"See, neighbour, I'm driving a fancy car, while you're getting around in a horse-drawn cart just like before. I'm building a

big house, while you're still living in that old house of your father's. Our fathers and mothers have always been friends, and I too am ready to help you in a neighbourly way — if you like, I can tell you what is the most profitable crop to plant your whole field with today."

"Thank you for your willingness to help," responded the second neighbour from his wagon, "only I happen to cherish a great deal my freedom of thought, indeed I do."

"I certainly don't want to encroach on your freedom of thought. It's just that I sincerely want to help you through."

"I thank you for your sincerity, good neighbour. But freedom of thought is eroded by non-living things — that car, for example, you are sitting in."

"How can a car erode...? It can easily overtake that old farm-cart of yours, and by the time you get to the city I'll be able to have my business all taken care of. And all thanks to my motor car."

"Yes, your car, of course, can certainly overtake my wagon, but it requires you to sit behind the wheel and hold on to it constantly as you drive, while you as the driver have to keep jerking some kind of stick with your hand and looking continually at the dashboard and the road. Maybe my horse is slower than a car, but it doesn't require any attention, and doesn't distract my thought either. If I should take a snooze, the horse will find its own way home. You say you have problems with fuel, whereas my horse fills itself up in the pasture over there. Anyway, tell me, where are you in such a hurry to get to in your car?"

"I want to buy some spare parts to keep on hand. I know exactly what could go wrong with my car at any moment."

"So, you know enough about technology that you can accurately predict all your breakdowns?"

"Yes, I'm pretty good at that! I took special mechanics courses — for three years in all I swotted through. If you recall, I asked you to join me in those courses too."

"So for three years of your life you had only this technology to give your thought to. Something that can get old and break down."

"Your horse, too, will get old and die."

"Yes, of course, she will get old. But before that happens she will be able to give birth to a foal. The foal will grow, and I shall be able to ride him. What is living will eternally serve Man, never fear, while what is dead only shortens his years."

"The whole village makes fun of your ideas," remarked the entrepreneur. "They all think of me as successful and wealthy, while they see you just sit and live off your father's fortune. Besides, you haven't introduced any new species of trees or bushes on your father's land, not even a bit."

"But I've come to love *these*. I've been trying to understand each one's purpose and how they interact with each other. And I've been able to invigorate the ones starting to wither, just by looking at and touching them. Now, come each spring, everything is blossoming in harmony, all by itself, requiring no outside attention. It's just waiting eagerly for summer, and then for the fall when it will offer up its fruit for the year."

"Really, friend, I must say you *are* queer," sighed the entrepreneur. "You walk around entranced with your domain, your garden and your flowers. At the same time, you say, you are giving freedom to your thoughts."

"Yes, I am."

"What do you need a free thought for, anyway? What's the point in freedom of thought?"

"So that I can make sense of all the grand creations. So that I can be happier myself, and help you."

"Me? What's got hold of you? I can marry the best girl in the village, any one of them will go for me. They all want to be rich, live in a spacious house and ride in my car."

"Being rich doesn't mean being happy."

"And being poor?"

"Being poor isn't so good either."

"So if you're not poor and not rich, then what?"

"You ought to have just enough of everything. Being self-sufficient — that's not bad either. And be consciously aware of what's going on around. After all, it's not by chance that happiness can be found."

The entrepreneur grinned and quickly went on his way.

A year later the two neighbouring fathers got together to talk. They decided it was time to be courting brides for their sons. When they asked them which of the village girls they would like to wed, the entrepreneuring son replied to his father:

"The daughter of the village elder really appeals to me, Father. I would rejoice to have her as my wife."

"I can see, my son, that you have made an excellent choice. The village elder's daughter is renowned as the most beautiful girl in the county. All the visitors to our village from both near and far are entranced at the sight of her. Mind you, she can be quite capricious. The girl has a mind of her own that even her parents can't figure out. Some people might think her strange — more and more women keep coming to her from various settlements for advice and to be healed of their ills, and they even bring their children to see this young girl."

"What of it, Father? I'm made of sterner stuff. In all our village there is no more spacious house or better car than mine. Besides, twice now I have seen her give me long and thoughtful looks."

On being asked which of the village girls *he* most fancied, the second son told his father:

"I love the village elder's daughter, Father."

"And how does she act toward you, my son? Have you noticed a look of love in her eyes?"

"No, Father. Whenever I happen to meet her, she lowers her eyes."

Both neighbours simultaneously decided to woo the maiden for their sons. Arriving at their house, they seated themselves sedately. The village elder summoned his daughter and told her:

"Look, my daughter, two matchmakers have come to see us. On behalf of two young lads, each wishing to have you to wife. The three of us have decided that you should choose from the two. Can you tell us your decision now or would you like to think about it until tomorrow morning?"

"I have spent many mornings thinking about it in my dreams, Father," the young girl quietly said. "I can give you my answer right now."

"So tell us. We are all eagerly awaiting your decision."

The beautiful girl answered the matchmakers like this:

"Thank you, fathers — thank you all for enquiring. I thank your sons for desiring to join their life with mine. You have indeed raised splendid sons, and it might have been very difficult to choose to which of two destinies I should myself resign. But I do want to have children, and I want my children to be happy, to stand tall in prosperity, freedom and love, and so I have fallen in love with the one who is wealthiest of all."

The father of the entrepreneur rose to his feet in pride, while the other father sat glumly in his chair. But the girl went over to the second father, knelt down before him, and said, without raising her eyelids:

"I wish to live with your son."

At this point the village elder rose to his feet. He wanted to see his daughter living in what was deemed by all the richest house in the village, and so he said to her rather harshly:

"You spoke correctly, my daughter — your smart reasoning brought gladness to your father's heart. But you for your part

did not go and kneel before the richest man in the village. Someone else here is the wealthiest. This is he."

And the elder, gesturing to the entrepreneur's father, added:

"Their son has built a spacious home, honey. They have a car, a tractor... and money."

The girl went over to her father and responded to his harsh and bewildering words:

"Of course you are right, Papa dear. But I was talking about children. What use will our children have for those things you mentioned? The tractor can break down while they are still growing up. The car may rust and the house fall into decay."

"That may be — maybe what you say is true, granted. But your children will have *a great deal* of money, and they can buy for themselves a new tractor and a new car and new clothes."

"And just how much is 'a great deal', might I ask?"

The entrepreneur's father proudly stroked his beard and moustache, and answered solemnly and seriously:

"My son has heaps of money — enough so that if he needed to buy three of everything our household already has, he could do so all at once. And those horses our neighbour keeps, we would be able to buy not just two, but a whole stable full."

The girl meekly lowered her eyelids and responded:

"I wish you and your son great happiness. But there is no amount of money on the Earth that would buy a father's garden where every branch reaches out in sheer love to the one cultivating it. And no money in the world can buy the loyalty of a steed that has played with a child as a colt. Your domain may indeed make money, but my beloved's domain will make a space for sufficiency and love."



A change of priestly tactics

During the thousand-year war the priest changed his tactics a number of times, but all to no avail. Rus' still laughed, as before, at his occult intrusions. The people referred to those preachers as miserable wretches. At that time wretchedness was not equated with physical affliction but with occultism. People in Rus' took pity on the wretched preachers, they fed them and offered them shelter, but did not take any of their sermons seriously.

After four hundred centuries the priest realised he would never achieve victory over the Vedic land. He accurately determined wherein the extraordinary power of Vedism lay.

Vedism was based solidly on a Divine culture. Everyone's way of life was Divine. And every family created in its domain a Space of Love, they felt the wholeness of Nature and, consequently, of everything God had created.

What happened in Vedism was that people spoke with God through Nature. Instead of bowing down before Him, they attempted to understand Him. They loved God as a son and daughter love their kindly parents.

And so the priest came up with a plan which would be able to break this dialogue with the Divine. To this end it was necessary to separate people from their domains, from the Divine gardens, from their co-creation together with God. It was necessary to divide the whole territory where the Vedic people lived into different states and to destroy their culture.

New preachers went to Rus'. They put a new approach into practice. This time they sought out people in whom selfishness — pride — dominated even just a little over the other energies of feelings. Whenever they found such a Man, they tried enhancing the sense of pride within him. This is how they operated:

Imagine a group of stately-looking elders arriving at the home of a happy family. But there is no attempt, as before, to preach or teach them how to live. On the contrary, they all at once bow down before the head of the household, present him with outlandish gifts and say:

"In our far-off land we climbed to the top of a high mountain — the highest mountain on the Earth. Standing at the summit, above the clouds, we heard a voice from heaven telling us about you. And it was told to us that you are the wisest of all people on the Earth. You alone were chosen, and we are honoured to bow down to you, present you with our gifts and wait upon your words of wisdom."

And if they saw the Man taking their bait, they would continue their sly talk:

"It is your duty to make all other people happy — the voice told us so on the mountain-top. You should not waste your valuable time on other concerns. You should be in charge of people and make decisions for them — decisions that have been entrusted to you alone. And here is your heavenly head-dress."

At this point a head-dress decorated with precious stones was presented to the Man as though it were the grandest treasure.

And so the head-dress was placed upon the head of the Man who now believed in his own majesty and his chosen status. And at that very moment all the visitors fell to their knees before him in great reverence. And they began to praise heaven for the honour of being worthy to bow before this majesty. Next, the foreign visitors built him a separate house to live in that looked very much like a temple.

This is how the first princes rose to power in Vedic Rus'.

The new prince's neighbours looked upon this Man sitting on his throne in the temple as some sort of curiosity. They watched as the foreign visitors bowed before him, indulged his every whim and plied him with all sorts of questions.

At first they took this scenario for some kind of game from overseas, and some decided, either out of curiosity or out of compassion, to play along with the foreigners and with their neighbour. But people gradually got drawn into the game. And little by little they sank into a state of serfdom, and without their realising it, their thoughts turned more and more away from co-creation.

It was not easy for the priest's emissaries to get the princdoms established. In the beginning, for more than a hundred years, their attempts proved unsuccessful. But still it finally came about, and Vedic Rus' was carved out into princdoms.

And then events took their natural course: the princes began fighting over who was greater, and dragged their neighbours into internecine feuds.

Later historians would claim that grand princes arose who managed to join the isolated princdoms of Rus' together into one mighty state. But think for yourself, Vladimir — could that really have been so? And what kind of unification exactly do the historians have in mind? It is all very simple, in fact. Yes, one prince was able to kill or conquer others. But people can be united only by culture and a way of life.

The setting up of borders always indicates separation. Once a state was established, not on the basis of a cultured way of life but on the artificial greatness of one or more people by virtue of their armies, a whole lot of problems immediately made themselves heard: how to maintain those borders and expand them as the opportunity occurred — and so arose the need for a sizeable army.

A large state cannot be governed by one Man alone — so clerks and scribes soon appeared, and they have been multiplying each day right up to the present time. The princes, clerks, scribes, merchants — and all their servants — together form a category of people who have been separated from God's creations. Today their functional designation is

the creation of an artificial world. They have utterly lost the ability to perceive true reality, and so constitute fertile soil for occultism.

Only a thousand years ago Rus' was considered pagan. Paganism still carried within itself a lingering sense of the Divine Vedic culture. With the advent of the princes and their princedoms — first little princedoms, and later large ones — the rulers found they needed a force more powerful than an army. A force capable of creating a type of Man inclined to unquestioning submission to authority.

Here too the priest's messengers came to the ruling princes' assistance and offered them a suitable religion.

The essence of this new development was very much to the princes' liking. Though there was hardly anything new in it. It contained everything that Egypt had had five thousand years earlier.

Like the pharaoh, the prince was considered to be appointed to his position by God. The occult ministers of the new religion were his advisors — again, just as in Egypt. Everyone else was a mere slave. It was not a simple task to inculcate the new order into the minds of free people whose memories could still savour the celebrations of Vedic culture. And so once again the priest came to the princes' aid. His foot-soldiers began spreading false rumours to the effect that there were pagan settlements where people were being more and more frequently sacrificed to God.

It was noised abroad that pagans sacrificed to their gods not just various animals but also beautiful girls, or young men, or even little children. This false rumour is still rampant among us today. More and more it became a source of anger to the pagan people. And now here was this new religion being offered which placed a strict prohibition on burnt sacrifices. It talked about equality and brotherhood — exempting, of course, the princes. Thus this new religion was little by

little introduced into pagan Rus'. Eventually one of the ruling princes decreed that Christianity be recognised as the only true religion in the land, Rus' came to be called Christian and all other religions were banned.

Now let anyone whose forebears — mothers and fathers — were called pagan just a thousand years ago ask themselves this question: did pagans really sacrifice either animals or people to their gods? And the true picture of events will become clear to anyone who is able to do at least nine minutes of logical reasoning.

And you, Vladimir, once you have applied your own logic to the discovery of the truth, can see the facts for yourself. I shall be glad to give you a little help.

First ask yourself a logical question: If pagans, as their accusers claim, actually offered up someone as a sacrifice to God, then why did the mere rumour about such offerings so greatly trouble their mind and feelings? It would have been more logical in that case to welcome such claims and enthusiastically try to repeat them, instead of greeting them with outrage and accepting the new religion's entreaties. But the people were outraged — why? Naturally, because the pagans could not entertain even the thought of sacrificing animals, let alone people.

That is why no one can come up with even a single source in support of burnt sacrifices among the people of pagan Rus'. It was only the chroniclers of Christianity that claimed that. But then they never lived in pagan Rus', and did not even know the language of pagan Rus'. And what about the sources and manuscripts of pagan Rus' itself? Some of them were hidden, some were burnt in bonfires, just as in Rome. What exactly was seditious in those scrolls? What did they disclose? Without being able to read them, everyone today can make their own guess. They would have exposed the falsity of the accusations against paganism. And they could

have transmitted the knowledge of Vedism. There was more to it than the fact that none of the people of pagan Rus' ever indulged in burnt sacrifices. They did not eat meat at all. They could not even imagine such a thing. They were friends with the animals. Their daily diet was varied enough, but it was strictly vegetarian. Who can come up with a single recipe from ancient Russian cuisine that even mentioned meat? No one!

Even our epic folk tales tell about how the turnip was respected in ancient Rus', about how the people drank mead-beer. Let anyone today, even meat-eaters, try drinking this warm mead made from flower pollen and herbs — after drinking that, you will not want to eat anything else, certainly not meat. Those who force themselves to do so may find the meat will only make them vomit.

Besides, judge for yourself, Vladimir, why should anyone eat meat when all around them a whole lot of easily digestible, high-energy food was available?

During the winter bees feed on nothing but honey and pollen, and so can go the whole winter without excreting at all. The whole intake is assimilated by the bee's body. And *sbiten'* — a drink made with boiled honey — was always served to guests directly they entered the home. And who would start eating meat after tasting a sweet drink?

It was the nomads that introduced meat to the world. There was hardly any edible fruit to fend for in the prairielands and deserts they moved about in, and this is why they ended up killing cattle. And the nomads ate the meat of those animal herds that served as their beasts of burden — animals that carried their belongings, fed them with milk and gave their wool for clothing.

Thus the culture of our forebears was destroyed, and Rus' was plunged into religion. If the people had learnt genuine religion, purely Christian, it is possible that life would have

turned out differently. But the priest managed to inject his own twists into the Christian teachings. And the one religion became subject to various interpretations. And the Christian world became divided into a multitude of denominations, often in conflict with each other.

The High Priest spent a great deal of effort on Rus'. In other places on the Earth people saw what he was doing and did not permit his preachers within their borders. Japan, China and India did not become Christian. But the High Priest won them over by another way. The Age of Occultism began one thousand years ago. People all over the Earth lived in the Age of Occultism. And are still living in it today.

CHAPTER EIGHT



Occultism

It lasts only a thousand years.

During the Age of Occultism mankind is plunged into a world of unreality.

Mankind begins to direct its tremendous store of diverse energies toward made-up images and abstract worlds existing beyond the boundaries of real life. The real world with its diversity receives less and less of the life-creating warmth of Man. It maintains its existence only at the expense of past accumulation and its original charge from the Divine.

Mankind ceases to fulfil its main purpose. It becomes dangerous for the Universe, and planetary-scale disasters take place.

Today all mankind still lives in the world of the occult. But that age ended in the year 2000. Of course, in reality the name *2000* is a misnomer.

You know yourself that only recently the traditional year-count was radically changed. The latest temporal borderline represented the millionth anniversary of civilisation on the Earth.

And as always a global disaster was slated to happen. More specifically, mankind was supposed to launch a new attempt toward populating the Universe through its own perfection. But no disaster occurred during any year of the Occult Age.

It took only three of the Vedic people who were not asleep to partially remove the soporific occult spells from people today. Remember how the hearts of those reading your books began to flutter and recall their love for the Earth? They are

still asleep, but the power of God's Vedic culture is coming back to them. And God is gaining new hope. While still not fully awake, they through their love averted a disaster. Now it will not happen on our planet.

Soon all people will come out of the hypnotic occult sleep. They will start coming back to reality.

Are you surprised that mankind today is either asleep under a hypnotic spell or dwelling in an unreal world? You might wonder: *How can that be? Here I am, and in the cities both large and small there are millions of people living. Cars go up and down the streets.*

You should not be all that surprised by my words, Vladimir. Think about it and judge for yourself — at what times, on what day or at what hour do people actually live in a real world? Think, for example, how many different religions there are on the globe. They all have a different interpretation of Man's being and the order of the Universe, and each has its own set of rituals, distinct from the others.

Let us say that there is indeed one religion which is truer than all the rest. But that would mean that the worlds the rest of them are creating are unreal. But after all, people believe in them too. And if they believe, they live in submission to the laws of the unreal world.

All over the Earth greater and greater numbers of people are wanting to have more money. But what is money? It is simply a convention. People think that everything can be bought with money. That is an illusion. No amount of money can buy the true energy of Love, or a mother's feelings, or one's Motherland, or the taste of fruit intended only for the one who grew it with mindful attention.

As a convention, money can be used only to buy conventional, conditional love — along with a multitude of soulless things around — but in the process you are dooming your soul to a state of loneliness.

In the Occult Millennium mankind is completely disoriented as to the Space created by God. And people's souls simply flounder about as though in darkness.

Look closely, Vladimir. Just over the past hundred years in the country where you live, look how society has kept changing its direction.

There was a tsar, the social élite functioned according to prescribed behavioural rites, and people of prominence were decorated with various emblems, medals and orders with coloured ribbons. They wore gold-embroidered uniforms. And monasteries and temples were built throughout the country where you live now. And then all of a sudden that was considered contemptible. Uniforms, medals and the ribbons attached to them came to be considered no more than clown outfits. Temples were part of the dark ages. Those who served in the temples were called swindlers.

And people enthusiastically sacked the temples and angrily slew the occult servers therein. Later it was announced to all that only the Soviet authorities were to blame. Yes, the authorities did officially encourage the people to do this. But then the people did not protest — they simply responded to the call of their ruling idols.

After all, you know from documents existing today how in the Kuban¹ forty-two Christian priests were brutally slaughtered. Not just killed, but brutally tortured. Their bodies were tossed in cesspools. This was not just the work of the rulers, the people themselves willingly participated in such acts. The rulers' only role was to allow them to happen. As a result, priests were slain by the thousands in different parts of the country. The ones that could not run ended up

¹*Kuban'* — the area around the Kuban' River in the northwestern Caucasus, which flows from Mount Elbrus to the Sea of Azov.

renouncing their faith. Very few in those times managed to save both their life and their faith.

The majority of the people in the country became sincere atheists. They changed their clothes; the emblems and ribbons on their uniforms became different, with different colours. Many analysts and historians have written books about the Soviet years, but... In the future Lenin and Stalin will be remembered for just one thing : *For the first time mankind has been shown clearly that occultism is obsolete. Even in their sleep people do not accept occult religions. Occultism is supported only by artifice and force.* But, you see, it was not their faith in God that was destroyed. It was only the occultism that had infested their faith that was brought down.

Over the past millennium, in Russia alone a startling change of philosophy has managed to occur among the people as a whole. Religion became significantly denigrated and people's faith in it was transferred to communism, though that too is a faith.

Quite recently, you saw yourself how once again the people in the country where you live sharply changed their direction. The path everybody in the country had been enthusiastically following was declared to be the wrong one. And priorities changed once more.

Did the people choose a new way? No way! The path is not at all clear to the people. In the unreal world of the occult the people do not choose their own path. Someone always points it out. But who? The High Priest, who still today rules the world.

How does he rule the people of the modern world? And why can nobody ever overthrow him? Where is he located? Take a look — I can show him to you.



The priest who still rules the world today

Now you see an elderly man. Do not be surprised at his modest appearance. In terms of clothing and behaviour he is indistinguishable from most other people, and as you can see, he is surrounded by ordinary things. And his house is not that big — his staff comprises just two servants. He has a family: a wife and two sons. But even his family do not know who he actually is.

And yet he does have one outward distinguishing feature: if you observe him closely, you can see that he spends the whole day in isolation. And on his face you can see the depth of his meditation. Whenever he eats, or talks with his wife (although their conversations are rather rare), his eyes look as though they are concealed behind a foggy film. And even when he watches television, his eyelids are slightly lowered, he never shows surprise and never laughs. In fact he hardly watches any television at all. He merely pretends to watch, and during this time he is deep in intensive thought. He is working out grandiose plans. And exercising control of events in whole countries. He is the High Priest from a dynasty of priests, having inherited from them a knowledge of the occult, which he will also be able to transmit to one of his sons. It will take him just a year to convey everything orally to his successor, whom he is training in secret without his even knowing it — the priest has long been developing specific abilities within his son.

All the world's money belongs to the High Priest. All the world's money works for him — including what you have in your pocket right now. Do not be surprised. I shall show you how this happens, and by what means and for what reason the High Priest prefers not to live in a castle surrounded by an army of guards, why he prefers commonplace routines to special luxury.

The High Priest has no bodyguards because he knows perfectly well that the more visible authority is to all, the greater the need for armed protection. Besides, there is no guarantee that any number of bodyguards, even hundreds of thousands, will succeed in protecting any earthly ruler. Indeed, there have been instances where the guards themselves betray or even kill the ruler. Besides, having bodyguards may entail a lot of problems. There are times when the ruler is compelled to submit to the guards' terms. Compelled to tell the guards about his intentions — forthcoming trips, for example.

With a bodyguard a ruler is always under observation, and so meditation becomes more difficult for him.

It is much simpler and more reliable to conceal one's identity. This also wards off intrigues on the part of one's adversaries, fanatics and challengers to one's authority.

Now you may well be thinking: *But how is it possible to control huge numbers of people without assistants, managers and deputies, without drafting laws and disciplining those who fail to carry them out?*

It is all very straightforward. The vast majority of the people have been immersed in occultism for a very long time.

The High Priest knows all the tricks of occultism. He does have assistants, managers, drafters of laws, prisons and executioners. He has armies and commanders, though not a single one of those who carry out his missions has any suspicion himself of who is secretly commanding him and by what means the orders are issued.

It is a simple system of control without visible and personal contact.

In cities both large and small of any country there are people who all at once start to hear voices from a source they cannot pin down. And this voice from an unknown source may order a Man to carry out some kind of action, and the Man obeys the order.

Sometimes there is a clearly audible voice, sometimes this Man does not know himself what is happening to him — it is just that he feels some kind of attraction within and he carries out the action ordered.

This kind of phenomenon is known to modern science. Psychiatrists along with other scientists have been attempting to study it for a long time, but to no avail.

Modern science classifies this kind of phenomenon as a type of mental disorder. People who go to doctors and report hearing voices coming out of nowhere and giving them orders are invariably carted off to a hospital. What kind of hospital? A psychiatric institution. In many countries these are very much like prisons. There are a great many of them today in America, Europe and Russia. Patients are treated with all sorts of pills and injections to quiet the mind — this dulls their sensations, making them sleep a lot and become extremely sluggish. And some of these people stop hearing voices as such. Others feign cure in an attempt to procure their release.

But not everyone who hears voices will go see a doctor. Just imagine now that someone submitting to a voice command is in charge of an atomic missile, or in command of an army, or assigned to guard a container of deadly bacteria. And this voice then gives him a bizarre order...

Science has not been able to define the exact nature of this unusual phenomenon. It definitely exists today, and they are afraid to publicise it, but that does not help. In the meantime, they should have been focusing their attention on something more basic: if there is a signal receiver, there must somewhere be a signal transmitter as well.

The High Priest and his assistants know how to transmit voice-commands. They also know what kind of Man each of the many religions is capable of shaping. The priests are the originators of these religions, of occultism itself. They need

it in order to control people. The fanatic who believes in the unreal world is like a bio-robot, predisposed to hear the voice-commands and to carry out any order unquestioningly.

The High Priest and his assistants know how to set people at odds with each other and start wars among people of different faiths.

Wars may have different specific causes, but in any war the basic weaponry has consisted of discrepancies in people's beliefs.

All technology and all artificial information channels are similarly controlled by the priests through people. And for this they do not have to control every television broadcast themselves or look over every reporter's shoulder as he writes. They need only create a general condition whereby all media are out to make money.

Television advertising, for example, has become more and more sophisticated, intrusive and aggressive. Any psychologist will tell you that it is nothing less than aggressive mental suggestion aimed at individual viewers — often not to their benefit, but to their harm. People are shamelessly told that commercial advertising cannot be helped — that is what pays for the programmes people watch. But then every TV viewer pays for all these adverts by purchasing products at the suggestion of the advertisers. Advertising costs are included in the retail price of the product. What can be more sorry than a situation like that?

And money acts as a huge and powerful lever for the priest's influence.

I told you that even the money you have in your pocket right now serves the High Priest. Here is how it all happens.

A simple pattern may be observed in the convoluted banking system we have: money withdrawn by someone from a bank increases the bank's capital. For example, let us say Russia as a country borrows on credit from an international

bank. It is then obliged to pay back with considerable interest much more than it originally borrowed. How is the difference made up? From the taxes you pay — or, let us say, even when a pensioner buys a quarter-kilo of bread, a tax is also included as a percentage of the price. And that percentage, or at least a part of it, goes to the international bank. Thus capital flourishes, but whose? The High Priest's. Without even touching the capital himself, he is able to direct the flow of money into wars, occult activities or the production of deadly medicines.

His goal is simple. Pride dominates in him, and it constantly aspires to create its own world, distinct from the world God made, and hold it in subjection. And the priests partially succeed in achieving the objectives they desire. People's concerns about their everyday lives are a great help to them in this. And they themselves stir up concerns among the people to distract them.

Note how when people are distracted by everyday concerns they do not notice that less and less information is being provided them. There are stricter and stricter prohibitions on bringing up the one basic question: is the path to which all mankind is now aspiring the right one?

If they could only free themselves from distraction, many might be able to come to a conclusion for themselves: seeing how every year diseases are on the rise, wars are not ceasing and each day brings greater and greater disasters, the path we are on is doubtful, to say the least. But oh the distractions! They do not allow for any kind of contemplation. The priest, on the other hand, is engaged minute by minute in meditation, creating designs and having them carried out by the hands of millions of people...

I spent a long time listening to Anastasia's emotional narrative. I refrained from interrupting her or asking her for

clarification along the way. This time I stayed longer than usual in the taiga. As I was leaving, I realised I was suffering from information overload and that it would be difficult for me to set everything down in a book. Besides, the things she said were so extraordinary, raising questions about religion and authority. In our religious denominations today there are a great many fanatics, all kinds of them. They are ready to go after anyone who encroaches on their beliefs! What do I need these problems for?

CHAPTER NINE



A need to think

After I got home and was preparing this book to submit to the publisher, I still couldn't decide, even up to the last moment, whether or not I should include all of Anastasia's sayings in the manuscript.

When Anastasia spoke of a splendid future for Russia which could be realised through the establishment of family domains, everything she said made sense. Her idea quickly caught on among my readers. People began to act.

Then in the book *Who are we?* when in an emotional answer to a question she referred to Christ Jesus as her older brother, and I wrote about it,¹ a number of readers, mainly faithful Christians, began to object.

In the book before that, I had written how, in answer to my question as to whether she might name any clerics who could understand her, she replied that Pope John Paul II would help her.² This prompted fresh doubts on the part of a few Catholic readers.

Such sayings of hers left me with a constant series of doubts of my own: should I write in my books about Anastasia's unusual actions, words and behaviour? Are they beneficial or harmful? Will they not cause some readers to entertain doubts about the obvious practical ideas of transforming society through the improvement of the living conditions and way of life on the part of individual families?

¹See Book 5, Chapter 23: "Your desires".

²See Book 4, Chapter 24: "Take back your Motherland, people!".

Besides, I wasn't completely free of doubt in regard to the content of her sayings — now I ask you, what am I to make of phrases like “Christ Jesus’ sister” or “Pope John Paul II will help”? If you look through the Bible, there is no mention anywhere that Jesus had any brothers or sisters.

And then all at once there occurred an event that could be called super-sensational, and in connection with this Anastasia’s unusual sayings again and again gave me pause for reflecting on the tremendous scope of Man’s true possibilities. This is what happened.

All at once I heard that the Vatican had publicised sources mentioning two of Christ Jesus’ sisters. Only I don’t remember whether they were sisters or cousins... I heard this brief news report while I was alone in my apartment, taking care of some routine tasks.

The radio and the television were both on at the time, and so I can’t say for certain where I heard it. I think it may have been the TV news.

After hearing this, each time I sat down at my desk I couldn’t help picking up my notes with Anastasia’s unusual sayings, which I had previously decided not to include in the new book. Now I was having second thoughts about whether I had made the right choice. Among these sayings there was this one in particular:

The American President, George Bush, in a highly unconventional move, without being aware of it himself, will save his country from a terrible disaster and protect the world from a war unprecedented in its potential destructive influence over the whole Earth.

Following the disastrous acts of terrorism in America on 11 September 2001 and the subsequent military operation (war, in fact) in Afghanistan with direct American involvement, this saying of Anastasia’s seemed to completely contradict what actually happened. However, upon analysing the information available in the press and on the TV, I became more and more

convinced that the events of 11 September in America could help people uncover a major mystery — could help head off even larger-scale, global acts of terrorism in various countries of the world. And they will be averted only providing this secret is exposed. Again and again I read over all Anastasia's extraordinary sayings. And here is what I discovered.

On 11 September 2001 in the United States of America there occurred a series of large-scale acts of terrorism. Several jets with passengers aboard took off with unknown pilots from New York airports and immediately altered their scheduled flight path. One after the other the planes tore into the twin towers of the World Trade Centre along with other strategic targets.

Over and over again gruesome images of the crashes lit up TV screens all over the world. Soon afterward Osama bin Laden and his organisation were declared to have masterminded the attack. A little while later the American President and government secured the support of a number of European countries and Russia and began bombing Afghanistan, where, according to available intelligence, the chief culprit and members of his organisation were hiding out.

So then, what is the mystery here? After all, images of the results of these terrorist acts and the ongoing anti-terrorist military operation were shown many times over and are still being used in TV news clips several times a day.

The mystery lies in the complete absence — or cover-up — of the *causes* of the acts of terrorism — in the complete absence of logic, not on the part of those who carried them out but of those who thought them up.

The mystery lies in the fact that the press didn't even try to make even a half-way significant analysis of the causes of what happened, as though somehow all the mass media had been issued an injunction not to investigate them. What we see and hear in the media on a daily basis touches upon only

the fact of what occurred. The constant repetition tends to make the extraordinary commonplace, something as routine as the daily reports of highway accidents.

According to media briefings this is what happened: Some extremely wealthy terrorist — generally assumed to be bin Laden, planned and carried out through his agents a series of notorious acts of terrorism which resulted in a huge number of casualties and exerted an unprecedented effect on people the world over.

Just what, in sum, did the mastermind behind these terrorist acts achieve? A significant part of the world community, on the head-of-state level, united against him. The most up-to-date technology and well-trained military units were employed to capture and destroy him.

According to the official version, terrorist Number One is hiding out in caves in the Afghan mountains. These mountains have been bombed from the air, along with Taliban forces, considered as collaborators with the mastermind.

The developed countries, led by the USA, have joined forces to put an end to all the camps of terrorist organisations, no matter what country such camps are located in.

Could the mastermind have failed to foresee the subsequent development of events? Sheer nonsense! Of course he knew that it would happen precisely that way. For a man able to evade capture by the special forces for such a long time, to plan and carry out terrorist acts requiring serious analysis and calculation, it should not have been a difficult task to calculate the course of events which followed.

Thus it turns out that this mastermind, from one point of view, is an astute strategist and tactician capable of meticulous analysis, while from another standpoint he is an utter fool. It turns out that through his terrorist activities he has brought doom upon himself, his organisation and all terrorist organisations, even those not connected with him.

The situation is utterly illogical and, consequently, the actions of the world community in the struggle against terrorism may not be effective — and, if the full truth be told, dangerous, since logic dictates that the mastermind behind a terrorist act remain above suspicion.

Be that as it may, one thing is clear: the picture of events that emerges from the facts reported in the mass media is a highly illogical one.

In the beginning, of course, I, like many other people, didn't pay much attention to this, but... The news from America immediately resurrected in my thought several of Anastasia's sayings — sayings which I had decided to refrain from publishing because of their strange and extraordinary nature. But now, after what happened in America, these same sayings explain a lot. Though it didn't become clear right off, by any means. Here's one example:

Right from the time of the Egyptian pharaohs, the rulers of states both large and small have been the least free people on the Earth. They spend the greater part of their time in an artificial information field, compelled to submit to accepted rituals of behaviour. They constantly receive a tremendous amount of routine and monotonous information, but time constraints do not allow them to analyse even that. If a ruler should make the transition from an artificial information field to a natural one even for just three days, this is something dangerous for all levels of the priesthood. Dangerous, too, for the ruler's secular rivals. The danger lies in the possibility that the ruler might start analysing a whole range of processes on his own, thereby freeing himself from the yoke of occult influences and freeing his people from them.

A natural information field is Nature at large — its appearance, fragrances and sounds. It is only the Nature of

one's own domain — a place where flora and fauna treat Man with love — that can protect Man from occult influences on him.

Now, as I sat at my desk (made of the cedar wood which Anastasia had given to me), I recalled these words, though this time they no longer seemed strange to me, as they had before.

Indeed, look at what is happening, even with our own President of Russia. He is constantly meeting either with foreign heads of state or with officials from our own country. None of them just stop by to take tea — they come with all sorts of problems, and are impatient for an immediate solution. And the press? No sooner does some sort of unusual event happen in the country than immediately the press wonders what the President's reaction will be. Or more bluntly: *Why didn't the President himself go to Ground Zero?* And he wins approval ratings when he actually visits the place where a flood or something else happened. But is that a good thing?

And when does he have time to calmly think about and analyse the information coming in? *Give us the President!* the people demand the moment something occurs. That's the way it happens. That's the way it's scripted. But what if it were scripted another way? The President should not be dashing off in all directions like a firefighter. He shouldn't be briefing officials, wasting time on meetings.

It is essential that he be given the opportunity to sit in his own garden, and from that perspective follow what is going on in the country, then analyse the incoming information, and from time to time take some kind of decisions. Perhaps then the people, too, would start to live better.

"What kind of nonsense is that?" many might react, as I did at first. Nonsense? But is it normal not to give someone the chance to think? Indeed, there is someone who finds it very

profitable for the presidents of various countries to think as little as possible. What would happen in our country if our President were given uninterrupted time to quietly think about things? What if he were afforded the opportunity to step out of the artificial information field, at least for a time?

And all at once... I was struck by a thought which made me feel as though an electric current was running through my whole body. All at once I could feel my desk warming up. An incredible stroke of intuition hit me... For some reason in my excitement I grabbed the telephone receiver and, without dialling any number (since she doesn't have a telephone) I cried into the mouthpiece: *Anastasia!*

There was no customary dial tone. And a moment later I heard a familiar voice, easily distinguishable from all other voices in the world — the calm, pure voice of Anastasia, saying:

"Hello, Vladimir! You should try not to get so excited. You see yourself what unnatural actions excessive excitement can lead to. I shall not talk with you on the telephone. Please, calm down. Get up from your desk and go out into the fresh air, into the grove of trees near your house."

The dial tone returned. I put the receiver down.

Wow! I thought, I really did get stirred up. I wonder whether that was really Anastasia talking to me or was I just hallucinating from excitement? I really must go outdoors into the fresh air and calm down.

A short time later I got dressed and went out to the grove of trees next to the house. Deep in the grove I caught sight of... her! There was Anastasia, standing under a pine tree, just by the side of the pathway, and smiling. Not paying any attention to her extraordinary arrival, I began talking immediately.



Who saved America?

“Anastasia, I’ve got it... I did some analysing, comparing your sayings with the events which took place in America, and it all became clear... Listen to me, and correct me if I’m wrong. The series of terrorist acts which occurred on 11 September in America — it wasn’t complete. The organisers were preparing something a lot bigger, weren’t they?... Of course they were. Only I can’t fill in the details. In general, I think, I’ve got it. But the details... Can you help me here?”

“I can.”

“Then tell me.”

“The mastermind behind this was counting on six terrorist groups to act in succession. Each of the six groups was to act independently at its appointed time, without knowing anything about each other. And their leaders did not know who was behind it all or what the ultimate goal was. Each group was made up of religious fanatics, ready to die for the cause.

“Only one group was comprised of people who had agreed to carry out the dirty deeds for money.

“The first group was to simultaneously seize control of all civil aircraft in the skies over the country, as well as those taking off from airports and those approaching American airspace. All the seized aircraft were to be used to destroy targets of national importance.

“Six days prior to this another group was to infect the water-supply system in twenty major hotels. The plan was drawn up in such a way that it would be virtually impossible to trace the source of the infection and the location of the perpetrating agents. Each agent was supposed to take a room in one of the hotels, place a special device on the cold-water tap and open the tap. Instead of water flowing from the tap, the air pressure would force a deadly powder back into the whole

system. After this the tap would be shut off and the following morning the perpetrator would be making his way to a hotel in another city.

“The bacteria released into the water-supply system would become glutinous upon contact with the water, sticking to the sides of the pipes, swell up, multiply and flow downward. In twelve days they would have proliferated a great deal. In an ordinary, natural-water setting they would be incapable of proliferating — they would be destroyed by other bacteria. But such a balance is absent in an artificial supply system, where Man has deprived the water of many of its natural properties.

“During peak consumption periods — when people would be washing themselves in the morning, for example — the water flow would cause a part of the bacteria to come loose, and contaminated water would come out of the tap. People washing themselves would feel nothing at first. But after eight to twelve days small abscesses would appear on their skin at an increasing rate. They would grow in size and suppurate. The disease would be highly infectious and very difficult to cure, though the attack organisers possess an antidote...

“A lot of people would be infected in many countries. Soon it would be discovered that these people had all stayed at hotels, but this would become evident only after the planes crashed.

“It pains me to talk about the wretched deeds to be carried out by the other perpetrators. The net result of all the acts of terrorism taken together were designed to produce a climate of panic and dread.

“Many people would begin leaving the country, taking their families with them. They would attempt to relocate their capital to banks in lands where they considered it less dangerous to live. But not every nation would agree to accept refugees from the USA. Most countries’ populations would be gripped

by fear and terror — especially if what had been considered the most powerful state in the world could not cope...”

“Stop, Anastasia! Let me try to guess. After that the masterminds would announce themselves — I mean, put forward their demands through some kind of intermediaries.”

“Yes.”

“But they didn’t succeed in carrying out all the attacks they had envisaged. They didn’t succeed in wholly frightening Americans. They didn’t manage to do everything they had planned because they were forced to start acting quite a bit before they were fully prepared. That’s how the illogicality arose. The terrorist acts took place, but they didn’t follow through with any demands. The whole process got cut off! And I think I can guess why. Because the real masterminds are to be found among the priests who are alive today. And they were frightened by Bush’s actions and were obliged to jump the gun. Right?”

“Yes. They...”

“Wait, Anastasia! I’ve got to understand all this for myself — I’ve got to learn *how* to understand. This is very important. If *I* can get it, that means others like me will also be able to discern the reality we live in. That means everybody will understand what must be done to better our lives.”

“Yes, Vladimir. If you have been able to understand, other people will too. Some right off, with others it will take time, but people will start building their lives in a splendid reality. Go on, only a little more calmly — there is no need to get so emotional about it.”

“But I’ve almost got myself calmed down now. Or maybe not. This is hard to talk about without getting emotional. But hey! — The President of America, Bush, has really stirred things up for those smart asses. I realised how horrified they must have been when he... When President Bush all at once upped and left for his ranch in Texas.

“Just six months after taking office, the President takes a holiday and goes away for close to a month! And where does he go? Not to some fashionable resort. Not to some exotic castle. He goes to his ranch, where he has a small house. Even the usual lines of presidential communication are missing. All he’s got there is one very ordinary telephone. And no proliferation of TV channels, seeing he hasn’t got a satellite dish. The media commentators mentioned these facts, but nobody realised what was behind them. I read on the Internet everything I could about Bush’s trip to his ranch. Just the fact was stated. They were surprised that he took a holiday so early in his mandate. And for such a long time. He spent twenty-six days at his ranch. He didn’t allow any press people to visit, and didn’t invite a bunch of officials.

“Nobody, but nobody, understood! Here was George Bush, the President of the United States of America, taking a colossal step which not a single president had ever taken before in the whole history of the country. Maybe not a single ruler has ever thought of doing something like that over the past five or ten thousand years!”

“You are right, they have not.”

“The beautiful thing is that for the first time the ruler of a huge country, the most important country in the world, much to the horror of all the priests, suddenly tore himself away from his artificial information field. He simply picked himself up and left it behind. And with that he came out from under the control of the occultists.

“Now I understand: rulers are always kept under control. Their daily pronouncements are vigilantly followed, right down to their intonations and facial expressions. Their actions are subject to correction through all kinds of information tossed their way. But when Bush escaped from that field they were horrified. They tried reaching him through occult means — you know, the way you put it, through remote voice

commands. But that didn't work — they didn't reach him! Just as you said — d'you remember? You said that Nature — the flora and fauna — constituted the natural world, and it does not permit harmful occult influences to reach Man. It protects Man, provided Man has made contact with the natural world — the one he has created himself."

"Yes, that is it, exactly."

"George Bush, of course, evidently did not create what was growing on his ranch. But he was the one who selected the location. He treated it with love — love for the Nature there, which is obvious from many facts. And Nature reacted to his love. It responded to him in kind. It protected him in the same way as the vegetation growing in one's family domain. Is something like that possible, Anastasia, when someone hasn't planted things himself, yet they still react?"

"It is possible. Sometimes they will react when Man treats his surroundings with sincerity and love. A similar thing happened in the case of George Bush."

"So there! I was right. Here was the President on his very own ranch. Everybody thought he wasn't receiving any information. But in actual fact the flow of artificial information from the artificial world significantly lessened. And the flow of natural information from the world around him significantly increased. The President took it in through the rustling of the leaves, the splashing of the water, the singing of the birds and the whistling of the wind, and he meditated. He analysed! He thought! This fact is something they will try to 'wipe out', to forget, or to refrain from talking about. They'll try to change the subject. But they won't succeed! Bush will still go down in millennial history.

"I've got it, Anastasia. Of course one can say a lot of intelligent things and write a lot of songs and poems, like King Solomon did in the Bible. Or one can act more radically and convincingly, like Bush, and thereby say to the world: *Look*

here, people. I'm rich, I have supreme power over the strongest country in the world. But none of this is the most important thing for Man's being. Man's soul, along with its Divine essence, prefers something else: not an artificially created world, but the natural world, created by God. My ranch is dearer to my soul than gold and technocratic achievements. And that is why I am going to my ranch. You too should be thinking, people, about your aspirations in life!

"The American President has come up with the best, the strongest and most convincing advertisement for the family domains you spoke of. The future family domains of Russia — of the whole world! If people don't understand it after this, then mankind really *is* asleep. Or just about everyone's under somebody's hypnosis. And that's why they're sick and in agony, that's why they use drugs and go to war and kill each other. If mankind doesn't come out of this hypnosis after your words, after Bush's actions, then it's going to take a disaster.

"Bush is the President. He's the most informed person in our technocratic world, since he has access to information from special services and various think tanks. And he is aware of the information offered by the natural world. He can do comparisons and analyses. He did this and showed with his actions...

"Wait — another incredible coincidence. No, a whole series of coincidences — if, indeed, they are coincidences. You were saying... You say things, and they come to pass... You told me that at the start of the new millennium the Russian President would pass a law concerning the land, to grant every Russian family a hectare of land free of charge.

"Well, on the 21st of February 2001 all the TV news programmes carried a report on a session of the State Council of governors under the chairmanship of the Russian President, Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin. The session looked at the land question — specifically, private ownership of land, including

farmland. The various governors assembled had different opinions on the question. The majority of regional leaders — members of the State Council — were in favour of making land available to Russians as private property.

“Judging by his remarks and his address, as well as by the fact that he was the one who had put the land question before the State Council, it appeared that the President was also in favour of allocating land to people as private property with the right of inheritance.

“And so the upshot of the session was a directive to the government to prepare draft legislation on the land issue by May of 2002 and present it to the State Duma for consideration.

“Of course they’re talking about *selling*, not giving the land away for family domains, and farmland isn’t even on the table, but all the same, it’s a palpable step in the right direction.

“Anastasia, is all this a chain of coincidences or did you exert some kind of influence on people? Eh? You can give remote voice commands too, can’t you? Of course you can. And you do. Have you been talking with them?”

“Vladimir, I have not been talking with anyone except you, and that has only been today, on the telephone. I have not talked with anybody at a distance, as you suppose. And I never influence anyone against their will.”

“But one time when I was in Moscow I could hear your voice, Anastasia. You weren’t around, yet I still heard your voice.”³

“Grandfather, Vladimir, was near you at that time. Many people can catch thoughts existing in space. It is a natural ability of Man. Earlier all people could do this, and there is nothing bad in it. Because there is no forcing. One Man can touch another at a distance with his thought-ray, send him warm cheer and thereby speed up the thinking process. Every Man possesses this thought-ray, only in varying degrees.”

³A reference to Book 2, Chapter 25: “The Space of Love”.

"But your ray is very strong — have you tried touching people with it?"

"Yes, I have. But I shall not mention their names."

"Why not?"

"The touch of the ray is not important here. What is important is their ability to perceive reality."

"All right, then, don't name names. Only... Hey, I've got an idea! You know what I just thought of? It's terrific! After all, you're able not just to warm people with your ray at a distance, but to burn them too. You can even turn a stone into dust — you demonstrated that once.⁴ So what you should do is burn up the perpetrators of terrorist acts. Burn up the priests — along with all the demonic forces. You were telling me. I remember writing it down: 'With my Ray I shall take but a moment to burn up the murk of age-old dogma. Stand not between the people and God...' ⁵ And so forth. You remember those words of yours?"

"Yes, I do."

"Then what are you waiting for? Why don't you burn them up? After all, you said that..."

"I was talking about dogmas. I would never dare burn up *people* with my ray."

"Even the masterminds behind acts of terrorism?"

"Even with them I would not dare."

"Why not?"

"Think about what you are saying, Vladimir."

"What's there to think about? Everyone knows the terrorism masterminds and their accessories need to be destroyed, right away. Armies of various countries have already been mobilised to this end. Special forces. People are dying."

⁴See Book 3, Chapter 7: "Assault!".

⁵See Book 3, Chapter 24: "Who are you, Anastasia?".

"Their efforts are to no avail. They will never find and never destroy the real masterminds. They will never be able to stop terrorism that way."

"All the more reason. If you can pinpoint and burn up the masterminds and their accessories in a flash, then do it. Burn them up!"

"Vladimir, perhaps you might give some thought to — you might determine — just who are the masterminds' accessories, and how many of them there are?"

"Well, sure, I could think about that. Only I doubt I'll be able to come up with an answer. If you know who, tell me their names."

"Very well. One of the accessories to terrorism is none other than *you*, Vladimir — along with your neighbours, friends and acquaintances."

"What? What are you saying, Anastasia? As for myself, and my friends too, I'm absolutely certain that we are not accessories."

"The lifestyle of most people, Vladimir, is fertile soil for terror, disease and all sorts of catastrophes. Is not someone who works in a factory producing machine guns and cartridges an accessory to killings?"

"If they manufacture weapons, well, maybe, indirectly. But you were talking about me. And I don't work in an arms factory."

"But you smoke, Vladimir."

"Well, yes. But what's that got to do with it?"

"Smoking is harmful, hence it follows that you are terrorising your own body."

"My own...? But we were talking about terrorising other people..."

"Why bring up other people right off? Everyone should carefully examine his own lifestyle. Especially those who live in cities. Do people who ride in motor cars not know what

deadly gas their motor car is polluting the air with? Do people who live in large buildings divided up into a whole lot of flats not know that it is harmful and dangerous to live in these apartments? The way life is organised in big cities is aimed at destroying Man and disorienting Man in respect to natural space. The majority of people who live that way — they are the ones who are accessories to terrorism.”

“Well, let’s say you’re right. But now many are beginning to understand, and they’re going to change their lifestyle. So help people, burn up the masterminds of terrorism with that ray of yours.”

“Vladimir, in order to carry out your request, I would have to charge my ray with a great deal of malicious energy capable of destroying Man.”

“So, what of it? Go ahead and do it. After all, this Man is a mastermind of terrorism.”

“I understand that. But before I can aim malicious energy at another, I would need to concentrate and produce in myself a large amount of this energy. Afterward it can inject itself into me again or be scattered in particles among other people. Yes, I can destroy the High Priest, but his program will continue to operate. And evil will find another priest, and he will be even stronger than the one I destroyed.

“You must understand, Vladimir, that terrorism, murders and crime are many thousands of years old. In Egypt the pharaoh was poisoned by the priests for trying to oppose their actions. When scientists opened his grave in the past century, they discovered that Tutankhamen was only eighteen years old.

“You have read in the Bible about the war of the priests. You yourself might remember that it talks about it in the Old Testament. Before all the Jews were to come out of Egypt, the priests quarrelled among themselves.

“The priest Moses asked for exclusive authority over the Jews, but the other priests would not accede to his request, and then the locusts came and attacked the Egyptian crops. Then a plague came over all their children. Many people and cattle fell victim to the disease. And finally the pharaoh let the Jews go. The residents of Egypt were so frightened they gave them cattle and weapons, as well as gold and silver.

“In the Old Testament it says that God was behind these attacks in Egypt. But could such attacks really have come from God? Of course, they could not have. God creates life to be happy for everyone. The priests caused the terrorism in Egypt when they were attempting to divide the authority among themselves. And then they blamed God for their evil deeds.

“Remember, too, Vladimir, how Jesus was crucified on the cross. Who was crucified along with him, on the crosses next to him? Criminals! That is what the New Testament says. And that was more than two thousand years ago. But they had crime back at that time too. They executed criminals. But what was the result? Crime still exists today. It goes up with each passing day. Why? Spending thousands of years in constant commotion, people have not realised that you cannot fight evil with evil. In that kind of a fight evil will only get bigger. That is why, Vladimir, I cannot respond to evil with malice.”

“Well, either you can’t or you don’t want to — I don’t suppose it makes much difference overall. When you speak, Anastasia, your arguments are very weighty indeed. It is quite true that mankind has not been able to cope with lawlessness for thousands of years. Maybe they’ve been using the wrong methods all this time. Only when you look at the current situation in the world, no alternative to suppressing terrorism by armed force comes to mind.

“And another thing: more and more often today we hear the term *religious extremism*. You’ve heard about that?”

“Yes.”

“And they even say: *Islamic religious extremism*. They say it’s the strongest religious extremism of all.”

“Yes, so they say.”

“So what’s to be done? After all, I have heard Islam is the fastest-growing religion today. Many of my acquaintances are Muslims, and these aren’t bad people, but on the other hand, there are also extremists among the Islamists. They engage in large-scale terrorist activities. How can we counteract them except with military force?”

“The first thing is, not to lie.”

“Not lie to who?”

“To yourself.”

“How so?”

“You know, Vladimir, you have heard about Muslim religious extremism. Many people have been called terrorists. You are not the only one who knows that — people have been deliberately spreading the news all over the world. It is not difficult to make a lot of people believe a notion like that, when acts of terrorism are actually taking place and Muslims participate in them. But when we talk about Muslim terrorism, we forget about another weighty argument.”

“Which one is that?”

“Those that are called extremists and terrorists believe that it is *they* who are attempting to put an end to terror and save their people from calamities. And their arguments have substance to them. They believe that they are saving the whole world from the plague brought on by the Western, non-Muslim world.”

“You said that their arguments have substance to them. But I have never heard anything about their arguments. If you know about them, please tell me.”

“Fine, I shall tell you. But try to reason things through for yourself, and then tell me which of the two warring sides

is right. The Muslim spiritual leaders say something along this line to their flock: *Look, people, look at what the unfaithful bring. The Western world has sunk into the mire of promiscuity and adultery. It wants to inject its fearful diseases into our children too. Allah's troops must stop the invasion of the unfaithful.*"

"Wait, Anastasia, those are mere words. Where are their arguments?"

"They cite facts showing that promiscuity, prostitution and homosexuality are widespread in Western, non-Muslim countries. Crime is prevalent. And every day more and more people are using drugs. And they are unable to stop terrifying diseases — AIDS, for example, and drunkenness."

"And you mean to say they don't have any of that in the Muslim countries?"

"Vladimir, in the Muslim world, in the Muslim countries, there are far fewer drunkards and smokers. There are far fewer cases of AIDS. Their birthrate is not falling as it is elsewhere and there is much less marital infidelity."

"So, it turns out, both sides are convinced they are fighting for a right cause?"

"Yes."

"So, what's ahead?"

"The priests believe they have already done everything necessary to initiate and spread large-scale war. The Western countries, the Christians, have joined together to attack the Muslim world. Following this, the Muslim world will come together, ready to fight. But the sides will not be equal: the Muslims have no modern weapons. Then, upon seeing their faithful brethren perish, they will get ready thousands of terrorists to make the Western world quit. War will start, but it will be stopped — *they* will not let it go ahead."

"Who will stop it?"

"Your readers. A new world-view is being formed in them, different from the one that has prevailed throughout the past

millennia. They are creating in their dreams. Once dreams begin to turn into reality, all wars and diseases will cease.”

“D’you mean to say that this will come about when construction of family domains begins? But how do family domains relate to the cessation of conflicts and religious opposition throughout the world?”

“The glad tidings of these domains will keep spreading throughout the world. People all over the globe will be roused out of their hypnotic incarceration, they will awaken from their millennial sleep. They will change their way of life and build a Divine world on the Earth with inspiration.”

“Of course, Anastasia, if what you say begins to take place, and takes place everywhere on the Earth, then the world will indeed change. I know that you dream about this. You believe in your dream and will never betray it. And many people have understood your idea in regard to the family domains. These people are really starting to take action.

“But, Anastasia, you don’t know everything. Come! Come to my flat, to my office. I have something I want to show you right now, and you will see, you’ll understand for yourself what these people are up against.”

“We shall go, Vladimir, and you will show me what has troubled you so.”



Who is for, who is against?

Upon entering the flat, Anastasia took off her cardigan and kerchief, letting her golden hair fall to her shoulders. She

gave her head a light shake, and the flat was at once filled with the enchanting fragrances of the taiga.

I took a chair and put it next to my own arm chair by the desk, turned on my computer and logged on to the Internet.

Not all people in Russia today will know what that is. And so I shall give a brief explanation. The Internet is an electronic information network, or 'web', which has been developing at an intensive pace in many countries of the world. With the aid of a computer one can tap in (or 'log on') to this network through a telephone line connected to a server. A server is a special powerful computer containing all sorts of information pages. On most servers one has the opportunity of posting one's own messages.

The Anastasia Foundation for Culture and Assistance to Creativity, based in Vladimir,⁶ together with the Moscow firm known as *Russki ekspres* (Russian Express) has also set up its own server and its own site at the address: *Anastasia.ru*.

Thus any readers with a computer can type in the address on their keyboard and not only visit our site, but they can send us an electronic message expressing their opinions about the books, find out what other readers have said about them, and argue or discuss any particular question.

Those that do not have their own computer can gain access to our website through one of the Internet cafés which now operate in all the regional and provincial centres of Russia, as well as, I am sure, in most major cities.

From time to time I too log on to the Internet and look up what my readers have been saying. I have not been able to do this very often, as I simply have not had time to respond to all the correspondence I receive by regular mail. And last year the *Anastasia.ru* site received more than fourteen thousand

⁶*The Anastasia Foundation for Culture and Assistance to Creativity, Vladimir* — see Book 5, Chapter 15: "Making it come true".

postings. People discussed concrete questions connected with Anastasia's ideas on family domains. They suggested draft changes to the Russian Constitution; some were thinking to hold a referendum on this issue.

The substance of Anastasia's idea about granting every willing family no less than a hectare of land on which to organise a family domain was set forth in appeals to President Putin more accurately and with more cogent back-up arguments than I had expressed in my own appeal, published in the book *Who are we?*⁷ In any case, you can judge for yourselves. For those readers without Internet access I am reproducing here an excerpt from one of the appeals.

Open letter to the President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin

Dear Vladimir Vladimirovich,

Over the years of Soviet power, which even today many of us still remember as the best years of our lives, a most frightful thing, you know, happened: we — the citizens of this Great Country, Russia, historically a mighty Power, which emerged victorious from the terrible Second World War and in an incredibly short period of time was able to build up its war-ruined economy — we transformed ourselves, without our even being aware of it, into weak-willed... parasites and welfare bums.

Look back — in Soviet times we all went to work without ever worrying about a job opening, and received a stable salary on which we could lead a normal life. We handed over our children to be schooled and were assured of their future. We knew that upon reaching retirement age we as pensioners would receive a stable pension and quietly live out our years... And this stability,

⁷See Book 5, Chapter 16: "Open letter to the President".

this mighty totalitarian system, played a dirty trick on us: having got accustomed to social passivity, social apathy and indifference, and now no longer enjoying access to a stable source of income, we have begun to get very upset. You see, we did not start to take action or improve our lives — we just started vilifying and railing like the blazes at the powers that be — each President and each Government in turn — blaming them and them alone for our Present Situation. After all, we figure it is up to them to pay us a stable salary and take care of our present and our future, while we simply live our lives for our own pleasure, and do nothing to support this Stability and Prosperity. I think you will agree that when there is movement only in one direction — that is parasitism. If all we want to do is receive and give nothing in return, well, that's parasitism for you.

And now something *amazing* has happened: thousands and tens of thousands have risen up under the impulse *to make something happen, to create!*

To create — a splendid flourishing corner of their Motherland — *Russia*.

To create — a splendid Present and Future for themselves and their children.

To create — their own Material and Spiritual Prosperity.

To create — Russia to be the wealthiest and most flourishing country in the world!

And for that these people need nothing more than a small plot of land a mere hectare in size. Along with the assurance that this land will not be subsequently taken away from them — their Motherland, where they will Create for ever a Space of Love for themselves and their children. A *Space of Love* — which will be comprised of all the flourishing corners of our vast Russia and proclaim to the Whole World the Great Miracle — the Renaissance of Russia the Great!

It seems to me that even now in Russia a situation has come about that any Ruler — you can call him a President,

if you like — might dream about: a situation where people themselves desire to work and create their own material and spiritual well-being, asking nothing from the state except a plot of land and a sign of stability expressed in Law.

Isn't this the dream of any state — to open up an *inexhaustible source* of wealth and well-being within itself, to find *stability* within itself and independence from external troubles?

Dear Vladimir Vladimirovich! Like thousands of other Russian citizens, I should like to affirm once more my intention to *create* my little corner of my Motherland, Russia, to make it into a flourishing garden for many generations of my descendants.

Like thousands of other Russian citizens, I hereby reaffirm my intention of labouring for the good of my family and for the good of my Motherland.

Like thousands of other Russian citizens, I have stopped unthinkingly and relentlessly criticising either you or our Government, realising the complexity and responsibility of your work.

Like thousands of other Russian citizens, I believe in your wisdom and far-sightedness, and am confident that you will take a responsible approach to appraising the current situation.

The time has finally come for you and us to work together as a fraternal team, a team of like-minded thinkers, for us to *understand* and *accept* you as a close friend, and then you will feel our love and support and look after us, too, with love, as the People entrusted to your charge.

And together we shall create a splendid Present and Future for our children, for our Russia!

20 July 2001

Vadim Ponomaryov, citizen of Russia



They defamed our forebears too

One day on my computer I opened up an Internet search engine, which lists all the various websites containing any key word you type in. I typed in the word *Anastasia*. And the monitor immediately lit up with an impressive list: 246 Russian-language sites, together with links to their web addresses.

Still not believing that they all related to the Siberian Anastasia, I began following the links and familiarising myself with the content of these pages. It turned out that the vast majority of them did in fact discuss at varying length the Siberian Anastasia. Her ideas were treated favourably on many of the sites. At first I was delighted by this, but as I delved deeper into the volume of information available on the Internet, I began coming up against an even more incredible phenomenon. Several of the sites offered a selection of articles from the press, along with anonymous messages, claiming that the movement associated with Anastasia was a sect, and all the readers of the books were categorised as sectarians. One of the sites featured a list (either full or partial) of the existing sects in Russia, and the list included 'Anastasia' and her supporters. There was no mention of the basis for such a conclusion or of who was spreading such rumours — they were simply set forth as though they were a given fact that apparently everybody had known about for a long time.

The articles and brief comments from various national and regional publications posted on different websites were very similar to each other, and they always came to the same conclusion: that the *Ringling Cedars of Russia* movement was either a sect or a business. The Anastasia movement was lumped in with such sectarian organisations as *Aum Shinrikyo*,⁸ and classified as a 'totalitarian sect'. They even used words like

'bigots' and 'destructivism'. No concrete facts were cited, just the conclusion, and that was it.

Not knowing the exact definition of the word *totalitarianism*, I looked it up in my Great Encyclopedic Dictionary⁹ and read the following:

Totalitarianism is one of the forms of domination, characterised by its complete control over all spheres of a society's life along with the virtual liquidation of constitutional rights and freedoms, also by repression of political opposition and dissenters (for example, the various forms of totalitarianism in Fascist Germany and Italy or the Communist régime in the USSR).

Now that's pretty steep! What they're saying in effect is that I or Anastasia have been in control of some flashy totalitarian sect ready to overthrow authority, abolish constitutional freedoms and institute a fascist régime. But I categorically deny that I have had any governing role in any kind of organisation, all the more so in the case of Anastasia. Throughout the past six years I have been working exclusively on my books, and once or twice a year I give talks at readers' conferences which are open to anyone who wishes to attend. My talks have been recorded on tape, and anybody can have access to them.

But why, for what purpose and by whom is this bald-faced lie being spread abroad? In one of the newspaper articles,

⁸ *Aum Shinrikyo* (also spelt *Senrikyo*) — a Japanese Buddhist religious group founded by Shoko Asahara; some of its members were held responsible for the 1995 gas attack on a Tokyo underground (subway) line. In 2000 the organisation's name was changed to *Aleph* (the first letter of the Hebrew and Arabic alphabets). In 2006, after years in prison, Shoko Asahara was sentenced to death.

⁹ Great Encyclopedic Dictionary (*Bol'shoi Entsiklopedicheski Slovar*), edited by A.M. Prokhorov, 2nd ed. Moscow & St. Petersburg, 2002.

this one in the Vladimir-region supplement to *Komsomol'skaya pravda*, it says that in the Anastasia books readers are encouraged to give up their city apartments and go off into the woods.

How can that be? I thought. After all, Anastasia says the exact opposite. Here are her direct words: "There is no need to go live in the forest. You need to clean up the place you have been polluting first."¹⁰ And she calls upon people to build their family domains near big cities, and gradually change their lifestyle to one more civilised and more favourable to one's soul and physical health.

Not having the opportunity to personally review the tremendous amount of information, let alone analyse it, I turned to several well-known experts in political science to examine the situation independently of each other and draw their conclusions. Each of them asked considerable compensation for their work, given that they had to read through all five books plus the huge amount of information connected with the books which had been posted on the Internet. I had no choice but to accept their terms.

Three months later I received the first expert's conclusions and, not long afterward, the remaining reports. Even though they expressed their findings in different words, since they did not know each other and were working independently, they came to pretty much the same conclusions. I shall cite a few typical excerpts from one of the reports:

There is a whole targeted, clearly formulated campaign directed against the *Ring of Cedars of Russia* series of books, with the aim of preventing the spread of these books among the population at large...

¹⁰Quoted (from two separate sentences) from Book 3, Chapter 21: "Should we all go live in the forest?"

The pivotal ideas of the books are the strengthening of the state, the achievement of the greatest possible unanimity in the various social strata of the population through the well-being of each individual family. This condition of well-being is achieved by virtue of each willing family being allotted no less than one hectare of land for lifetime use. In the context of the books this idea is the most persuasive and takes precedence over all others. Consequently, the series' opponents, whatever the arguments they put forward, are in fact denouncing this particular idea.

The next question raised by the *Ringling Cedars of Russia* series — the Divine nature of Man, his spiritual origin — may provoke animosity on the part of many religious denominations. The book's main heroine declares that Man's existence in Paradise should be built here on the Earth and by Man himself. Man is eternal, only changing his fleshly form from one century to the next. Our whole natural environment is created by God and comprises His living thoughts. It is only by making contact with Nature that Man can comprehend what God has programmed and the substance of His purpose for Man on the Earth...

This whole concept, the reasoning behind it and its extreme persuasiveness cannot fail to provoke opposition, especially among religious fanatics who believe that the end of the world is inevitable and that some people will be transported into a Paradise beyond the clouds while others are sent to hell. Such a concept is favourable to many people who have been unable to make their own life happy during their existence here on the Earth.

The opposition to the ideas of the series' main heroine (Anastasia) is being effected by the circulation, through the mass media, of rumours that its readers, who have taken the initiative to put a number of the projects suggested by the books into practice, belong to some sort of totalitarian sect.

This approach is quite deliberate, inasmuch as it serves to distance the authorities from contacts with enterprising readers and from examining their specific proposals, as well as from discussing the problems raised in the books in the mass media. It also serves to interfere with the circulation of the books and the ideas put forward in them. It should be pointed out that the opposition has achieved their aim. According to reports on hand, claims about the readers belonging to a sect are being circulated in many government agencies.

The specific objectives of the opposition are not clearly presented — they remain quite enigmatic.

As a rule, when candidates competing for office use dirty tricks in their campaigns, it is easy to guess who is instigating them. Similarly in the economic sphere, when individual firms are competing for business, it is not difficult to determine who is behind a smear campaign and why. The goal is always clear — to knock off or weaken the competition.

Anastasia talks about a new consciousness for Man, a new way of life, establishing the state on a more perfect foundation.

Who would oppose an aspiration like that? Only forces interested in the destruction of individual families, states and society as a whole. The existence of such forces can be traced through their conspicuous opposition — in this case, in launching actions directed at Anastasia herself and her ideas, as well as against the readers of the *Ringling Cedars of Russia* series. To all appearances they are acting through agencies either directly or indirectly under their jurisdiction, as well as through individuals.

I showed Anastasia isolated excerpts from the discussions of the subject on the Internet, and read her the expert's con-

clusions, in the hope that the situation portrayed would somehow move her or rouse her into taking corrective action.

But Anastasia continued sitting quietly beside me on her chair, her hands resting on her knees, her face showing absolutely no concern. On the contrary, it even betrayed a little smile.

"What are you smiling for, Anastasia?" I enquired. "Doesn't it bother you at all that they are slandering your readers? The fact that they are blocking their initiatives to obtain land for the family domains?"

"I am delighted, Vladimir, by the inspired impulse on the part of so many people, by their understanding of the essence and significance of what they are undertaking. See how thoughtfully they are setting forth their thoughts and drawing up plans for the future. And the appeal to the President is better than the one you formulated in your earlier book. As well as their making plans to hold a conference with that wonderful title: *Choose your future!*¹¹ It is very good when people start reflecting on their future."

"They certainly are making plans, Anastasia. But don't you see how their plans are being thwarted? What a tricky move someone thought up — to call them all sectarians, striking fear into the population and discouraging administrative bodies from contact with them? Don't you see that?"

"I see it. But there is nothing new or sophisticated in such opposition. The same approach was used to destroy the culture, lifestyle and knowledge of our forebears. And now the dark forces are using the old methods again. And they will even come up with provocations, and then spread frightening rumours. This has happened before, Vladimir."¹²

¹¹The conference later took place in February 2002 in Moscow's Palace of Youth (*Dvorets molodiozhi*) and was attended by hundreds of readers from all over Russia and abroad. The conference's Proceedings, including presentations on economics, law, ecology, public policy and other subjects were subsequently published as a separate volume.

“Exactly — this happened before. And they won. You said yourself — they destroyed the culture of our forebears. They distorted history. That means that now, too, using a tested method, they’ll win again. If they haven’t won already. Hey, just a simple question like granting every willing family a hectare of land — it’s been impossible to solve for a year now.

It would have been okay if they’d asked for that hectare for something obscene. But it’s impossible to get land for the purpose of organising one’s family domain, for normal living conditions and a supply of food. Those refugees that have been living in tent cities for more than three years now¹³ — if they — at least the ones who wanted it — had each been given a hectare of land, by now they could have turned it into a decent human place to live. I’ve thought quite a bit, Anastasia, about what colossal changes could take place in our country, if only the authorities would not oppose but help people aspiring to create their own domains. But such a simple little question regarding the allocation of land is not being solved.”



¹²In October 2006 a central Russian daily newspaper with a circulation of 1.6 million featured an article (subsequently reprinted in other editions throughout the country) claiming that destructive behaviour on the part of readers of the Series had reached the point of feeding their children to wild beasts and copulating on tombstones of the dolmens — all at Vladimir Megre’s instigation. Similarly, a thousand years earlier Christian ‘historians’ alleged that pagans were offering human sacrifices and engaging in public orgies.

¹³A reference to the hundreds of thousands of people displaced by the war in Chechnya — see footnote 4 in Book 5, Chapter 17: “Questions and answers”.

Glad tidings

"This question is far from simple, Vladimir. It actually involves major changes on our planet and in the Universe. When millions of happy Earth families begin to consciously transform the planet into a flourishing garden, the harmony reigning on the Earth will have an effect on other planets and the whole space of the Universe. Right now the planet Earth is sending a poisonous stench into the Cosmos. And more and more garbage is piling up in orbit. And a malicious energy is radiating from the direction of the Earth. A different energy will be emitted when there is a change in the conscious awareness of Earth dwellers. And then the grace emanating from the Earth will bestow flourishing gardens upon other planets."

"Wow, how grand! And has there never been such an opportunity before in human history? After all, in Russia back before the revolution landlords had their family estates. And now in many countries there is private ownership of land. We have farmers too who rent out land for extended periods. But nothing comes of it. Why not?"

"There has been no conscious awareness — the kind that is growing today in human minds and souls as little shoots of the Divine. What you called a straightforward question, Vladimir, during the occult millennia was the greatest secret held by the priests. Many religions through the ages have talked about God, but not one of them has ever stated the obvious: in consciously communing with Nature, Man communes with the Divine thought. To understand Space is to understand God.

"And even the thought or the dream of a family domain, where everything is in harmony with you, embodies much more closeness to God than a whole lot of convoluted rituals.

All the mysteries of the Universe will be unfolded to Man. And all at once Man will discover within himself capabilities that he cannot even imagine today. And Man will become truly Godlike — the Man that begins to create the Divine world around him.

“Think, why do not ‘wise-men’ ever mention this anywhere? All because once Man understands his earthly essence and his capabilities, he will become free from occult spells. The power of the priests will disappear. Nobody and nothing will ever have power over a Man who has created a Space of Love around him. And no harsh and threatening judge will the Creator be for such a Man, but rather a father and a friend.

“This is why through the centuries they have come up with so many tricks to turn Man away from his purpose. Land! Such a straightforward question, you say, Vladimir. But think about how centuries have passed and Man still does not have family land of his own. You were mentioning farmers and landlords. But with their family domain they hired other people to work the land. They have endeavoured to get as much profit as possible out of their land. People who did not work the land themselves could not treat it with love. And often seeds were sown in the ground in anger, and malice grew.

“For thousands of years simple truths have been hid from the people. Other people’s hands and thoughts should not be compelled to touch one’s family land. In different ages rulers have offered people land allotments, but in such a way that the meaning of their earthly deeds has not been clear to people.

“If a Man is given just a small piece of land — a quarter of a hectare, for example — his family will not be able to build an oasis there which will serve him effortlessly. A large tract of land is too much for a Man to govern independently and he will end up hiring helpers, thereby involving other people’s thoughts. So people have been drawn away by trickery and chicanery from what is important.”

"Does this mean, Anastasia, that not a single religion over thousands of years has ever called upon people to create Divine oases on the Earth's land? On the contrary, they have spent all their time calling people's thought away from the land, somewhere else. So it turns out that they..."

"Vladimir, do not say unflattering words about religion. Your spiritual father, the monk Feodorit,¹⁴ led you to where you are today. And it is largely thanks to him that you and I met in the first place. The time has come today when congregations of all the various denominations need to think about how to save our spiritual leaders from disaster."

"What kind of disaster?"

"The same kind that happened in the past century — when people sacked the temples and put ministers of various faiths to death."

"You mean under the Soviet régime... But now, you see, we have democracy, freedom of religion and the authorities treat all religions — or at least the major ones — with respect. How could the events of bygone years all at once repeat themselves?"

"You should take a closer look at what is happening today, Vladimir. You know that many countries have joined together in the struggle against terrorism."

"Yes."

"They have pointed their finger at *other* countries as the ones promoting terrorism. And they have publicised the names of the instigators. They have accused, among others, some spiritual and religious leaders, and special forces have been assigned to hunt them down. But that is only the beginning. Reports have been given to the leaders of countries both large and small exposing the nature of many religions, and they include a whole lot of examples of how these

¹⁴*Feodorit* — see Book 2, Chapter 24: "Father Feodorit".

religions themselves were responsible for fomenting acts of terror and wars on the Earth. In these reports, which have already been prepared, analysts have set forth everything accurately and convincingly. Information about many terrible crimes will now gradually come to light. They will remind people of an endless succession of wars like the Crusades, intrigues, perversions and greed among the ministers of the occult. When anger builds up in a whole lot of people, pogroms may be launched in many places, and these may include the destruction of temples.

“At the moment, clerics from a number of religions are trying to put a stop to religious extremism, making declarations to the effect that the extremists have nothing in common with them — indeed, these clerics openly condemn extremism. For the moment, these declarations are being accepted. Or, rather, the political leaders feign ignorance... and say they are satisfied with the declarations.

“In the meantime, these secret reports are already claiming that religions are programming people, using any kind of pretext. The pretext may be well-intentioned — calling the faithful to good works, for example. But any faith in something a Man cannot see, especially one which he accepts unquestioningly as truth from a preacher, is always fraught with the danger that the thoughts of the programmed believer may be redirected at the will of the preacher, and so today’s believers may easily be transformed into tomorrow’s suicide bombers. And a whole lot of different facts from both past and present are cited in the reports as evidence in support of this conclusion. Before long the rulers will become inclined to the opinion that they should select one religion and put it completely under their control, at the same time declaring all others harmful and deserving of elimination.

“Subsequently, if they do not succeed in drawing all the people into one religion, then the next step is to destroy *all*

religions, at least within their own borders. Such a decision will lead to a never-ending war. This war has already started, it is already going on. It must be stopped. And this can only be done in one way — by giving birth to a conscious awareness on the part of our spiritual leaders. Only glad tidings can restore peace to all the Earth. Those that accept the glad tidings and proclaim them in temples both great and small — they will fill the temples with multitudes of people. Those that do not perceive the sayings will find themselves in temples that are empty and decaying.”

“What glad tidings are your referring to, Anastasia? Can you explain it a little more simply?”

“People who call themselves spiritual leaders, who talk of God and teach children in the schools today, should recognise as a God-pleasing deed the co-creation of a Space of Love in the personal domain of every family dwelling on the Earth. Not only to recognise this but to create designs as well for future projects together with their parishioners. To endeavour, along with the people, to bring back the knowledge of pristine origins. To dream and discuss such a theme, and then to bring the design to perfection in all its detail. The process of creating the dream will take many years. Then, when all this comes to prevail upon the Earth, people will live in harmony, in a real, Divine Space of Love.”

“I’ve got it, Anastasia. You want everyone to begin studying Nature in all the temples of whatever religious persuasion, and in the schools and in institutions of higher learning. To master the science of creating a family domain according to a special design. Let’s say this can actually bring various religious denominations together into a common alliance — not just in words but in deeds. Let’s suppose it could really awaken people from their hypnotic sleep, put an end to terrorism, drug use and a whole lot of other negative tendencies in society.

“Let’s suppose. But... How will you be able to convince all the patriarchs and all the clerics, and in so many different denominations? How will you be able to convince all the secular educational institutions? A lot of things you say come true, Anastasia, but what you’re talking about at the moment is completely unfeasible, sheer pie in the sky!”

“It *is* feasible. They have no other choice now.”

“But that’s just what *you* think. Just you. These are mere words that you’re saying.”

“But the One who allows me to utter these ‘mere’ words, as you put it, possesses power unsurpassed. You may remember back seven-plus years ago, back when you were still an entrepreneur, that I stood before you and drew letters in the sand by the lake in the taiga.”

“Yes, I remember, but what of it?”

“And then all at once you began to write books, and now a whole lot of people are already reading them. Who do you think was mainly responsible for this? The sand by the taiga lake? Or the stick I drew with? Or the words I articulated? Or perhaps your hand created the books all by itself? And later poetry welled up like a sacred spring in human hearts. Who was the chief Creator behind these works of art?”

“I don’t know. Possibly all the factors played a part.”

“Believe me, Vladimir — please try to understand. It is His energy that stands behind everything that was created. It is His energy that inspired human hearts. And it will continue to inspire them.”

“Perhaps, but somehow it is hard to believe that church ministers will start to act the way you say.”

“You should believe in this. And visualise a gladsome prospect within yourself, and then it will come to achievement. All the more so, since that is no longer hard for you to do. You remember how an Orthodox village priest came to you to cheer up your crestfallen spirits.¹⁵ Another priest paid for

your books with his own money and then distributed them to the prisons. And your Father Feodorit talked with you about a lot of things... Do you remember?"

"I do."

"And you should realise, too, that not all church ministers share the same world-view. There are those who will proclaim the glad tidings."

"Yes, I think you're right. But there will be others who will begin to oppose them. Especially the High Priest you spoke about — his occult agents will think up some kind of new intrigue."

"Of course they will, but all the dark forces' endeavours will now be in vain. The process has begun and it has already attained the point of no return. People will learn first hand of their earthly Paradise. These are mere words, you will say. But here, I shall now utter two simple words — and a part of the darkness will be illumined with light. Let the rest of the darkness tremble and begin to conceal their names, as they fail to win the possibility of turning into reality. And these words are utterly simple: *The Book of Kin*."¹⁶

¹⁵See Book 4, Chapter 24: "Take back your Motherland, people!"

¹⁶*The Book of Kin* — a translation of the two-word Russian phrase *Rodovaya kniga*.

CHAPTER TEN



The Book of Kin

“Yes, the words are certainly simple, all right,” I observed. “And just why are all the forces of darkness supposed to tremble at hearing them?”

“They are afraid of what is behind the words,” replied Anastasia. “Do you know who will write this book? And how many pages it will have?”

“How many? And who will write them?”

“Just a few days will go by, and millions of fathers and mothers in many a land will be writing the Book of Kin, filling in its pages with their own hand. There will be a vast multitude of them — these Books of Kin. And all of them will contain the truths which begin in the heart, for their children. There will be no room in these books for artifice or guise. Before them all the lies of history will fall.

“You can surmise what would happen, Vladimir, if you could take into your hands today a book which your ancestor of old had begun to write especially for you. Then another would continue the writing, eventually your grandfather, and your father and your mother.

“The books read by Man today include many that are devised with a specific aim in mind — namely, the distortion of history and of the meaning of life. Many false dogmas are especially designed to disorient Man in space. This is not easily discernible all at once. But clarity comes directly a son reads a book of his forebears, which his father and mother have continued personally for him.”

“But wait, Anastasia, not everyone knows how to write a book.”

“Everyone can if they feel the demand to do so — if they are looking to protect their children, and in the future themselves, from false dogmas. In Vedic times every father and mother would write a book of kin for their future children and grandchildren. This book was not comprised of words, but of deeds. Children could read created space like a book, and understand the deeds and thoughts of their parents, and were happy to inherit a happy space. Only one thing was missing from that book — children were not alerted to the world of the occult. It was not part of the complete awareness of the omniscient Veduns.¹ Now that all mankind has been able to detect in their own experience the devastating influences exerted on themselves by the occult dogmas, they will certainly be able to protect their children from them.

“Even if there are not yet any domains to bloom in the spring, thoughts about them are already alive in many human hearts. They need to start writing a book precisely about their thoughts, for their children.”

“And why, Anastasia, does every parent need to write? Look, I’ve written books about domains and an architect from the suburb of Medvedkovo² is working on a design for a whole settlement. Besides, there is a flurry of Internet discussions on the subject — isn’t that enough?”

“It is not enough, Vladimir. Take a closer look at what has been going on. You have been writing books, but other people are writing books too, to counteract yours. There are so

¹*Vedun* (pron. *ve-DOON*) — in Slavic and Hindu traditions: a revered wise man. Like the word *Vedic*, it is derived from the Old Slavic (originally Indo-European) root *ved-* meaning *knowledge* or *full awareness*.

²*Medvedkovo* — a northern Moscow suburb, founded in the 16th century as the estate of Vasili Fiodrovich Pozharsky, who bore the nickname of *Medved* (Bear). Note that this word includes the roots *med-* (honey) and *ved-* (know) — the bear was originally named in Russian for his knowledge of where honey could be found.

many books that a Man could not hope to read even half of them over his lifetime. And look, there is a daily flow of information to Man that does not come from books. And even though it seems very diversified, all that information really comes down to the same result: it justifies and glorifies the unreal world of the occult. What can help the newcomer to the world determine where the truth and where the falsehood lies?

“The holy temple of the family will help in this — the Book of Kin. In it a mother and father will write for their son and daughter about what is the most important thing that needs to be created for happiness in life. The children will continue to record the Book of Kin. There will be no wiser and truer books for families anywhere on the Earth. All the knowledge of their pristine origins will be poured into it.”

“But how, Anastasia, how can knowledge of one’s pristine origins turn up in a book which people are only beginning to write today? Where are they to find such knowledge? You said that the culture of our forebears, their books, were all destroyed.”

“Those that will begin to write already have this knowledge concealed within themselves. It is preserved within each one of us. When people think deeply and begin to write not just for anyone, but for their children, all the knowledge of their pristine origins will be revealed within them and come to light.”

“So that means that before they start to write, they first need to *think*, so that wise thoughts may be set forth right from the very first pages of the book?”

“The first pages may be outwardly very simple.”

“Can you give me some examples?”

“When was the Man who began to write this Book of Kin born? What was his name? For what purpose and with what thoughts did he take pen in hand and approach the pages of

this most important book? And what did he plan to create in the future?"

"Such a book," I observed, "would be easy to begin for anyone who, let's say, has been a famous artist, or a governor, or a scholar, or a die-hard entrepreneur. But what about someone who has simply lived a life? Say someone's been working and can barely make ends meet, he scarcely earns enough for food and clothing. What could he possibly write for his children, what advice could he give them?"

"The rulers of today, and those who bask before the public in rays of glory, and those who have accumulated a whole lot of money, will find it difficult from now on to have an answer for their children. People quickly forget their deeds of yesterday. But what a Man has contributed to his future will be appreciated by future generations. Are you or anyone else in the habit of recalling past governors, famous artists or entrepreneurs?"

"Not very often — or, rather, I don't really think about them at all. I don't even know their names. But children will take great pride in remembering what their parents did."

"And their children will try to forget — they will be ashamed just at the mention of their parents' names."

"Why should the children be ashamed?"

"Because fate offered their parents such great opportunities, but they could not grasp the fact that fate is affording us opportunities only — invariably — for the purpose of creating the future. In his one lifetime, Man should be endeavouring to create the next life for himself — a life in which he can embody himself anew and live for ever.

"Every Man can even today plan out a domain and a Space of Love, they can create their design and try to obtain the land. They can use that land to plant a few saplings or plant seeds of family trees. Perhaps they will not be able to grow to maturity, say, a whole grove, or a green hedge, or a splendid garden, in

their lifetime. Perhaps a poor old man will not even be able to lay a foundation for his house. But he will be able to write in the Book of Kin for his grandchildren, for his children: *I was poor, it was only in my old age that I began to think on the meaning of life, on what I have handed to my children. And I have created a plan for a space for our family, I have described it for you, my children, in a book. I have been able to plant nine fruit trees in the garden, as well as just one tree on the spot where a grove will grow.*

“The years will flow on, the grandson will read that book and remember his grandfather. He will go up to the mighty, majestic cedar or oak growing amidst a lot of other trees on the land of his kin’s domain. His thought, overflowing with love and gratitude will soar into space, will merge with his grandfather’s thought, and then a new plane of being will be born for both of them. A whole life in eternity is afforded to Man. The settling of the Earth and the planets of the Universe is nothing more than a transformation for each Man within himself.

“The Book of Kin will help convey the glad tidings to one’s descendants, and help the soul of the beginning writer to once again embody itself upon the Earth.”

“Well, Anastasia, you attach such importance to this book that I too have the desire to start writing one for my descendants. I have the intuitive feeling that in this idea of yours about the book is something most unusual and grand. Wow! That’s quite a name: *The Book of Kin, The Kin’s Book, the most holy book for the family.*

“But what should it be written on? Ordinary paper will soon yellow and disintegrate. And the binding on notebooks and albums tends to look rather primitive. After all, if the book is destined for one’s descendants — if, as you say, it is of such great importance — then the paper and the binding should correspond too. What do you think? What should be used?”

“*That* kind, for example...” And she nodded in the direction of a book lying on my desk. I followed her gaze, and a moment later I was holding something quite extraordinary in my hands...

Some time ago a man named Sergei from Novosibirsk had sent me a copy of my *Anastasia*. The customary publisher’s binding had been cut off, and the pages transferred to another — I was going to say *binding*, but that’s not the right word for what these pages had been put into. A Siberian craftsman had created an extraordinary work of art. The whole cover, including the spine, had been made out of valuable species of wood — the edges were of beech with cedar inside the frame. All the details were decorated with finely carved ornaments, text and illustrations. One could hardly apply the ordinary term *cover* to all this. The term *casing* would probably be more appropriate. The front and back parts were fastened together on one side by the spine, on the other by a little lock. All the little parts were finely fitted together. When the book was closed, the pages were evenly positioned between the front and back parts of the casing, thus preventing the paper from buckling under conditions of either high or low humidity. The pages would not flutter even from a draught of air, in contrast to some other books which I put beside it for comparison. Many visitors who saw this work of art would hold it for a long time in their hands, looking it over carefully with joyful admiration.

Following Anastasia’s gaze, I took the book with the wooden casing into my hands, felt its warmth and began to understand. Perhaps it was thanks to this extraordinary work that I really understood the tremendous significance of the Book of Kin Anastasia had been talking about.

She sat there meekly on the chair beside me, her hands modestly resting on her knees. But I got the feeling that she was wiser than all the priests and dynastic leaders right from

ancient times, wiser than our modern analysts. And through her wisdom and purity of thought she is able to overcome all the negative manifestations in human society. Where did these capabilities of hers come from? What school or system of child-raising can endow Man with such abilities?

Wow! What an unusual, incredible step to think up — a Book of Kin! I couldn't stop myself from letting my mind get carried away and... Just look what a grand thing she's come up with!

Nobody has so far been able to counteract the flood of various kinds of suggestions which has been rushing at people in different countries minute by minute — first and foremost, at our children.

Suggestions! Our TV features a constant parade of action films supposedly for the purpose of public entertainment, but in actual fact demonstrating how splendidly Man can provide for his financial well-being through violence.

Suggestions! How great it must be to be a famous singer, to bask in the spotlight and the applause, to gad about to receptions in luxury limousines!

Suggestions! If it weren't for the power of suggestion, they would also need to show other, considerably longer segments from the life of these people. The most challenging everyday work routines, the never-ending intrigues instigated by entertainment rivals, the never-ending attacks by jealous wannabes, not to mention the paparazzi hoping to make money on the backs of celebrities under the so-called 'freedom of the press'.

One particularly monstrous suggestion comes in the form of aggressive and sophisticated advertising, which is ready to promote anything as long as you pay the money.

Suggestions! Never-ending news about all sorts of international do-good foundations coupled with wonder-boy politicians — and people are left with the impression that it

is only thanks to our politicians that they can live all warm, fed and cozy in their homes. And then when the radiators go cold, people no longer bother asking themselves questions about how they can change their lives, how they can become independent of central heating, electricity and water-supply. Instead, they rush madly into the streets and shout *Gimme!* A suggestion of their own helplessness! Such false dogmas are being suggested to adults and children alike.

Children! How can we talk about raising children as long as we parents just stand on the sidelines? First we entrust the delivery of our children to strangers in an unfamiliar medical institution. Then we allow strangers to teach them in kindergarten and school. Then we allow them to be exposed to a plethora of explicit or disguised pornographic literature on our store shelves.

We allow strangers to recommend books and textbooks to our children to read. We allow strangers to produce TV programmes for them. Who? Who finds it profitable to hold the whole system of child-raising in their hands? Maybe that's not the important question. Maybe what's more important is our feeling of utter helplessness and insignificance? We feel we're totally incapable of putting a stop to such lawlessness. But this isn't true! Any parent can do it! If only he wants to. If only he thinks about it.

The Book of Kin! What a super idea! The end of lawless commercial suggestions! Such lawlessness may still flex its muscles and show off a little. But it won't be long before Man takes in his hands the Book of Kin, and finds there written — by the hand of his grandfather, grandmother, father and mother — a statement of Man's purpose in life.

We, today's parents, shall certainly be able to figure out what this purpose is. Most definitely! We are experienced, we've seen, heard and gone through a lot already. We only need to pause for just a wee bit, turn away from the flood of

suggestions and think for ourselves, with our own heads. For certain, every parent must think about this. By himself! Only by himself. There's no point in looking for answers to questions on the meaning of life in books of wisdom from past centuries. No matter how celebrated or promoted these books are. And there's no point in seeking answers in the works of wise-men whose reputation is thousands of years old.

These wise-men were great preachers and messiahs. They endeavoured to preach and leave writings for future generations. But there is not one — not even one of these great works that we shall ever see. They have been most cleverly destroyed. This can be clearly understood if one but stops and thinks.

Just look and see what a difference it makes — how switching a single comma around in a brief sentence can change the whole meaning of a message. Remember the famous example: *Execute never, show mercy!* / *Execute, never show mercy!* And how many similar alterations have crept into the works of the ancient thinkers, either deliberately or inadvertently, at the hands of copyists, translators, publishers and historians?! And we are talking here not just about changes in punctuation, but the deletion of whole pages, whole chapters, and the writing of one's own interpretations.

The result is that we today are living in some kind of illusory world. Mankind is constantly at war. People keep destroying each other like hell and can't understand why wars do not stop. But how can they stop if mankind has not even once been able to determine who has been instigating these wars? It hasn't been able to because there has been no independent thought, and without independent thought it accepts suggestion as truth.

Who started the Second World War? Who fought with whom? Who won? The whole world community is convinced that the war was started by Hitler's Germany under Hitler.

Victory was achieved by the Soviet Union under Stalin. And these half-truths — or, rather, delusions — are accepted by the majority as absolute, unequivocal, historical facts.

And only a very few historical researchers occasionally mention Hitler's spiritual mentors — for example, the Russian lama Gudzhiev,³ acting through Karl Haushofer.⁴ Hitler had one other spiritual mentor — Dietrich Eckhart.⁵ Historians know of contacts these spiritual mentors had with their superiors, part of a more elevated hierarchy. But at this point nobody any longer mentions names. Researchers say only that they have traced the connections to the Himalayas and Tibet, as well as to both open and secret occult societies existing at the time in Germany, and confirm Hitler's participation in them.

Germany witnessed the rise of organisations such as the *German Order*⁶ and the *Thule Society*⁷ — the latter's emblem was the swastika together with a wreath and sword.

³*Georgi Ivanovich Gudzhiev* (also spelt *Gurdjieff*, *Gurdzbiev*) (1872?–1949) — a Greek-Armenian mystic, later based in Paris. In 1922 he founded the Institute for the Harmonious Development of Man. He emphasised the principle of 'self-awareness', the need to awaken from the dream-like state that most of human existence seems to be. Gudzhiev authored a number of books, including the well-known *Beelzebub's tales to his grandson* (*Rasskazy Vel'zevula svoemu vnuku*).

⁴*Karl Ernst Haushofer* (1869–1946) — German geopolitician, believed to have influenced Hitler's expansionist policies. He was an avid student of Japanese culture and was instrumental in forging Germany's alliance with Japan following Hitler's rise to power in 1933. His link to Gurdjieff is a matter of some controversy.

⁵*Dietrich Eckhart* — German occultist, who was very close to Hitler.

⁶*German Order* (in German: *Deutsche Orden*) — a religious order founded for charitable purposes, known from the 12th century as the *Teutonic Order*, abolished on occasion by both Napoleon and Hitler (it still exists today in both Germany and Austria). The term *German Order* was also applied to the highest decoration awarded by the Nazi Party.

Someone was clearly and deliberately shaping their own unique, brand-new ideology in Germany, inculcating in its population a specific type of world-view. The upshot was large-scale war and masses of human casualties, followed by the Nuremburg trials where Hitler's cronies were tried. But those who appeared before the court were ordinary soldiers — even if they happened to be generals or field marshals, they were still soldiers, including Hitler himself. Foot-soldiers to the unseen priest who shaped the ideology. He — the chief strategist and organiser — was not even mentioned in the trial records. Who is he? Who are his closest secret associates and assistants? Is it all that important to know about them? *It is important!* Extremely important! After all, it is they who masterminded the war. And as long as they are allowed to remain in the shadows, they will start it again. With their growing experience, new wars will be even more sophisticated and on an even more massive scale.

What were these people really after, the masterminds behind the Second World War? Perhaps an examination of the following fact will bring us closer to solving the mystery.

For the Nazi ideologists in Germany at that time, there was an organisation known as *Annenerbe* which collected ancient books from all over the world. In the first place they were interested in Old Russian editions of the pre-Christian period. One can trace a rather bizarre chain — the Himalayas, Tibet, lamas, secret societies — all leading to a relentless hunt for the knowledge of our forebears from pagan Russia. We Russians saw no need to preserve these manuscripts, but someone else found them to be a vital necessity. Why? What secrets did

⁷*Thule Society* — a German occultist group in Munich, named from the Greek word meaning 'farthest [northern] land', founded in 1910 by Dietrich Eckhart. It is said to have sponsored the *Deutsche Arbeiterpartei* (German Labour Party), which Hitler later transformed into the Nazi Party.

this knowledge harbour within itself? Secrets which evidently had much more of an edge to them than anything known to the Tibetan monks.

But how to gain access to even one of these secrets? Just to one?! And if it turns out to be significant, then what kind of lost world might open up to people today if a few more — or, indeed, all — of them should be revealed? But where and in what millennia should we look for an answer?

Rome! Ancient Rome! Something extraordinary happened there four thousand years ago. More extraordinary than the exploits of the Roman legion. Oh, yes! That's it, an incredible discovery! The Roman senators were the highest élite group of that period. They were slave-owners, but all at once they began to give their slaves, who were skilled and desirous of growing food crops on the land... They began to give them *land*... for their lifetime use with the right of succession. Funds were allocated to a slave's family to build a house. A slave's family could not be transferred to another owner without their land. It — the land — became an inseparable part of the slave's family.

But what suddenly moved these slave-owners to such a humane and altruistic act? Was it purely from kind and noble motives, or did they receive something in return? What they received was ten percent of the harvest for their table. That is probably the smallest tax of the whole known period. This begs the question: why did the Roman élite do such a thing? After all, the slave-owner could have simply ordered his slaves to work in his fields by the sweat of their brow and take as much of the harvest as he wanted. But no! Why? Because back in pagan Rome they had still hung on to the Vedic knowledge. And the patricians and senators knew that the same product grown by a slave on land other than his own would differ sharply in its properties from that grown on his own ground and raised with love.

Back then they still knew that everything growing in the ground carries in itself a psychic energy. To be healthy, one must feed one's self with lovingly grown produce. This was mentioned in several ancient books in the Alexandria Library,⁸ which was destroyed. What further knowledge, what wisdom was lost along with these books? Anastasia says that it is possible to resurrect this knowledge and all its attendant wisdom, beginning with their pristine origins, within one's self. Everyone has the ability to do it. I want to believe that statement, but I'm still not fully convinced. Where can we find proof that such a thing is possible? What facts can we draw upon from memory so that we can fully accept what she says?

Are we to remember everything we heard from our father and mother, or that we were taught in school, or read somewhere over our whole lifetime? But our recollections still do not contain any significant or absolute proof. What if I could remember everything I was told by Father Feodorit? But he didn't say all that much. He spent most of the time listening, and while he did give me some ancient books to read, there was no evidence in them. Then how? How can modern Man suddenly unfold within himself this treasured knowledge of his pristine origins? He can!!! No doubt there exist characteristic examples and proof in the recollection of every Man! In my own recollections I did come across one.



⁸ *Alexandria Library* — see special footnote (from the original text) near the end of Chapter 6: "Imagery and trial".

A good and attentive grandmother

Grandmother! My grandmother was a witch. Not a fairy-tale witch, but a real, actual white witch. Oldsters, perhaps, will remember her incredible marvels. She lived in Ukraine in the village of Kuznichi in the Gorodnia district of Chernigov Region. She was called Efrosinya, and her last name was Verkhusha. On one occasion, when I was very young, I was present at one of her miracles.

Back then I hardly understood anything about them, but now it has all become crystal clear to me. O God, what simplicity there is in the most puzzling incredible phenomena! I have an idea at least half of the population today, especially the healers, would be able to freely duplicate her results. To provide a few more details, here is what happened.

All my early childhood I spent in the Ukrainian countryside, in a small white, straw-covered hut. I loved to watch my grandmother busying herself about the stove. Once after a scuffle with one of my classmates, someone taunted: "Your grandmother's a witch!" Other kids started to defend my grandmother, saying, for example: "My mummy says she's a good woman."

On a number of occasions I saw how my grandmother treated people's physical ills. I didn't attach any particular significance to it at the time — after all there were many healers in different villages back then. Some had better success treating one particular disease, some another. And nobody was called a witch. But my grandmother's abilities did not fall under the usual healing methods.

It turned out that my grandmother, who was only semi-literate, easily cured many animals. She did this by a method that seemed at first glance incredible. She would disappear for a day along with the sick animal, and by the time she returned it would have made a full recovery, or at least a partial

one, in which case she would instruct its owner on how to continue the treatment.

When I heard my classmate insulting my grandmother by calling her a 'witch', even though children are generally afraid of witches, I did not begin acting any worse toward my kind grandmother. On the contrary, she — or rather, her actions — only awakened a greater fascination in me.

One day the collective-farm chairman's horse was brought to my grandmother. It was a purebred, recently bought for the chairman to travel about on his daily business. We local kids always admired this particular mare when the chairman happened to ride by. The mare held her head high, and her gait was friskier and more elegant than that of all the other horses in the area. But this time she was brought to Grandmother not harnessed to a wagon and not saddled. She was being led just by the bridle, looking very downcast and moving very slowly. This was a rare event for me — the chairman's horse right in our yard! I began following the proceedings with considerable interest.

Grandmother walked up to the mare and began stroking her, first from one side on her muzzle, and then around the ear, all the while quietly whispering soothing words. Then she unbridled the mare (taking the metallic bit out of her mouth). Carrying a bench out into the yard, she laid out bunches of herbs on the bench, then brought the mare over to them and began offering the animal various dried herbs in turn. With some of them the horse didn't pay any attention and turned away, while others she sniffed at and even took a small taste of them. The bunches that caught the mare's attention, Grandmother threw into a water-filled iron pot which was standing over a coal fire, and finally dropped her night-cap into the mixture.

I heard her tell the people who had brought the horse to come the day after next, in the morning. After the people had left, I realised that Grandmother was once again getting ready to disappear somewhere together with the mare, and

I started pleading with her to take me along. Grandmother, who had always granted all my requests, did not refuse this one either, though she did stipulate one condition: I was to go to bed earlier than usual that night. I obeyed.

Grandmother awoke me at dawn. The mare was standing in front of the house; she was covered with a small piece of canvas. After washing my face with the mixture from the iron pot, Grandmother gave me a small bundle containing something to eat, then took hold of the rope-lead (which she had fastened to the horse's bridle). Presently we set off along the border between the garden plots in the direction of the little forest that started just beyond. We walked very slowly along the edge of the forest. To be more specific, Grandmother walked alongside the mare and stopped each time the mare bent her head down to the grass to taste some kind of herb. Grandmother held the lead so loosely that it even slipped out of her hands whenever the mare, having spied something in the grass, jerked her head sharply to one side.

Occasionally Grandmother would still keep on leading the horse further, but after coming to a new place, she would once again give her free rein. We kept walking, either along the edge of the forest, or just a little ways in.

It was already past noon when we came to a mudhole in the middle of the field. We sat down by a haystack from the first haycutting for a little rest and a bite to eat. After snacking on milk and bread, I was tired from our long trek and felt like sleeping. On top of it all Grandmother took out of her bundle a small sheepskin coat, spread it out beside the haystack and encouraged me:

"Lie down and have a rest, little one. I guess you must be pretty tuckered out."

I lay down and began to fight off sleep, fearing that Grandmother might magically disappear along with the mare and without me, but sleep won out.

Upon awakening I saw Grandmother picking some sort of herbs right next to the mare's muzzle and sticking them in her bundle. Not long afterward we started heading for home, but a different way this time. As it began to get dark, I again felt as though I needed a rest, and once more Grandmother put me down on the sheepskin coat. When she woke me up it was still dark, and we continued once more on our homeward journey.

From time to time I could hear Grandmother saying something to the mare. While I don't recall the content of her words, I clearly remember her voice intonations — soothing, tender and cheerful. When we reached home Grandmother at once began to give the horse water, adding the mixture from the iron pot to the pail.

Later I saw her give the people who came for the horse the bunches of herbs she had picked during our walk and explain something to them.

The mare, who had by this time become a little friskier, was reluctant to leave our yard. She had already been harnessed again and kept turning her head to look at Grandmother, pulling on her lead.

For several days afterward I was angry at my grandmother for not showing me how she could magically disappear like a witch, but the whole time she had just kept on feeding the horse, picking herbs and tying them into bunches.

I might have soon forgotten about the walk and the witchery, but when I told the boy who had called her a witch that my grandmother didn't disappear anywhere, but simply fed sick animals, he — and he was just a bit older than me — cited a significant fact that neither I nor any of the village kids who were on my side could counteract:

“Why is it then that each time the chairman rides by your yard, the horse stops trotting, and goes by just at a walk — she doesn't even obey the whip?”

I don't remember how Grandmother explained this to me. It is only now that I understand the reason. I am confident that a lot of people today who have kind hearts and have an attentive relationship to Nature and animals could also treat creatures' ailments the way she did.

Now I realise that she allowed the horse to try bunches of various herbs simply to determine what specific herbs the ailing animal required. She also used this to decide the route she would take the next day, counting on finding these herbs along the way, and at the same time replenishing her own stock.

She needed to make this a whole day's trip, since each plant has a particular time when its consumption is especially beneficial. She held the lead loosely so as to allow the mare to determine for herself which herbs and how many she needed to take in. Animals can feel this in an inexplicable way. Since the mixture was prepared from herbs chosen by the mare herself, Grandmother's use of it for washing, as well as letting her night-cap soak in it, was probably to make the animal more predisposed to her.

See how simple everything turns out to be! Only it's still not clear to me how all this was known by my semi-literate grandmother. Oh, how we have complicated this simplicity! May that not be the reason for the large-scale epizootic ('mad-cow-disease') that recently swept across Europe, and our modern scientific thought came up with nothing better than to destroy thousands of diseased animals!

I have cited just one example attesting to the fact that the achievements of our modern medicine are illusory. Indeed, I could cite a whole lot of similar examples of the illusory achievements of our contemporary society. But why talk of specific details when we can go right off to the main thing?



To live in a marvellous reality

What kind of society are we living in today, anyway? What are we striving for? What do we suppose we can build in the future? The overwhelming majority of the Russian population will answer without hesitation:

“We live in a democratic state and are striving to build a free democratic society, just like in the developed, civilised Western countries.”

That is exactly what the majority of politicians and political strategists will say.

That is exactly what they say on TV and in newspaper columns.

That is exactly what the majority of people in our country think.

That majority opinion exactly confirms Anastasia’s statement that a part of the people in our modern civilisation are asleep, while the rest, because of their programming, are mere bio-robots in the hands of a bunch of priests who imagine themselves to be the rulers of the world.

If one can just stop and withdraw one’s self, even a little, from the world’s feverish daily monotonous commotion and think independently, it should be possible to understand the following facts.

Democracy! Just what is democracy, anyway? What concept does the word itself denote? The majority will answer by quoting the well-known Great Encyclopedic Dictionary⁹ or the Dictionary of the Russian Language,¹⁰ both of which offer pretty much the same terse definition:

⁹See footnote 9 in Chapter 9: “A need to think”.

¹⁰Dictionary of the Russian Language (*Tolkovy Slovar’ Russkogo Yazyka*), edited by S. I. Ozhegov and N. Yu. Shvedova, Moscow, 2002.

Democracy is a form of political system or social order in a state, based on the recognition of the people as a whole as the source of authority. The basic principles of democracy are the authority of the majority, the equality of citizens...

And in highly developed countries people choose their parliaments and presidents by majority vote.

‘Choose’? Utter nonsense! A complete illusion! There are no choices or elections! Not once, not even in a country which considers itself the most democratic and civilised on the globe, have the people themselves ever held power.

But the elections? They are a complete illusion! Remember what always happens before elections in any so-called democratic country. Teams of political strategists working for each candidate fight among themselves, spending huge sums of money and sophisticated methods of psychological influence on people through the mass media, TV and graphic promotional campaigns.

And the more highly developed the country, the more sophisticated the technological methods of suggestion employed.

It is clearly evident that the victory always goes to the team of political strategists that can exert the most influence and the greatest power of suggestion. It is under the influence of this suggestion that people go and vote. They think they are voting by their own will. In fact they are merely carrying out somebody else’s will.

Thus it turns out that modern democracy *is an illusion of the masses. It is their faith in an unreal social order — an unreal, illusory world.*

It all boils down to this: subordination to the majority does not exist in the natural world. All the groups of plants, animals and insects may be subject to instinct, the movement of the planets, the order established by Nature, or the leader of

a herd. And in human groupings it is always the minority that is in control.

It is not the majority that has fomented revolutions and wars, but the majority participated in revolutions and wars at the consciously directed suggestion of a minority. That's the way it has been and that's the way it is now.

Democracy is the most dangerous illusion people have been exposed to *en masse*. It is dangerous because in the democratic world it is only too easy for any democratic country to end up being ruled by one person, or a small group of people. For that, all they need is a pile of money and a good team of psychologists and political strategists.

And we — today's parents, living under the influence of illusions, are still trying to raise our children. But in actual fact what we are doing is introducing — pushing, one might say — their consciousness into a world of illusion... We are in fact handing them over into somebody else's clutches... Only not to God. We are handing them over to some kind of opposite of God.

God's world is not illusory, it is real and beautiful. It has its own unsurpassed fragrances, colours, shapes and sounds. The gates to this world are always open, and we are always free to enter, if only we can shake off the illusions that have been fettering our consciousness.

I too shall write my own *Book of Kin* for my descendants — indeed, for myself. And among other things I shall most certainly write the following:

I, Vladimir Megré, lived in an age when mankind did not exist in the real world. Their flesh fed on the gifts of the real world, but their consciousness wandered in a world of illusion. This has been a very challenging period in people's lives. Right now I am attempting to bring my consciousness back to the real world of the Divine. This Divine

world of Nature has suffered at the hands of people's consciousness. Suffered terribly. I realise this and am trying to correct the situation. I will do whatever I can, even if it is only creating a design for my domain. Perhaps even just a part of it. The main thing is to understand and have my children understand.

As before, Anastasia sat quietly by and listened while I vented my reasonings aloud. When I stopped, she got up, walked over to the window and observed:

"The stars are beginning to twinkle in the sky. It is time for me to go, Vladimir. You are right in many respects. But be careful not to let these new visions of reality make you want to control others. Get the better of such a temptation and do not join any organisations. Other people, too, are seeing this reality. Once they have organised, they will bring about a significant achievement on the Earth. You will understand your own destiny in life."

"I'm not aiming to join anything or control anybody, Anastasia. But what is this destiny of mine you speak about?"

"The time will come when you will feel this for yourself. Right now lie down on the bed, go to sleep and rest. You are excited. It is possible that an untrained heart will not be able to withstand such excitement."

"Yes, I know. But if I go to sleep, you will go away. You always do. Sometimes I have a strong desire for you to stay and not go away. I want you to be always beside me."

"I *am* always beside you. Whenever you think of me. You will soon begin to feel and understand this. Now wash yourself with water and go to sleep."

"I can't sleep. Lately I haven't been sleeping all that well. My thoughts have been keeping me awake."

"I shall help you, Vladimir. Would you like me to read some of the poetry your readers have sent in, and sing you a lullaby?"

“Go ahead and try, perhaps I really *shall* nod off to sleep.”

After I washed and lay down in my bed which had already been made up, Anastasia sat down beside me and placed her hand on my forehead. Then she ran her fingers through my hair and softly sang a song written by one of my readers from Ukraine. Anastasia sang very softly, only it seemed that many people and the stars in the sky were listening to her song — listening to her pure voice and her words:

Take my hand this hour...
Tomorrow, you will see,
Is another day, but now
You can press your cheek to me.

Thus hour after hour
You may sleep in sweet relief,
For from your strands of hair
I'll gather up the grief.

And I shall spread a blanket fine,
Blue with stars all woven,
I shall stay a long, long time,
Just so you won't get frozen.
If only you'll receive me.

From the night I'll come and stand
All throughout the ages.
I've learnt to heal ills by my hand,
Which all pain assuages.
If only you'll believe me.

Down from a high incline
Past us stones will tumble.

I know ahead of time
Where you're going to stumble.

Into church and palace
You'll go, a hero bright.
All the pretty lasses
I shall keep from your sight.

In a world of black and white
I too'll live unimpeded,
So that swords and bows drawn tight
Will never more be needed.

If only you, if only you
If only you will love me.

I'll let loyal Sparrow fly up and team
With Crane in the heavens above you.¹¹
I dare not come into your dream...
Too tenderly I love you.

Before immersing myself in a deep and calm sleep, I managed to think: *Of course, tomorrow is another day. It will be better. I shall describe the dawn of a brand new day. And many people will start writing in their Books of Kin about how a splendid new beginning has been dawning on mankind. And these will be the greatest*

¹¹ A reference to the Russian proverb: *Luchsbe sinitsa v ruke, chem zburavl' na nebe* (lit. 'Better [to have] a sparrow (titmouse/chickadee) in one's hand than a crane in the sky'). Like its English counterpart, *A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush*, it suggests a cautious, conservative approach to life which the poet's heroine now finds herself ready to give up, releasing the sparrow so that she may join the crane in the sky.

historical books for their descendants for thousands of years of time. And one of them will be mine. Tomorrow I shall start writing a new book, and now I shall be able to give it a more coherent-sounding design. And the new book will define a new historic turning-point for the people of the Earth — a turning to the marvellous reality of the Divine.

Until we meet again, dear readers, in this new and marvellous reality!

Vladimir Megré

To be continued...



Translator's Afterword

Suppose you've lived all your life in the same town at the base of a huge mountain. You've looked at that mountain day in and day out as you walked to and from school, ploughed your fields, shopped at the outdoor market, or cycled around the town on errands. You are familiar with every detail of its craggy surfaces, and on occasion have even climbed up part way to explore the foothills. But you have never been round to the other side.

Then one fine day you decide to take the night train to a town some distance away, about a quarter of the way around the mountain, where the local residents speak a completely different dialect from yours. Upon arriving the next morning, you set out to take a look at the mountain from this side. And there it is, looming just as large, just beyond this new town. Only at first it doesn't look like the same mountain at all, even though your angle has changed by a mere 90 degrees. What was familiar from a frontal view you now see in profile. Features you knew before in profile are now facing you head on.

Some of these features require a closer examination to identify. In fact, many of your fellow residents who made this trip before you and didn't bother to examine the scene in detail say the mountain here looks nothing at all like the one back home. Some of them refuse to believe it is the same mountain. A few even associate the unfamiliar appearance with something hostile and threatening.

Such impressions are further fuelled by the different way the locals describe the mountain in their own dialect — either

with completely different words, or using the same words but with different connotations. Indeed, the terminological discrepancy is rather disconcerting at first. But little by little, the more you examine these features in detail and even try a bit of climbing exploration, the more you become convinced that you are dealing with the same mountain you have known all your life. And as you hear local residents speaking about it, you gradually acquire the ability to translate between their dialect and yours and realise they are talking about the same concepts you have known all along.

In sum, you find yourself simply amazed at what you are learning about a familiar landmark from a brand new perspective. That does not necessarily mean, however, that you have any plans to suddenly relocate your residence. But you are certainly able to make use of your new knowledge to enhance your appreciation and exploration of the mountain from your own home base.

This little story pretty much describes my experience in approaching Vladimir Megré's *Ringling Cedars Series*. Having been raised in the Protestant denomination known as Christian Science¹ (though I am sure people of many different faiths have had a similar experience), I was amazed, even 'blown away' by the new vistas of 'Mount Spirituality' that opened up to me from my initial reading of the Series. At first glance, like the mountain in the story above, some of the features,

¹*Christian Science* — a Christian denomination founded in 1879 in New England by Mary Baker Eddy, designed to "reinstate primitive Christianity and its lost element of healing" (Eddy, *Manual of The Mother Church*, p. 17). Eddy's principal statement of her ideas is found in a 700-page volume entitled *Science and health with Key to the Scriptures* (Boston, 1911). As with Megré, one of Eddy's basic aims was to change the human perception of God's laws in action from one based on mysticism and the promise of future rewards to one based on reason and fact, demonstrable in our earthly experience here and now.

especially those given new names or whose names were interpreted differently, presented something of a recognition challenge. But the more I read, the more I realised I was not being presented with a new God or even a new religion, but simply with new views on the same God and spirituality I had known all along, only from a different angle. And these insights have indeed enhanced my appreciation and exploration of spiritual concepts from my own faith's home base.

One particularly striking example of being 'blown away' by a new view of familiar territory was my initial reading of Chapter 1 in the present volume ("Who raises our children?"), which seems to pick up right where Mary Baker Eddy's chapter on "Marriage" in *Science and health* (pp. 56–69) leaves off. Not only that, but a friend of our family's — a Catholic writer on theology — told me of a number of instances where intimate relations have been linked to a more spiritual outlook, including certain practices among Orthodox Jews and native peoples of North America.² She also referred me to the Book of Tobit (or Tobias) in the Apocrypha for an additional illustration. These examples, however, while fascinating, differ from the approach outlined in Chapter 1 in that their attention is still concentrated on the physical act of intimacy (albeit seen from a more spiritual standpoint), while the principal focus of Megré's discussion with the psychologist is *children*, the physical conditions playing but an incidental role.³

²For further exploration, see: Philip Sherrard, *Christianity and Eros* (London: SPCK Holy Trinity Church, 1976); Linda Sabbath, *The radiant heart* (Denville, NJ, USA: Dimension Books, 1977); Mary Shivanandan, *Natural sex* (New York: Rawson Wade, 1979).

³Compare Eddy's statement in *Science and health* (pp. 61–62): "If the propagation of a higher human species is requisite to reach this goal [of spiritual unity], then its material conditions can only be permitted for the purpose of generating."

Another group that has much in common with Anastasia's viewpoints on life are the Doukhobors — a sect that was persecuted in Tsarist Russia for their pacifism and opposition to the dictates of official church hierarchy. In 1899 they were helped to emigrate to Canada by the writer Leo Tolstoy, who recognised in them a living embodiment of his own simple, straightforward approach to a Christianity of the heart without ecclesiastical trappings.⁴

This past year I had occasion to present a conference paper entitled: "Links across space and time: the life and works of Leo Tolstoy, Mary Baker Eddy and Vladimir Megré", pointing out some of the many similarities not only in the ideas of these three spiritual thinkers, but also in their personal and professional lives. As specific examples, the paper compares similar statements from all three writers on the subjects of *life* and *prayer*. I have no doubt that the comparison could be extended to include some other spiritual thinkers too.

Indeed, to me one of the most remarkable features of Megré's whole account of Anastasia and her sayings is its sense of *inclusiveness*. Megré does not purport to take his readers into another universe, where all the worthy values they have held dear for so long must suddenly be regarded as worthless and forsakeable in favour of some new doctrine. He is not presenting them with a 'new mountain'. Rather, he is simply showing them the spiritual values they already have from a brand new point of view, thereby enhancing the significance of these values and helping his readers put them into practice more effectively.

As a translator, I was delighted to find that this sense of inclusiveness embraces not just people and their values, but the

⁴See, for example: Andrew Donskov, *Leo Tolstoy and the Canadian Doukhobors* (Ottawa: Centre for Research on Canadian-Russian Relations, 2005).

whole underlying foundation of *language* as well. Often seen as a divisive element in human society, in the *Ringling Cedars Series* (particularly the present book) language becomes a unifying force as fragments of its ancient roots are uncovered, enabling us to trace equivalent words in different languages back to their common origin.

At the beginning of Chapter 10, footnote 2 on the name *Medvedkovo* explains that *medved'*, the Russian word for the animal we call a 'bear', is comprised of the roots *med-* (honey) and *ved-* (know).⁵ Surprisingly, both these roots have their counterparts in English: *mead* (an alcoholic drink made from fermented honey and water) and *wit* (an obsolete word meaning 'know', now more commonly used in the sense of 'quick understanding' or the ability to play intelligently with words and their meanings).⁶ Historically, *knowledge* and *sight* were related concepts (we *see*, therefore we *know*), and hence words like *video* and *vision* can also be traced (through Latin *videre* = 'to see') back to this same root, as can the word *white* (something clearly seen). These examples show some of the many layers of meaning inherent in the original root.

But even more interesting, as my editor, Leonid Sharashkin, has pointed out to me, is the realisation of how these linguistic changes reflect the evolution of the underlying concepts in human consciousness: in both Russian and English the roots *ved-* and *wit-* have yielded in general usage to *zna-* and *know-*, respectively, indicating mankind's greater interest today in superficial, technological knowledge than in the

⁵On *vedat'* and its distinction from *znat'* please see footnote 8 in Chapter 5: "The history of mankind, as told by Anastasia".

⁶The word *wit* may be familiar to readers of the Authorised (King James) Version of the Bible in its variant *wot* — see, for example, Exodus 32: 1, where the people tell Aaron they "wot not what is become of" Moses. See also Acts 3: 17, Romans 11: 2.

multi-dimensional awareness and wisdom implied by the earlier terms. In fact, with some of their derivatives in both languages, e.g., *ved'ma* = *witch*, the original positive reference (in this case, to someone capable of harnessing the extended abilities of the human mind) has given way in popular perception to a more negative connotation (of one who uses such abilities for devious or evil purposes).

Like many Russian roots, *ved-* comes directly from Sanskrit (along with Latin, one of the two proto-tongues from which the whole Indo-European family of languages is derived).⁷ And this highlights another aspect of inclusiveness evident in the Series — namely, certain indications that language transcends mere human invention,⁸ hence its great potential for unifying instead of dividing the peoples of the Earth. On a visit to Russia in the 1960s, renowned Sanskritologist Durga Prasad Shastri discovered remarkable similarities between present-day Russian and the Sanskrit spoken in India some twenty-five centuries earlier. In fact, his knowledge of ancient Sanskrit enabled him to understand spoken Russian well enough that he could get by without an interpreter.⁹

And this is one more illustration of how Vladimir Megré, through relating Anastasia's sayings on mankind and its

⁷Another interesting insight from Sanskrit is the origin of the name *Anastasia*. In Sanskrit the first letter *a-* is a negating particle (as in *asymmetrical* in English), while the root *nast-* signifies 'deterioration' (compare English *nasty*) — hence *anasta* = 'without deterioration'. This also underlies the use of *anastasia* in Greek to signify 'resurrection'. (I am grateful to my editor for pointing out this etymology.)

⁸See, for example, "A book of pristine origins" in Chapter 2: "Conversation with my son".

⁹See: D. P. Shastri, *Links between Russian and Sanskrit*. Meerut District Conference of the Indo-Soviet Cultural Society (Ghaziabad, 1964). Again, I thank my editor for bringing this reference to my attention.

history, brings together people of not only different religions and cultures but also of different chronological periods, to recognise and embrace their common heritage as children not of different genetic backgrounds, but rather of the one universal God.

Perhaps the author's future volumes will not only show us still new views of our familiar 'mountain', but transform our whole perception of a 'mountain' into a dimension we cannot yet fathom. Think of how a mountain seen from space may resemble, let's say, a cedar nut! Then imagine how what we see as a 'mountain' of spirituality might be perceived through spiritual vision itself! The possibilities are endless.

Ottawa, Canada

John Woodsworth

December 2006

ABOUT THE RINGING CEDARS SERIES

Anastasia, the first book of the Ringing Cedars Series, tells the story of entrepreneur Vladimir Megré's trade trip to the Siberian taiga in 1995, where he witnessed incredible spiritual phenomena connected with sacred 'ringing cedar' trees. He spent three days with a woman named Anastasia who shared with him her unique outlook on subjects as diverse as gardening, child-rearing, healing, Nature, sexuality, religion and more. This wilderness experience transformed Vladimir so deeply that he abandoned his commercial plans and, penniless, went to Moscow to fulfil Anastasia's request and write a book about the spiritual insights she so generously shared with him. True to her promise this life-changing book, once written, has become an international bestseller and has touched hearts of millions of people world-wide.

The Ringing Cedars of Russia, the second book of the Series, in addition to providing a fascinating behind-the-scenes look at the story of how *Anastasia* came to be published, offers a deeper exploration of the universal concepts so dramatically revealed in Book 1. It takes the reader on an adventure through the vast expanses of space, time and spirit — from the Paradise-like glade in the Siberian taiga to the rough urban depths of Russia's capital city, from the ancient mysteries of our forebears to a vision of humanity's radiant future.

The Space of Love, the third book of the Series, describes author's second visit to Anastasia. Rich with new revelations on natural child-rearing and alternative education, on the spiritual significance of breast-feeding and the meaning of ancient megaliths, it shows how each person's thoughts can influence the destiny of the entire Earth and describes practical ways of putting Anastasia's vision of happiness into practice. Megré shares his new outlook on education and children's real creative potential after a visit to a school where pupils build their own campus and cover the ten-year Russian school programme in just two years. Complete with an account of an armed intrusion into Anastasia's habitat, the book highlights the limitless power of Love and non-violence.

Co-creation, the fourth book and centrepiece of the Series, paints a dramatic living image of the creation of the Universe and humanity's place in this creation, making this primordial mystery relevant to our everyday living today. Deeply metaphysical yet at the same time down-to-Earth practical, this poetic heart-felt volume helps us uncover answers to the most significant questions about the essence and meaning of the Universe and the nature and purpose of our existence. It also shows how and why the knowledge of these answers, innate in every human being, has become obscured and forgotten, and points the way toward reclaiming this wisdom and — in partnership with Nature — manifesting the energy of Love through our lives.

Who are we? — Book Five of the Series — describes the author's search for real-life 'proofs' of Anastasia's vision presented in the previous volumes. Finding these proofs and taking stock of ongoing global environmental destruction, Vladimir Megré describes further practical steps for putting Anastasia's vision into practice. Full of beautiful realistic images of a new way of living in co-operation with the Earth and each other, this book also highlights the role of children in making us aware of the precariousness of the present situation and in leading the global transition toward a happy, violence-free society.

The book of kin, the sixth book of the Series, describes another visit by the author to Anastasia's glade in the Siberian taiga and his conversations with his growing son, which cause him to take a new look at education, science, history, family and Nature. Through parables and revelatory dialogues and stories Anastasia then leads Vladimir Megré and the reader on a shocking re-discovery of the pages of humanity's history that have been distorted or kept secret for thousands of years. This knowledge sheds light on the causes of war, oppression and violence in the modern world and guides us in preserving the wisdom of our ancestors and passing it over to future generations.

The energy of life, Book Seven of the Series, re-asserts the power of human thought and the influence of our thinking on our lives

and the destiny of the entire planet and the Universe. It also brings forth a practical understanding of ways to consciously control and build up the power of our creative thought. The book sheds still further light on the forgotten pages of humanity's history, on religion, on the roots of inter-racial and inter-religious conflict, on ideal nutrition, and shows how a new way of thinking and a lifestyle in true harmony with Nature can lead to happiness and solve the personal and societal problems of crime, corruption, misery, conflict, war and violence.

The new civilisation, the eighth book of the Series, is not yet complete. The first part of the book, already published as a separate volume, describes yet another visit by Vladimir Megré to Anastasia and their son, and offers new insights into practical co-operation with Nature, showing in ever greater detail how Anastasia's lifestyle applies to our lives. Describing how the visions presented in previous volumes have already taken beautiful form in real life and produced massive changes in Russia and beyond, the author discerns the birth of a new civilisation. The book also paints a vivid image of America's radiant future, in which the conflict between the powerful and the helpless, the rich and the poor, the city and the country, can be transcended and thereby lead to transformations in both the individual and society.

Rites of Love — Book 8, Part 2 (published as a separate volume) — contrasts today's mainstream attitudes to sex, family, childbirth and education with our forebears' lifestyle, which reflected their deep spiritual understanding of the significance of conception, pregnancy, homebirth and upbringing of the young in an atmosphere of love. In powerful poetic prose Megré describes their ancient way of life, grounded in love and non-violence, and shows the practicability of this same approach today. Through the life-story of one family, he portrays the radiant world of the ancient Russian Vedic civilisation, the drama of its destruction and its re-birth millennia later — in our present time.

To be continued...

READERS' COMMENTS

Originals of these letters or e-mails are held by the publisher. We have preserved the spelling and grammar of the originals.

I received a copy of Anastasia, two days ago and read it entirely! It is difficult finding the words to express how much it means to me and how powerfully I am impacted by it. It's almost as if my mind and heart have been prepared to read this book for years! I've found a treasure for which I have been searching desperately for years! I will be ordering the entire series soon and sharing them with everyone I know! [and received soon after from the same reader] I've been immersed in the books. Since we last spoke, I have read book 2 AND 3! I am in awe of what I have read. I have been DEEPLY impacted and touched thus far, and I can't wait to read book 4 through 8. As soon as book 5 is available, I will order a copy!

— *Brian, Los Angeles, USA*

It is the first thing written in a book that has made so much sense to me. All that she says makes sense and you just know that you are reading TRUTH. The book is awesome. I cannot explain how very little I have read in my life and certainly I've NEVER finished one book I started. This book was different and I could not put it down... ever! The truth lies in there for sure and which I believe is why it is selling incredibly all over the world with no advertising at all.

— *Denise, Canada*

Basically, these books make all the books that I've read to date look like a complete waste of paper! ... I think that going through life without this knowledge is a waste of time, and not passing it on to children is a crime. I can say with confidence that nothing like these books exists in the world today.

— *Rafal F., Australia (from an unsolicited letter to the editor of NEXUS Magazine, February/March 2006 edition)*

I first laid my eyes on the Anastasia books in the Nexus Magazine, and felt the energy at once, bought them, and was completely breath taken. I had to stop reading — just to cry for while — so touched

with the beauty and simplicity of Anastasia's spirit. This is a series of books bound to have tremendous impact. I have read hundreds of books through the years on spiritual advancement (Personal/Earth), but there is nothing so direct and clear as this — with the exception of selected channellings. Thanks to Anastasia, Vladimir, John, Leonid and all involved!

— *Jan, Norway*

A while back, myself and MR also purchased 6 books, 2 each of the first 3. I have been passing them on to a few other people, and now I am being asked about them more and more. This order is a copy each for my 2 daughters, because they have been asking me to borrow them, and so far it hasn't been possible, because other people have them at the moment. So, I decided to give these to them as a birthday gift, seeing as they are both "into" this kind of reading. In fact, we all are into the spiritual types of books, and prefer them to any other kind of books. After reading these series though, I have recommended that they give all their other reading materials away, because this Anastasia series is all they'll need from now on. I am in my 60's now, and I just wish I knew all of this Anastasia material about 40+ years ago. I think my life, as well as the lives of my family would have been vastly different, if this kind of knowledge was "the norm" back when I was young, instead of it all being suppressed by the mainstream. The sooner we can all get "Anastasia" centres established worldwide, the better of mankind, and our planet will be. ... I just can't wait until the entire series has been translated, but in the meantime, I'll be getting book 4, and waiting eagerly for each new volume as it becomes available.

— *John, Melbourne, Australia*

Anastasia is among — no — is the most profound work I have ever read. I haven't read that many "great" works, and may still be a bit naïve — but I have read enough to realise that this is something special. No other book has actually changed me... I am even more excited now in expectation of acquiring Books 2 through 4 — I'm quietly confident that this is indeed the "life-changing" experience I have been waiting for. Cheers!

— *Ben, Australia*

Have just read with utter delight and joy Book 1 and would like to buy the first four books that are translated into English. Do you have a distributor in the U.K. and what is the cost per book in sterling? Please e-mail me back with this information. Thanking you in advance and so looking forward to hearing from you.

— *Araura, UK*

I need to buy 6 copies of the first book, Anastasia. I have six close friends who just HAVE to read them, and won't unless I shove them into their laps. Bill me.

— *Duncan, Queensland, Australia*

What a wonderful read. I thoroughly enjoyed all 3 — I finished them all by Sunday eve. I'm a fast reader when I find something that touches my soul. I am hooked. When is #4 due? Can't wait to read them all. I've just started to go through them again to highlight the messages.

— *Kathleen, Australia*

I've read through all 3 books and what can I say?... hard to put into words. Now I have some idea how hard it could be for Anastasia to put into words what she wants to say for us. Anyway... I can't wait to read the next one so can you please email me as soon as available in Australia.

— *Elizabeth, Rochedale, Australia*

I am enjoying the books very much, am half way through book 2, which has moved me most so far. Now I would like to get another set of the first three books as a present for a friend.

— *Don, Warragul, Australia*

These ringing cedar books are so powerful, I feel in communion with Anastasia reading them. I would love to distribute these books.

— *Andrew, Melbourne, Australia*

I cannot even begin to describe the depth of the effect Anastasia has had on me and I have only read Book 1. For the first time in my life I feel affirmed on a very deep level and feel free to be me. I am

so excited to have discovered these books and am fully committed to doing what I can to help spread their message.

— *Mary, New Zealand*

We have devoured the first book as if we were starving and I am eager to order the others very soon.

— *Sherry, USA*

There has been a very significant change taking place within me since reading the Series. It has been a casting off of the selfish elements within me and walking into a vast chasm of blessings. What is possible I do not yet know, only that an awareness and a consciousness is possible in this life. My life is hopeful now.

— *Allan, Wisconsin, USA*

At last! Truth that has not been distorted by dogma or someone's ego! I might explode from emotion if I read any more! I had a hard time getting myself to just stand still.

— *Ana, Portugal*

The Ringing Cedars books help with explaining ways to have a richer life, raise healthier children, filling one's heart rather than one's pockets.

— *Penny, Missouri, USA*

There is something highly significant stirring in the spirit world which has broken out upon the world, starting in Russia since Vladimir Megré first encountered this remarkable woman. You read her books; you get filled with the passion of wanting to share what you find with your families and friends... The appearance of Anastasia is a most important and needful occurrence which has benefited many people enormously. Her appearance has rocked hosts of people to their very foundations and reading Book 1 it is easy to see why. There seems to be the promise that Anastasia and Vladimir Megré are to become the most famous people to appear on the world scene... So far I am deeply affected and inspired by her... roll on Book 2.

— *David, England*

THE AUTHOR, Vladimir Megré, born in 1950, was a well-known entrepreneur from a Siberian city of Novosibirsk. According to his account, in 1995 — after hearing a fascinating story about the power of ‘ringing cedars’ from a Siberian elder — he organised a trade expedition into the Siberian taiga to rediscover the lost technique of pressing virgin cedar nut oil containing high curative powers, as well as to find the ringing cedar tree. However, his encounter on this trip with a Siberian woman named Anastasia transformed him so deeply that he abandoned his business and went to Moscow to write a book about the spiritual insights she had shared with him. Vladimir Megré now lives near the city of Vladimir, Russia, 190 km (120 miles) east of Moscow. If you wish to contact the author, you may send a message to his personal e-mail megre@online.sinor.ru

THE TRANSLATOR, John Woodsworth, born in Vancouver (British Columbia), has over forty years of experience in Russian-English translation, from classical poetry to modern short stories. Since 1982 he has been associated with the University of Ottawa in Canada as a Russian-language teacher, translator and editor, most recently as a Research Associate and Administrative Assistant with the University’s Slavic Research Group. A published Russian-language poet himself, he and his wife — Susan K. Woodsworth — are directors of the Sasquatch Literary Arts Performance Series in Ottawa. A Certified Russian-English Translator, John Woodsworth is in the process of translating the remaining volumes in Vladimir Megré’s Ringing Cedars Series.

THE EDITOR, Leonid Sharashkin, is writing his doctoral dissertation on the spiritual, cultural and economic significance of the Russian *dacha* gardening movement, at the University of Missouri at Columbia. After receiving a Master’s degree in Natural Resources Management from Indiana University at Bloomington, he worked for two years as Programme Manager at the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF Russia) in Moscow, where he also served as editor of Russia’s largest environmental magazine, *The Panda Times*. Together with his wife, Irina Sharashkina, he has translated into Russian *Small is beautiful* and *A guide for the perplexed* by E.F. Schumacher, *The secret life of plants* by Peter Tompkins and Christopher Bird, *The continuum concept* by Jean Liedloff and *Birth without violence* by Frederick Leboyer.

ORDERING INFORMATION



USA:

- *on-line* — www.RingingCedars.com
- *tel. / fax (toll-free)* — 1-888-DOLMENS (1-888-365-6367)
- *tel. / fax (from outside US & Canada)* — 1-646-429-1986
- *e-mail* — sales@RingingCedars.com
- *mail (US)* — send US\$14.95 per copy plus \$3.95 shipping and handling for the first copy and \$0.99 s&h for each additional copy in your order to:

Ringing Cedars Press
415 Dairy Rd., Suite E-339
Kahului, HI 96732, USA

Make a check or money order payable to "Ringing Cedars Press". Please indicate clearly the quantity and title of the book(s) you are ordering and be sure to include your US postal address with your payment. Allow 2-4 weeks for delivery. Prices are subject to change without notice.

UNITED KINGDOM:

- *order on-line* — www.RingingCedars.co.uk
- *by phone (toll-free)* — 0800-011-2081
- *e-mail* — books@RingingCedars.co.uk

AUSTRALIA:

- *order on-line* — www.RingingCedars.com.au
- *by phone* — 1800-248-768
- *e-mail* — books@RingingCedars.com.au

NEW ZEALAND:

- *order on-line* — www.RingingCedars.co.nz
- *by phone* — 64-9232-9792
- *e-mail* — sales@RingingCedars.co.nz

SOUTH AFRICA:

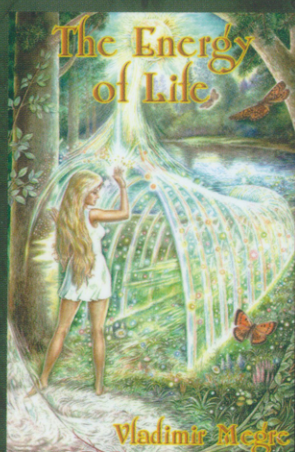
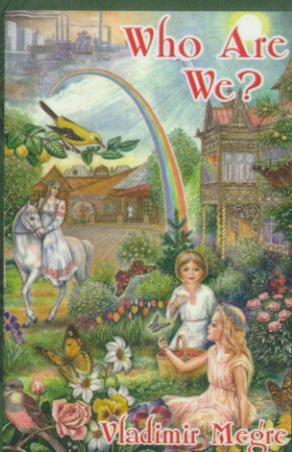
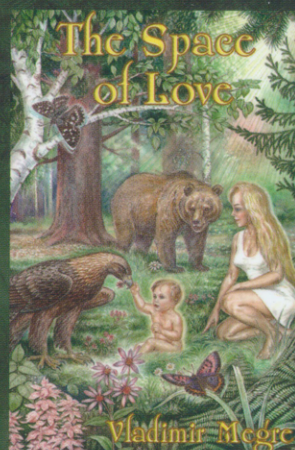
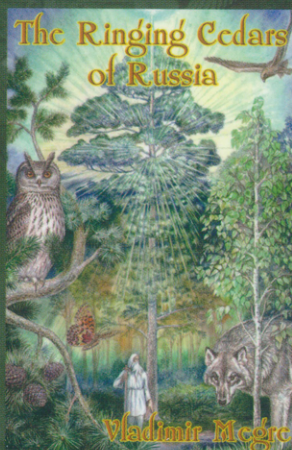
- *order on-line* — www.RingingCedars.co.za
- *e-mail* — books@RingingCedars.co.za

The Book of Kin by V. Megre

Book 6 of The Ringing Cedars Series

Spirituality /
Childrearing /
History

A new visit to Anastasia's glade in the Siberian taiga and conversations with his growing son cause Vladimir Megre to take a new look at education, science, history, family and Nature. Through parables and revelatory dialogues and stories Anastasia leads the author and the reader on a shocking re-discovery of the pages of humanity's history that have been distorted or kept secret for thousands of years. This knowledge sheds light on the causes of war, oppression and violence in the modern world and guides us in preserving the wisdom of our ancestors and passing it over to future generations.



RINGING CEDARS PRESS

www.RingingCedars.com

1-888-DOLMENS

US\$14.95 CAN\$19.95 AU\$24.95

ISBN 978-0-9763333-6-4



5 1 4 9 5



9 780976 333364

The Energy of Life

A vibrant, magical illustration of a woman with long blonde hair, wearing a white dress, standing in a forest. She is reaching out with her hands towards a large, glowing, rainbow-colored energy structure that resembles a giant DNA helix or a complex web of light. The structure is composed of many colorful strands (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple) that spiral and intertwine, creating a sense of dynamic movement. The background is a lush forest with tall trees, green foliage, and a body of water in the distance. Sunlight filters through the trees, creating a warm, golden glow. Several butterflies are visible, including a large orange and black one in the upper right and a smaller orange and black one in the lower right. The overall atmosphere is one of wonder, magic, and the interconnectedness of life.

Vladimir Megre

Vladimir Megré

THE ENERGY OF LIFE

The Ringing Cedars Series
Book 7

Translated from the Russian by
John Woodsworth

Edited by
Leonid Sharashkin



Ringing Cedars Press
Paia, Hawaii, USA

The Energy of Life by
Vladimir Megré

Translation and footnotes by
John Woodsworth

Editing, footnotes, design and layout by
Leonid Sharashkin

Cover art by
Alexander Razboinikov

Copyright © 2003 Vladimir Megré
Copyright © 2007 Leonid Sharashkin, translation
Copyright © 2007 Leonid Sharashkin, cover art
Copyright © 2007 Leonid Sharashkin, design and layout
Copyright © 2007 Leonid Sharashkin, footnotes

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, except for the inclusion of brief quotations in a review, without permission in writing from the publisher.

Library of Congress Control Number: 2007934230

ISBN: 978-0-9763333-7-1

Published by
Ringing Cedars Press

www.RingingCedars.com



Contents

1. Thought which creates.....	I
2. A bride for an English lord.....	4
3. You create your own fate.....	12
4. 'Garbage-dump thinking'.....	15
5. A goddess of a wife.....	18
6. And where is your thought right now?.....	25
7. A conversation with Anastasia's grandfather.....	29
8. Thank you.....	33
9. Divine faith.....	42
10. The speed of one's thinking.....	47
11. Training thought.....	51
12. The ultimate taboo.....	56
13. Divine nutrition.....	64
14. A society of schizophrenics?.....	80
15. Opposition.....	87
16. To Jews, Christians and others.....	107
17. Going deep into history.....	115
18. Take down Jesus Christ from the cross.....	130
19. Terrorism.....	134
20. Pagans.....	141
21. Combat.....	163

22. The marvellous Vedruss holidays.....	178
23. Significant books.....	185
24. An exercise for teleportation.....	193
25. Give children their Motherland.....	200
26. A security zone of the future.....	224
27. A law for deputies elected by the people.....	259
28. To the readers of the Ringing Cedars Series....	270
 The Ringing Cedars Series at a glance.....	 278

CHAPTER ONE



Thought which creates

Man's life! On what or on whom does it depend? Why do some become emperors or regimental commanders, while others are obliged to fend for scraps at garbage dumps?

One opinion holds that each person's fate is pre-determined from birth. That would make Man¹ nothing more than an insignificant cog in some mechanised system, and not the highly organised creation of God.

According to a different opinion, Man is a self-sufficient creation, including, without exception, all the diverse energies of the vast Universe.

But there is in Man an energy peculiar to him alone. It is known as *the energy of thought*. Once Man realises just what kind of energy is in his possession and learns to exploit it to the full, then he will be a ruler of the whole Universe.

Which of these two mutually exclusive definitions of Man is true?

Perhaps the following ancient parable — you could call it an anecdote — will help us arrive at the answer.

A man fed up with his life ran out into the woods at the edge of town, threw up his hands, clenched his fists and railed at God:

¹*Man* — Throughout the Ringing Cedars Series, the word *Man* with a capital *M* is used to refer to a human being of either gender. For details on the word's usage and the important distinction between *Man* and *human being* please see the Translator's Preface to Book 1.

"I can't go on with my life. Your earthly household is filled with nothing but injustice and chaos. Some people go galivanting 'round town in expensive cars and dine in fine restaurants, while others fend for scraps at garbage dumps. Me, for instance — why, I ain't got enough money to buy me a new pair o' shoes. If You, God, are just — that is, if You exist at all — then make my lottery ticket hit the jackpot."

At that moment the clouds parted in the heavens, a warm sunbeam caressed the complainant's face and a calm, clear voice sounded from above:

"Do not worry, My son. I am prepared to fulfil your request."

The man was overjoyed. He walked along the street with a smile on his face, happily peering into shop windows and imagining what kind of goods his lottery winnings might buy.

A year passed. The man won nothing. He concluded God had let him down.

Now the man, who by this time was *really* fed up, went back to the same place in the woods where he had heard God's promise and cried:

"You didn't keep your promise to me, God. You let me down. Here I've been waiting for a whole year now. I've been dreaming about the things I'll buy with the money I win. But a whole year's gone by, and I ain't got no winnings yet."

"Oh, My dear son," came the sad response from the heavens. "You wanted to win a lot of money in the lottery. So why over the whole year did you not buy a single lottery ticket?"



This little parable or anecdote has been making the rounds lately. People tend to laugh at the loser.

“How come he didn’t catch on that for his dream to come true he first had to buy at least one lottery ticket?” they ask. “But this chap didn’t even take the most obvious first step!”

It’s not the parable itself that’s important here, or whether this situation ever actually happened. What is important is how people relate to the chain of events recounted in this story.

The fact that people laugh at the unfortunate dimwit tells us that they intuitively, perhaps subconsciously, realise that their own future life depends not only on some kind of Higher Power or Divine Design, but on themselves too.

And now everybody can try and analyse their own life situations. Have they done everything they possibly can on their own to make their dream come true?

I dare say, and not without some justification, that any dream — even one that seems to be unreal and utterly fantastical — will come true if only the individual wanting it to come true takes simple and consistent actions toward his goal.

This statement could be illustrated with a whole range of examples. Here is one of them.

CHAPTER TWO



A bride for an English lord

One day at a small local market in the city of Vladimir I happened to witness an incident between a young salesgirl and an inebriated male customer.

The girl was selling cigarettes. She was evidently new on the job and hadn't yet boned up very well on her merchandise. She was getting the brand-names of the cigarettes mixed up and took a long time to wait on each customer. A small queue had formed — about three people. The last person in line, a drunken male, shouted out to the salesgirl:

"Hey, can't you move a little faster, birdbrain!"

The girl's cheeks blushed bright red. Several passers-by stopped to stare at the hapless girl.

The drunk continued shouting out his unflattering remarks. He wanted to buy two packs of *Primas*, but when his turn came, the girl refused to serve him. Flushed with embarrassment and clearly having a hard time holding back her tears, she declared to the customer:

"You are being insulting, and I refuse to serve you."

At first the man was dumbfounded at this unexpected turn of events. Then he faced the growing crowd of gawkers and launched into an even more insulting tirade:

"Will you just look at this stupid jackass?! If you got yourself a husband, he'd complain in no uncertain terms if you hobbled about the kitchen like a lame hen!"

"I wouldn't let even my husband insult me like that," the girl replied.

"Who d'you think you are, anyway? Nothing but a stubborn

jackass!" the inebriated man went on, shouting even louder and more irritatingly. "*She won't let her husband* — Maybe you're planning on marrying some English lord?"

"Maybe a lord, that's my business," replied the girl tersely and turned away.

The situation was heating up. Neither side was willing to give in. A sizeable crowd of market regulars had gathered to watch things unfold. Onlookers began scoffing at the young salesgirl's declared intention to marry an English lord.

Another girl came over from the next stall and stood beside her friend. She just stood there, without saying a word.

They stood there silently, two young girls who looked to be just out of high school. The crowd that had gathered were now talking amongst themselves about the girls' insolent and haughty behaviour.

Most of the snide remarks were about the girl's pie-in-the-sky hopes of marrying a lord, along with her over-estimation of her attributes and opportunities.

The dilemma was solved by a young man, the owner of the market stalls. When he first approached, he demanded in rather severe tones that the girl sell the cigarettes to the customer. However, after hearing her refusal, he quickly hit upon a solution satisfactory to all. Reaching into his pocket he pulled out a fifty-rouble note and addressed the girl:

"Madam, if you would be so kind, and if it is not too much trouble, please sell me two packages of *Primas*."

"Of course," responded the girl, handing him the cigarettes.

The young man in turn passed the cigarettes to the male customer. The conflict was over and the crowd dispersed. This story has a sequel — a quite unexpected one at that.

Each time I went by the market thereafter, I couldn't help paying attention to these two young salesgirls. They worked just as deftly as their senior fellow-workers, but at the same

time significantly distinguished themselves from them. They were slender of figure, modestly but neatly dressed, makeup not overdone, and their movements were far more elegant than the others'. The girls continued working at the market for almost a year and then both disappeared at the same time.

It was about six months later, in the summertime, at the same market, that I noticed an elegant young woman walking beside the fruit stalls. She stood out from the crowd by her proud bearing and fashionable expensive attire. This striking young woman was accompanied by a dapper-looking gentleman carrying a basket filled with a variety of appetising fruits.

It dawned on me that this young woman who was attracting all sorts of attention from the men around — as well as (no doubt) jealous glances from the women — was none other than the friend of the cigarette salesgirl.

I went over and explained to the young couple — especially to the lady's concerned companion — the reason for my curiosity. Finally the woman recognised me. We sat down at a table in an open-air café and Natasha (as she was called) recounted to me the events that had taken place over the past year and a half. Her story went as follows:

The day when Katya had that incident with the customer in front of all the regulars we decided to quit our jobs so people wouldn't laugh at us. You remember how Katya said back then that she was going to marry an English lord. And people laughed at her. We realised they would go on laughing and pointing fingers at us.

But we didn't manage to find work anywhere else. You see, we'd just finished high school, and didn't make it when we applied to college. Well, all right, I got average marks, but Katya was a real brain. She passed her exams with flying

colours, but still didn't get in. They'd cut back on the number of free college places, and she didn't have the money to pay for her education — her mum makes a pittance, and there's no dad. So we ended up taking sales jobs at the market, since they wouldn't hire us anywhere else.

We began working and swotting to sit the next year's college exams. But a week after the incident at the market Katya all of a sudden turns to me and says:

"I've got to prepare myself to be worthy of being the wife of an English lord. D'you want to train along with me?"

I thought she was joking, but she was dead serious. Even back at school Katya had always been pretty obsessive about whatever she put her mind to.

She went to the library and found the syllabus of a seminary for young ladies,¹ which she adapted to modern times. And we started training like crazy according to Katya's syllabus.

We did dancing and aerobics, we studied English and English history, along with the rules of etiquette and good manners. We watched political discussions on TV so we could hold conversation with intelligent people. Even while we were at work in our stall we tried to behave as though we were at a high-society gathering, so that our manners would acquire a natural feel.

We earned money, but didn't spend it on ourselves. We didn't even buy makeup, so we could save. We were saving so we could have fancy outfits custom made, as well as for a trip to England.

¹*seminary for young ladies* — from tsarist times in Russia, when there were élite boarding schools reserved for girls of noble descent. The syllabus would have included a wide array of subjects (languages, dancing, painting, etiquette, religion etc.) designed to prepare the girls for their future roles in high society.

Katya said, you see, that English lords would never come round a small market like this in Vladimir, which meant we had to go to England. Our chances would be far greater there.

So we went to England with a tourist group. The two weeks there simply flew by. Of course, you understand, there were no English lords to greet us or take us around. And I really had no expectations for myself — I was just doing this to keep Katya company. But she actually had hopes. Once she gets something into her head, that's it. She never stopped looking every Englishman in the face, searching for her intended. We even went to a dance club a couple of times, but nobody asked us to dance, not even once.

It was the day of our departure, and we were on our way out to the motor coach from our hotel, and Katya still kept looking around, ever hopeful. We stopped right on the hotel steps, when Katya suddenly puts her bag down, looks off to one side and says:

“Here he comes!”

I look, and lo and behold, walking along the sidewalk toward us is a young man, minding his own business and paying no attention to us. Just as I expected, he came right up to where we were standing, but didn't even glance at Katya and walked right by.

And then all of a sudden Katya — coo, blow me away! — calls out to him.

The young man turns to look at us. Katya goes up to him slowly but confidently and says to him in English:

“My name is Katya. I am from Russia. Now I am leaving to go to airport on a bus with my tour-group. I have approached you... I have feeling that I can make you a very good wife. I do not yet love you, but I shall be able to love you, and you will love me. We shall have good children together. A little boy and a little girl. We shall be happy together. And now, if you wish, you can accompany me to say good-bye at airport.”

The young man just stood there staring intently at Katya without saying a word. He was dumbfounded, no doubt from the shock. Then he said he had an important business meeting, wished her *bon voyage* and walked off.

The whole way to the airport Katya sat staring out the window. We didn't say a word to each other. Both Katya and I felt awkward in front of all the tourists who saw the scene in front of the hotel. I could literally feel my skin tingling at all those people making fun of Katya and accusing her.

But when we arrived at the airport and were getting off the coach, right there was none other than this same young Englishman, greeting Katya with a huge bouquet of flowers in his hand.

She put her bag down — no, she simply let it fall to the pavement. She didn't take the bouquet, but buried her head in his chest and began crying.

He dropped the bouquet, and the flowers scattered all over. I helped the other tourists gather them up, while they just stood there. And the Englishman was stroking Katya's head. And as though there were nobody else around, he kept telling her what a fool he was for almost letting fate slip through his fingers, how if he didn't catch up with her he would suffer for it his whole life, and kept on thanking Katya for finding him.

Meanwhile, as it turned out, the plane's departure was delayed. I shan't tell you how, but I was the one who managed to delay it.

Her Englishman turned out to be from a family of British diplomats and he himself was about to be posted to some embassy.

As soon as we got back to Russia, he started ringing up Katya every day. They'd talk for hours. Katya's now in England, and pregnant. I think they really do love each other. And now I believe in love at first sight.

When Natasha finished telling me her amazing story, she gave a smile to her companion sitting beside her. I asked whether they had known each other long. And the young man answered:

“You see, I was in the same tourist group. When the Englishman’s flowers got strewn all over, Natasha started picking them up, and I began helping her. Now I carry her fruit basket for her. Who are we, compared to English lords?!”

Natasha lovingly placed her hand on her companion’s shoulder and said with a smile:

“And just who are they compared to *you* — our Russian men?!”

Then the happy girl turned to me and said:

“Andrei and I got married a month ago. And here we are, come to see my parents.”



After hearing the story of these girls, a lot of people might think: well, they were just lucky. Not a typical situation. But if I dare say it, the situation in this case was absolutely typical and entirely normal. More than that, I would affirm that other girls could predict a similar destiny for themselves if they are prepared to follow the pattern set by Katya and Natasha. Of course there may be certain differences — names, the type of suitor, and the time-frame involved — but a similar situation happening with others is already a predetermined fact. Predetermined by whom? By the girls themselves, their way of thinking and the consistent steps they take toward their goal.

Think about it. Katya had a dream, or a goal: to marry an Englishman. What prompted this dream is unimportant. She was probably turned off by the atmosphere of the market, the drunken customers and how rude they were, or maybe the shameful taunts of the customer in question.

In any case, a dream was born. What of it? What young girl doesn't dream of a prince driving a white Mercedes, and yet still ends up marrying a typical loser? In the vast majority of cases their dreams do not come true.

I concede that, of course, but the reason they don't come true is simply that their actions, or more precisely, their *inaction* in respect to their dream is like the anecdote about the lottery ticket — when someone dreams about winning big at the lottery and even asks God for help, but doesn't take the first elementary step of buying a single ticket.

The girls began taking action, and a consistent pattern was realised: *dream — thought — action*. Try removing just one of these elements from the chain, and the girls' fate would have turned out completely differently.

CHAPTER THREE



You create your own fate

Man's destiny! Many are wont to think that Man's fate is decided by someone *up there*. But this 'someone' simply makes available to every Man the most powerful energy in the Universe — an energy capable of not only shaping its holder's destiny, but of creating whole new galaxies. This energy is called *human thought*.

It is not enough just to know that this is so. One must become consciously aware of this phenomenon — one must *feel* it.

How completely we are able to become aware of it, to feel and understand it, determines the degree to which the secrets of this vast Universe of ours unfold before us, the degree to which we perceive how its wonders — or, more precisely, its natural phenomena — work.

It is only the conscious awareness and acceptance of the energy of thought that will allow us to make our lives and the lives of our loved ones truly happy. And yet it is precisely a happy life that is predestined for Man on the Earth.

And so we are obliged to persuade ourselves of the indisputability of the following conclusions:

First: *Man is a thinking being.*

Second: *the power of the energy of thought has no equal in the Universe: everything we see, including ourselves, is created by the energy of thought.*

We can name off millions of objects from a primitive hammer to a space ship, yet the appearance of each one of these is preceded by thought.

Our imagination builds a material object in space unseen to our eyes. Just because we don't yet glimpse its materialisation doesn't mean that the object doesn't exist. It is already constructed in mental space, and this is more significant than its subsequent materialisation.

A space ship is constructed by the thought of one or more people. We still don't see it, we can't touch it, yet at the same time it exists! It exists in a dimension invisible to us, but later it materialises, taking on a form we can see with our ordinary sight.

Which is more important in the construction of a space ship — the craftsmanship of the worker executing the details according to the blueprints presented to him, or the thought of the designer and builder? Of course the physical labour on any project is absolutely necessary, but nothing can displace the primacy of *thought*.

A real space ship can suffer a catastrophic accident, caused not by some kind of defective part, but always by an inadequately developed thought. In ordinary parlance it is known as *thoughtlessness*.

Thought *is* capable of foreseeing any kind of accident. In thought there are no unforeseen situations. Yet all sorts of accidents and irregularities *do* happen. Why? Because of haste in turning the project into material reality, not allowing it to be sufficiently thought through.

Anyone who thinks this through on their own can come to the same indisputable conclusion: all objects that have ever been manufactured on the Earth are materialised thoughts.

Now it is vitally necessary to realise that absolutely all life situations, including life itself, are formed first of all in thought.

The world of living Nature which we see, including Man himself, was originally formed by God's thought.

Just like God, Man is capable of forming with his thought not only new objects but his own life situations as well.

If your thought is insufficiently developed, or prevented by some cause from freely making use of its inherent energy and speed capabilities, your life situations will be influenced by somebody else's thoughts — possibly the thoughts of your family, acquaintances, or society in general.

But note that even in this case your life situations are determined aforetime by human thought. And you have only yourselves to blame if you have choked and imprisoned your own thinking, thereby subjecting yourselves to the will of another person's thoughts, meaning that your successes or failures in life are already dependent on this other person or persons.

You may be persuaded of what I have just said through a variety of examples in life. Think what a Man does before becoming a famous performing artist? First of all he dreams about it, naturally, then thinks up a plan of how to attain his dream, and then steps into action. He takes part in amateur productions, studies at an appropriate school, and then takes a job in the theatre, film studio or symphony orchestra.

Some people may protest and say that while everybody dreams of becoming the most famous performing artist, only a few actually achieve this, while others are obliged to look for work in another field that has nothing to do with a career in the arts. Besides the dream, one needs talent too. Yes, of course, that is true. But talent is also a product of the power of thought.

What about physical and natural gifts? They are significant, of course. But, then again, human thought is not so stupid as to inspire a legless person to enrol in a ballet school.

How can it be, the reader may wonder: if everything, even one's profession and well-being, depended on one's own thoughts, then surely everybody would be rich and famous, and there wouldn't be any people eking out a pitiful existence, rummaging through garbage dumps in search of something to eat.

Well, now, let's head off to a garbage dump, in the literal sense of the word.

CHAPTER FOUR



‘Garbage-dump thinking’

I did this in the following manner. I let some stubble grow on my face, rumpled my hair and borrowed some old work clothes from a painter friend. Then I took a plastic bag and a stick and walked up to a garbage dumpster. I rummaged about with a stick in the garbage and came up with several empty bottles, which I put into the plastic bag, before proceeding to the dumpster at a neighbouring building. My efforts were rewarded. I had been at the second dumpster no more than ten minutes — fifteen tops — when I was virtually set upon by a man wielding a metal rod in his hands.

“Keep your paws off what doesn’t belong to you,” he said in a tone that brooked no contradiction.

“You’re saying that this is your territory?” I asked calmly, taking a few steps back from the dumpster, at the same time handing him my plastic bag with the bottles.

“Whose else would it be?” the man replied, already sounding less aggressive than before. He took my bag and began raking through the contents of the garbage dump, paying no attention to me.

“Maybe you could show me where there’s some freebies around?” I enquired, adding: “I’ll make it worth your while.”

“White,” responded the unofficial owner of the dumpster.

I went to the store and picked up a bottle of ‘white’ vodka,¹ along with a few snacks. Over drinks we got to know each

¹*‘white’ vodka* — clear, unmixed, ‘classic’ Russian vodka as distinct from ‘coloured’ varieties of vodka (e.g., fruit liquors infused with cranberry, rowanberry etc.) available on the market.

other, and Pavel shared with me a lot of the tricks of his trade, and believe me, there were quite a few.

You have to know, for example, what days especially to guard against 'transients' like me invading and pinching one's 'property'. Especially after holidays, when a lot of bottles get tossed out. It is also important to know which refuse materials contain base metals, and how to collect them — some dealers pay more for glass containers and base metals. And to know what to do with discarded clothing that's still fit to wear.

I attempted to change the subject.

While Pavel was entirely capable of expressing his opinions on politics and the government, he did so with considerably less interest. He had a one-track mind — everything revolved around the dumpsters.

As a final conclusive test I suggested the following to him:

"You know, Pavel, there's a chap building a house not too far away who's looking for a security guard over the winter, as well as to help in the construction, for which he's willing to pay extra. And supply groceries to boot. Every week his driver brings potatoes, onions and cereal. You're a decent fellow — he'll hire you. If you like, we can go have a word with him."

After a few drinks, as might be expected, we had become friends. Which made the sudden sharp shift in his mood all the more unexpected. First he spent about thirty seconds in intensive thought. Then after staring at me another thirty seconds in a kind of standoffish silence, he finally came out with what was on his mind:

"You think I've been drinkin' and not realised what's going on? What's all this business, creep, about me being hired as a guard, just so's you can take over my dumpsters?"

He didn't even ask what kind of wage a security guard might earn, or what kind of accommodations might be included, or

what kind of work, specifically, he might have to do for the extra pay. His thought was completely concentrated on his dumpsters, working out the best way to take care of them and protect them from competitors.

So it turns out that this Man predetermined the course of his thought — deciding the questions of his existence on the basis of garbage dumpsters — and then followed the direction of his thought.

One could cite quite a number of other examples confirming the indisputability of the fact that the creation of all material objects, life situations and social phenomena is preceded by the energy of *thought*.

One Man can influence another through his own thoughts. This is attested in ancient tales and parables. Here is what Anastasia's grandfather had to say about the energy of human thought.

CHAPTER FIVE



A goddess of a wife

“Yes, Vladimir, Man’s thought has access to energy unsurpassed. Many of the creations of this energy are either dismissed as magic or counted as miracles and ascribed to a higher power.

“Take, for example, the ‘miracle icons’. Why would they suddenly become miraculous? Why would a piece of wooden board with a hand-painted image on it all of a sudden have the power to work miracles? It happens when iconographers imbue their work with a sufficient amount of their own mental energy. Those who look at the icon then add their own energy. People talk about a ‘prayed-over icon’ — in other words, an icon imbued with a goodly amount of the energy of human thoughts.

“It used to be that iconographers knew about the properties of this great energy. Before approaching a particular work, they fasted to cleanse their body of impurities, at the same time intensifying their thought. Then they entered into a state of detachment, focusing their energy on a single task — the painting of the icon. When it was completely finished, they spent another long period contemplating what they had done. And miracles were sometimes the result.

“People sometimes see unusual phenomena, or various kinds of angels. But note that people invariably see only what they are thinking about. They invariably see only the images they believe in.

“Christians, for example, can see only their own saints. Moslems see only theirs. That is because they are beholding

the projections of their own or the general collective thought.

“Back only fifteen hundred years ago there were people who understood the power and properties of the energy of human thought. There are parables about this. Would you like to hear one?”

“Yes, I would.”

“I shall translate it from its ancient tongue into contemporary language, and change the setting to modern terms to make it more understandable. But tell me first, how does a man who has been married to a woman for a long time behave? What does he do when he comes home?”

“Well, a lot of husbands, as long as they don’t habitually reach for the bottle, will sit down in front of the television set and either read a paper or watch TV. They might take out the garbage, if their wife asks them to.”

“And what about the women?”

“There’s no question about that — they get supper ready in the kitchen, and afterward wash the dishes.”

“Fine. That will help me translate the ancient parable into modern terms.”



Once upon a time there lived an ordinary husband and wife. The wife’s name was Elena, her husband was Ivan.

Every day the husband would come home from work, sit down in his favourite chair by the television set and begin reading the newspaper. His wife Elena would get supper ready. As she gave Ivan his supper she would nag him that

he never did anything useful around the place, and was not earning enough money. Ivan got irritated by his wife's nagging. But instead of giving her some kind of gruff response, he simply thought to himself: *She herself's a dirty slut, and she's telling me what to do. But when we got married, she was so totally different — she was beautiful, she was tender.*

One day when this nagging wife demanded Ivan take out the garbage, he reluctantly tore himself away from the TV and headed outdoors with the dustbin. Upon returning, he stopped in the doorway and turned to God in his thought:

"O, Lord! O, Lord! Just look at how lousy my life's turned out! Do I really have to while away all my remaining years with such a nagging and ugly wife? This isn't life — it's sheer torture!"

And then all of a sudden Ivan heard the quiet voice of God:

"My son, I could help alleviate your troubles, I could give you a splendid goddess of a wife, only if your neighbours noticed a sudden change in your life, they might become greatly astonished. Let us work this way: I shall change your wife just a little at a time. I shall imbue her with the spirit of a goddess and improve her outward appearance. Only you must remember that if you want to live with a goddess, you have to make your own life worthy of a goddess."

"Thank you, O Lord! Any man would be happy to change his life for the sake of a goddess. But tell me: when will You start making changes in my wife?"

"I shall begin a few little changes right away. And minute by minute I shall be changing her for the better."

Ivan went back into his home, sat down in his chair, picked up the paper and turned the television back on. Only he did not feel like reading, or watching any TV films. He could not wait to peek and see whether his wife had started changing — even just a little.

He got up and opened the kitchen door. Leaning against the door-post, he began watching his wife intently. She was standing with her back to him, washing the supper dishes.

All at once Elena felt herself being watched and turned toward the doorway. Their eyes met. Ivan looked at his wife and thought: *No, I don't see any changes going on in my wife.*

Seeing the unusual attention her husband was paying her and not being able to figure it out, Elena all at once straightened her hair, and a rosy blush came over her cheeks as she asked:

"What is it, Ivan? Why are you looking at me so intently?"

The husband could not think of what to say. Embarrassed, he blurted out:

"Well, maybe... the dishes... maybe I could help you wash them? I was just thinking about it, for some reason."

"The dishes? You help me?" the wife echoed in surprise, taking off her much-soiled apron. "Well, you see, I've already done them."

Wow! She's changing right before my eyes! Ivan thought. Look how much prettier she's become all of a sudden!

And then he started drying the dishes.

The next day after work Ivan couldn't wait to get home. He couldn't wait to see how his nagging wife was little by little being transformed into a goddess.

Hasn't she got a lot of goddess in her already? But I haven't changed even a little bit myself, as usual. In any case, I should buy her some flowers, so I won't fall flat on my face before a goddess!

Upon opening the door to his home, Ivan stood entranced in amazement. There before him stood Elena in her party dress, the same one he had bought her last year. She was sporting a neat hairdo, complete with a bright ribbon. He was dumbfounded. With some awkwardness he offered the flowers to Elena, not being able to take his eyes off her.

She accepted the flowers and gave a little gasp. She lowered her eyelids and a rosy blush filled her cheeks.

Oh, what marvellous eyelids goddesses have! What meekness they express! What extraordinary inner beauty, and outward looks!

And Ivan gasped in turn, upon seeing the table set with their fancy china and two candles burning on the table, along with two wine-glasses and the food with its divinely tempting aromas.

He sat down to the table, and Elena his wife sat down opposite him. But then suddenly she jumped up and said:

"I'm so sorry, I forgot to turn the TV on for you. But here, I've got today's paper for you."

"Never mind the TV, and I don't really feel like reading the paper either — they all keep saying the same thing," Ivan responded with sincerity. "I'd rather you tell me what you'd like to do tomorrow, Saturday."

Completely overwhelmed, Elena asked in amazement:

"What would *you* like to do?"

"Well, I happened to pick us up a couple of theatre tickets today. Anyway, tomorrow afternoon, I thought you might like to do a bit of shopping. Since we're going to the theatre, I thought we'd drop into a store first and buy you a dress suitable for the occasion."

Ivan just caught himself in time from blurting out his cherished secret: *a dress suitable for a goddess*. Embarrassed, he looked at her again and gave another gasp. A goddess was indeed sitting at the table before him. Her face was beaming with joy, and her eyes were sparkling. Her restrained smile was just slightly inquisitive.

O Lord, how marvellous goddesses are after all! But if she keeps on getting better day by day, can I become worthy of this goddess? Ivan mused. All of a sudden, a thought struck him like lightning: *I've got to do it! I've got to do it while this goddess is here*

with me. I've got to ask her, plead with her to bear my child. A child which will come from me and from this most marvellous goddess!

"A penny for your thoughts, Ivan! Could that be *excitement* I see in your face?" Elena asked her husband.

He sat there excitedly, not sure how to talk about so precious a thing. This was no piece of cake — asking a goddess to bear a child! This was not a gift God had promised him. He did not know how to tell her about his wish. Fumbling with a corner of the tablecloth, Ivan got up from the table and pleaded, blushing:

"I don't know... Do you think... But I... wanted to say... for a long time now... I want to have a child with you, my beautiful goddess!"

Whereupon she, Elena, came over to Ivan, her husband. From her love-filled eyes a tear of joy rolled down her rosy cheek. She placed her hand on Ivan's shoulder, and her breath flared in a warm flush.

What a night that was! What a morning! And oh, what a day it is! How marvellous it is to live with a goddess! thought Ivan, as he bundled up his second grandson for an outdoor stroll.



"What did you understand from this parable, Vladimir?"

"I understood all of it. God didn't actually help Ivan. All he did was listen to God's voice. Ivan made his own wife a goddess through his thought."

"Of course, you are right: Ivan created his own happiness with his thought. He made his wife a goddess and changed himself. But God did help Ivan."

“When?”

“Back when God gave everything to each of us, when He was contemplating the creation of Man. And explaining everything to the first Man he created. Do you remember God’s words from the book *Co-creation*? He said:

“My son, you are infinite, you are eternal, within you are your dreams of creation.”¹

“These words, Vladimir, are still true today. Every Man has within himself creative dreams. The question is only: in which direction are they aimed? And how powerful is the thought, including its energy, in His sons and daughters living on the Earth today?”

¹Quoted from Book 4, Chapter 8: “Birth”.

CHAPTER SIX



And where is your thought right now?

I shall not concern the reader with further examples. Each one can ascertain independently from his own life what segments of his being have been created by his own thought and what segments by somebody else's.

To answer this question once and for all, let's start by stating the obvious: *thought is precursor to everything*.

As I have already indicated, to anyone who succeeds in not only becoming aware of this but in feeling it as well many secrets of the Universe will be revealed. First and foremost, a distinct picture of creation will appear.

God created the world in which we live through the help of a dream — the energy of His thought. He created Man, giving him complete freedom of action and endowing him with powerful energy capable of creating similar worlds, or possibly worlds even more perfected than the Earth.

In order to create new worlds or to perfect the world already created, it is vital that the speed of Man's thinking match that of the Divine.

However, one glance at the world created by human society shows clearly that it is not only imperfect but poses an ever-increasing danger to existence. Consequently, a degradation of consciousness is clearly taking place or, more precisely, Man's speed of thinking is diminishing.

The very first people possessed a speed of thinking equal to the Divine. It could not have been otherwise, since, like

any parent-creator, God could not even think of creating His child less perfect than Himself.

What powers could have proved capable of influencing human consciousness and aiming it down the path of degradation? If anyone had the power to do so, that means he would be able to surpass the energy of thought of both God and Man. But there is no such being, either on the Earth or anywhere else.

The proof of this statement is simplicity itself. If there existed an entity possessing a greater speed of thinking than Man, it would long ago have created its own world and we would be able to see it.

To either redirect or subjugate the energy of human thought is something only human thought itself can do. In other words, one Man possessing a greater speed of thought than the rest and wanting to subjugate others could, under certain circumstances, do so.

In today's situation human society has been subjugated to the descendants of the Egyptian priests who preserved the knowledge of the science of imagery and who maintained, with the help of special exercises, the capability of thinking at a much greater speed than the vast majority of people living on the Earth.¹

And there are circumstances which confirm this to be the status quo.

There is one Man who has proved capable of standing up to the priests one-on-one.

I am talking, of course, about the Siberian recluse, Anastasia. And note that she achieves palpable results without the help of any kind of army or technical superstructures, but simply by virtue of the power of her thought.

¹For further details, see Books 4 and 6, especially Book 6, Chapter 6: "Imagery and trial".

That mankind is beginning, at the dawn of a new millennium, to enter into a Divine world of splendour is to me, personally, an indisputable fact. I should like to share some joyful news with my readers.

I have it on reliable authority that several individual groups of scholars have been working, independently of each other, on a programme of national development according to an image created by Anastasia. Not just people with academic degrees, but students, too, have been involved in these projects.

To develop a programme like this in detail requires approximately two to three years of persistent work on the part of a whole army of specialists. But the first glimpses of it you can already catch even now.

For example, the Internet site www.Anastasia.ru has published a paper by a fourth-year Ukrainian university student outlining a programme of development for Ukraine, based on Anastasia's idea of family domains. People all over Russia and the Commonwealth of Independent States² have been sending in draft constitutions for future communities.

It is not for me to judge the merits of this young woman's paper, but it is already significant simply by virtue of its being the first one published. It is also important to note that these scholars became involved not by dint of somebody's commission but by the dictates of their own hearts.

It won't be long before you get a chance to become acquainted with and discuss their highly important works. I

²*Commonwealth of Independent States* — an organisation made up of most of the former Soviet republics, founded in December 1991 — immediately following the dissolution of the USSR — to facilitate trade ties as well as mutual co-operation in matters of foreign policy and defence. It does not include Estonia, Latvia or Lithuania; moreover, Georgia and Turkmenistan have opted for less than full membership status.

think these projects will be set forth for public discussion under the umbrella name of *the national idea*.³

I could have included these passages in my previous book, following the account of my conversation with Anastasia's grandfather. I didn't. I thought it would be premature. As it is, many people dismiss Anastasia's powers as bordering on fantasy or fairy tales.

My conversation with her grandfather, however, revealed to me even more extraordinary phenomena than any Anastasia had shown me earlier, and helped me see Anastasia herself in a new light. Now that current events in human society have begun to confirm what I heard back in the Siberian taiga, I shall cite part of my conversation with her grandfather.

³Indeed, in 2006 — four years after this book was originally published in Russian — the Russian government put forth four *National Projects*: strong agriculture, affordable housing, high-quality education and healthcare. A number of prominent politicians, including Vladimir Zhirinovskiy — the leader of Russia's Liberal Democratic Party and Deputy Head of the Russian Duma (Parliament) — have openly declared that the concept of *kin's domains* should become the basis for implementation of these 'National Projects'. More recently, in March 2007, Dmitry Medvedev, Russia's Deputy Prime Minister in charge of the 'National Projects', publicly stated that the idea of kin's domains was fully aligned with the government's own priorities.

CHAPTER SEVEN



A conversation with Anastasia's grandfather

This took place on the day following her great-grandfather's passing.¹

Usually, when loved ones pass from our lives, relatives offer expressions of sympathy. The last little while Anastasia's grandfather never left his father's side. Now that he's all alone, I decided to seek him out and talk with him, to take his mind off his sorrow, as is customary. I knew pretty much where I could find him, and so headed over to the neighbouring glade.

Anastasia's grandfather was standing motionless at the edge of the glade, watching and listening to the nutcracker birds² twitter on the branches. He was wearing a long shirt³ made out of nettle fibres and some kind of rope-belt. He was barefoot.

I knew that residents of the taiga took care not to interrupt each other's train of thought. And I began to realise on just how high a level this culture of communication actually was. It speaks of the great respect they have for each other's thinking.

After some time Anastasia's grandfather turned and headed over in my direction. As he approached, I could detect no

¹Great-grandfather's passing is described in Book 6, Chapter 3: "An invitation to the future".

²*nutcracker birds* (Latin: *Nucifraga caryocatactes*) — in Russian these are known either as *orekbovki* (nut birds) or *kedrovki* (cedar birds).

³*long shirt* (Russian: *rubakha*) — in this case, a knee-length shirt common as everyday wear among Russian rural dwellers.

trace of sorrow on his face, which manifested its customary kind-heartedness.

“Good day to you,” he said, offering me his hand as we exchanged greetings. In our conversation he always structured his sentences in terms of modern, often quite mundane usage, sometimes making a joke or teasing me — though never insultingly. On the contrary, he had a way of making you feel at home, as though you were chatting with a member of your family. And he was somebody you could talk with very easily on any subject — even on topics men bring up when there are no women around.

Undoubtedly many of Anastasia’s abilities were inherited from her parents and ancestors, as well, of course, as from her grandfather, who had, after all, played a hands-on role in her upbringing.

What knowledge of life, what abilities lay hidden in this grey-headed elder who a hundred years on had lost none of his keenness of mind and youthful agility? With me he spoke in very simple terms, although one time I overheard him talking with his father. Well over half the words he used were ones I had never heard before. It means that in talking with others, out of respect to them he makes use of their lexicon and manner of speaking.

“Well, now, how are things going? In your civilised society? Any people starting to wake up?” asked Grandfather with a hint of jocularly.

“Things are going along okay,” I responded. “There are some scholars who have taken an interest in Anastasia’s ideas. Various groups are working on national development programmes based on her proposals. This is happening not only in Russia but in other countries as well. But it’s not clear just yet when all the marvellous things, as she put it, will actually come to pass either in our country or abroad.”

"It's all happened already, Vladimir. The main thing has been done."

"What do you mean by 'the main thing'?"

"Anastasia has created a thought, an image of a future state, and she has done this with her usual meticulous approach, right down to the last detail and how thoughts will be materialised in a future reality.

"Now you and a lot of people will be able to see this splendid future materialised. The energy of her thought is extraordinarily strong, and her strength has no equal anywhere in space. It is perfect and quite specific, but the main thing is that she keeps on gaining strength thanks to the help of other people's thinking. She is no longer alone.

"So you tell me that groups of scholars in various countries are working on national development programmes, and entrepreneurs are starting to build the domains she thought up, and her thought has been perceived by many people young and old. Once these people have had contact with her thought, they are creating thoughts of their own.

"The thoughts of all these people merging together are filling space with an energy of unprecedented strength, and this energy is materialising a splendid future. Already one can see partial manifestations of this materialisation."

"But what if someone deliberately started to obstruct this materialisation of the future?" I asked. "The priests, for example, who now rule the world, let's say the high priest himself began obstructing it?"

"He will not obstruct it. He will help it along."

"How can you be so sure?"

"I have heard his conversation and seen his thought."

"What conversation? How did you see it?"

"Vladimir, you've probably already guessed that my father was one of those six priests."

"I had no idea."

“Well, you might have guessed. Although outward simplicity and the ability to conceal one’s abilities and possibilities is one of the important components of their power. There’s no way they’re going to brag about the weapons in their arsenal the way the leaders of the world’s great powers do. The priests are capable of aiming these weapons wherever they like by directing the leaders’ thoughts, by bringing about corresponding situations. And they never had any thought of bragging about themselves in public. Their major, secret goal over the millennia has been to achieve a dialogue with God. No matter how they’ve acted, they have never feared Divine revenge, knowing that God has given full freedom to each Man, and He will not break His promise.

“They have been controlling mankind, torturing it even, thereby showing God that they are more capable than anyone else, that the fate of the Earth’s civilisation depends on them. This kind of situation, they figured, ought to compel God to enter into a dialogue with them... Only there hasn’t been any dialogue. And now it’s become clear why it has been totally out of the question for the priests to have a dialogue with God.”

CHAPTER EIGHT



Thank you

When little Anastasia was born, and after this tiny infant who had not yet learnt to walk was left all alone without any parents, the fiery sphere began to put in an occasional appearance beside her.¹

My father, along with the other priests, knew about a great many natural phenomena that your scientists today consider mysterious and unexplainable. Yet he could still not account for the power of this fiery sphere.

Its unfathomable energy could momentarily dissipate in space in the form of tiny sparks, or just as quickly gather itself together into a single whole. A delicate tongue of fiery light bursting from the sphere could instantaneously pulverise a huge stone or rock.

The same tongue of light was also capable of tenderly touching an insect's leg as it crawled along the petal of a flower, without causing any harm.

But the main, the most inexplicable part of the mystery was how this cluster of tremendous energy reacted to the feelings and desires of little Anastasia. That meant it had feelings, and *thought* besides.

Thought, in the complete sense of the word, is native only to Man. But the fiery sphere was not Man. Then who was This? How could It possess feelings which belong only to Man? Where did It acquire such tremendous power and might?

¹This and the following two chapters are narrated by Anastasia's grandfather.

I told you, and you described this in your book,² how it changed the Earth's gravitational field in a single spot, when Anastasia was learning to walk. Thousands of little tongues of light emanated from it, combing the little girl's golden hair.

Father had an idea about what kind of forces could have produced this fiery, mighty and thinking sphere, but he never spoke of it aloud. Supposition requires proof.

When Anastasia was a little older, we once overheard her talking with the sphere. Or rather, she was the one who did all the talking. The sphere never uttered words, it only reacted to the child's words through its actions.

When Father asked Anastasia about the sphere, she gave only a very brief answer:

"I would call it *Good*." Her answer was insufficient for my father, but he didn't speak with her again about the sphere, not back then nor over the years since.

From that original answer it was clear that Anastasia had no desire to give a definition either to the fiery sphere itself or to its actions. Most probably she perceived it through her feelings. But my father, for some reason, was anxious to define the phenomenon.

From the time the sphere first appeared, Father stopped participating in the priests' affairs and concentrated his attention on solving the mystery.

The priests know the mechanisms for confirming a hypothesis or overturning their own hypotheses. To this end it is necessary to publicise the phenomenon with a highly accurate report and await people's reaction and opinions. Mind you, these people should not be asked or instructed to express their opinions. Definitions must arise freely, on the level of feelings and not just intellect, in order to be as accurate as possible.

²See Book 2, Chapter 27: "The anomaly".

So, at my father's request, I told you about Anastasia's childhood, including the story of her communication with the mysterious phenomenon. You wrote about this in your book without distorting what you heard, and, most significantly, you did not express any opinions of your own.

We looked forward with some excitement to hearing your readers' reaction. It came very quickly, expressed not only in the usual things people say, but in emotional bursts of feeling. People said or wrote what my father had supposed for many years but never spoke aloud — thoughts he had hid from the other priests.

You published poetry from readers who wrote not because somebody had asked them to, but straight from the heart. Let me remind you of how one of these poems starts off:

*On her Birthday
God appeared
To his beloved little Nastenka...³*

Father's guess had been confirmed. The fiery sphere which communicated from time to time with Anastasia is none other than a representative form of God.

God has many representative forms. Each blade of grass is a manifestation of His thoughts. But of all the many elements comprising God's representation, the sphere presented itself, if not as the main one, certainly as one of the most majestic and concentrated forms, including even the energy of both intelligence and feelings.

And then one day... This happened after you had written your first five books. After the publication of her words — or rather, dark space was penetrated by what seemed like a fiery sword — the emotional outburst captured in her words:

³*Nastenka* — a common diminutive variant of *Anastasia*.

“Prepare yourself, all wickedness and evil-mindedness, to leave the Earth behind and fall upon me!”⁴

From Anastasia’s lips these words go far beyond the meaning of just the words. You, Vladimir, along with many others, have had the opportunity a number of times to see that for yourself. And the wickedness began to attack Anastasia with an invisible energy.

The white circles started appearing, bleaching the grass all around. It even happened sometimes that Anastasia would lose consciousness momentarily. And we didn’t know how to help her.

Our little granddaughter did not ask us for help. And because she didn’t ask, that meant unquestionably that this was something she had to work out all on her own.

More recently, however, we began to notice these attacks on her getting more and more severe. It was as though evil were simply agonising to carry out these final attacks.

But our granddaughter’s tenacity was growing at the same time. Lately the routine blows have simply caused her to give a shudder and head for the lakeshore. Somehow the lake water has been able to quickly restore her strength. After splashing and diving in the water, she’s come out at full strength, as before.

On one particular day we noticed Anastasia heading for the lake after one of the usual blows, but she was treading very carefully. When she stopped to lean against a cedar trunk and rest, Father said with some alarm:

“Today our granddaughter is having a particularly difficult challenge to handle. It’s really been hard on her. Look, and you will see some grey strands in her golden hair.”

Then we saw Anastasia push off from the trunk, take one step and then another in the direction of the lake. Then she stumbled and stopped once more.

⁴Quoted from Book 3, Chapter 24: “Who are you, Anastasia?”.

It was at this point that the fiery sphere appeared from space, right in front of her. But this time its lightning flashes were changing colours, as though volcanic ashes were seething inside it. And then all of a sudden it would look as though fierce fiery arrows were piercing through an invisible protective shield — floods of them dashing out and disappearing in space. But the sphere was not decreasing but increasing in size, while the diverse energies inside it were condensing and seething with ever greater intensity. The sphere itself was not suspended in space, but contracted and expanded like a heart. Then all at once it fell still, as though trying to make a decision. And thousands of lightning trills of energy dashed out in Anastasia's direction.

At just what point this sinking girl managed to raise her hand, Father and I failed to detect, even though we were watching the whole event, trying not to blink. We knew what this gesture meant. She was shielding herself from the lighting trills directed at her. But why? At that time we still weren't in a position to understand.

But one thing was clear: the fiery sphere, through its energy, was capable of fully restoring her strength. Not only that, but it could also endow Anastasia with fresh energy, whereby outward attacks could no longer hold any terror for our granddaughter. But why did she decide to act on her own?

The tongues of fire extended in her direction quivered, but did not touch Anastasia, standing there with her hand raised. They either disappeared in the sphere, which was still raging with tremendous energy, or dashed out once more, reaching out in her direction but, as before, not touching her.

And then all at once, with slow and tender words, she addressed the fiery sphere and its tongues of light:

"I implore You now to contain the bursts of Your energy. Do not touch me. I can restore my strength in Your lake as before. I just need to make it to the shore."

In an instant the sphere gathered up all its quivering tongues of light from all around, and kept pulsating like a heart. It swept upward with a flash — it seemingly cracked asunder and then contracted. Its myriad tongues made a dash for the ground, touching everything on the path leading to the lake from Anastasia's feet.

And another vision arose. The path began to sparkle with millions of pulsating colours of light, making a multicoloured rainbow arc over the path leading to the lake from Anastasia's feet. It was a wondrous sight indeed! Anastasia's pathway now lay through a triumphal arch!

She took a step, but to one side. She did not follow the route marked out for her by the fiery sphere. She slowly attained the shore and dived in, then resurfaced and simply lay in the water with outstretched arms. Then she started splashing about — her strength had returned.

Anastasia's behaviour in relation to the fiery sphere, which was really in relation to God, was beyond our comprehension. But what happened next is comparable to a turning point in the consciousness of all mankind, or to a change of balance in the energies of the Universe. What happened next was...

Throwing on a little dress over her still wet body, she carefully smoothed out its folds, straightened her hair, then pressed her hands to her breast and began speaking out into space:

"My Father, You are present everywhere! I am your daughter amidst Your perfect creations.⁵ I must put an end to the dispute among the entities in the Universe as to whether Your creations are perfect, or whether they might be flawed.

"My Father, You are present everywhere! You have fulfilled my request and not touched me. None of them will now say that Paradise will return to the Earth only when God corrects His imperfect creations!

⁵See Book 4, Chapter II: "Three prayers".

“But there is nothing requiring Your correction. You created all right from the start in perfection. My Father, present everywhere, I am not alone. In all the corners of the Earth there are sons and daughters of Your own. And they have mighty aspirations. They will restore the Earth to the marvellous flowering of its original pristine creation.

“My Father, present everywhere, we are your sons and daughters. We are created by You. We are perfection.

“And now we shall show everyone what we can do. And may You be delighted by our actions.”

When Anastasia uttered these words and then fell silent, the fiery sphere which had been resting high above made a dash for the ground. About three metres from Anastasia's feet it dispersed into millions of tiny sparks all around, and then in an instant gathered itself back together into a single whole.

Only this single whole was no longer a fiery sphere.

There in front of Anastasia stood a child of (in Earth terms) about seven years. It is difficult to say whether it was a boy or a girl. The child's shoulders were covered by a fabric with a pale bluish-purple sheen that looked as though it were made out of mist itself. The child's hair fell around his shoulders. The expression on the child's face was one of intelligence, confidence and grace. Rather, the expression on the child's face was impossible to convey in words — it could only be described in terms of the feelings which overflowed our souls.

The young child stood barefoot on the grass without trampling even a single blade. Anastasia knelt to the ground in front of Him, then sat down on the grass, her eyes fixed on His extraordinary face. It seemed that in the very next second He and she would embrace, but this did not happen. The child smiled at Anastasia. With a careful utterance of each sound, He said:

“Thank you, sons and daughters, for your aspirations.”

Then as He dissipated into space, the fiery sphere once more appeared high above, glistening with a joyful light of the like nobody had ever seen before. It made several circles over the lake, and for five minutes or so drops of warm rain soothed everything growing around, as well as the smooth surface of the lake.

The moisture was invigorating. A few drops fell on my arm without rolling off. Instead, they dissolved, filling my body with a luxuriant bliss.

My father is always unflappable in situations like this, in complete control of his emotions, but this time even he was shaken. He walked through the taiga as though he could no longer feel his body, and I followed.

He walked for several hours, and then turned to speak to me. A tiny tear was rolling down his cheek. As one of the high priests, he was not susceptible to such emotion. But I saw his tears. Father said quietly and confidently:

“She did it! Anastasia has brought people across the dark forces’ window of time. The seeds of happy and joyful aspirations will now be scattered over the whole Earth.”

Then Father had a long and animated conversation with me. He was not surprised by the actions of the sphere, or by the fact that one of God’s representative forms — perhaps His main manifestation — had appeared to Anastasia in the person of a child.

My father was a priest, and not just a simple priest either. He had the ability to discern what was important in visible occurrences. And it wasn’t at all the vision itself that interested him. The most important thing was the appearance of a thought in space.

The thought produced by Anastasia had not been heard since the time of creation, nor reflected in a single religious or scientific treatise. Utterly simple and yet, at the same time, extraordinarily exalted, it has turned the treatises we know

into naïve musings which had nothing in common with the Divine essence. Anastasia had imbued human consciousness with the concept of God which Man had been missing all these years.

“What does it consist of?”

CHAPTER NINE



Divine faith

You know that the Earth and everything growing on it, as well as all its functions — rain, snow, wind — were thought up by Him right from the very start.

Our Creator — the Great Mind — created His great creation in an impulse of inspiration. And He created Man in His own image as a culmination of His creation.

But ever since the time of creation it turned out that many beings have been plagued with doubt as to whether Man was really created by God as a creation unsurpassed in the Universe. Is it really true what God said about Man not being just like any other creature but being equal with God? God Himself said, “My image and likeness he is... I have given him everything that is Mine, and will furthermore give him for his own all that may be thought at a future time.”¹

God wanted to see His own creation, Man, in the likeness of Himself.

Now take a look at mankind today. Many people talk about God. They talk about the strength of their love for the Creator. But with that they are lying to themselves. For it is impossible to love someone without seeing, feeling or understanding Him.

Many will say “I believe in God”. But what exactly do they believe in? Do they believe in God’s existence? But surely that indicates a very primitive level of consciousness. A Man

¹Quoted (with a slight variation) from two different paragraphs in Book 4, Chapter 3: “The first appearance of *you*”.

who says "I believe God exists" is admitting in effect that he neither feels nor understands God, but simply believes in His existence.

If by faith in God they mean that God is an almighty, kind and loving parent, then what do they do for God apart from uttering words? They destroy His creations and isolate themselves behind the stone walls of monasteries from the world created by their Father. They spend their time thinking up and churning out all sorts of treatises. And everywhere it's the same. The treatises say that God must be worshipped. But people worship they know not what.

And now, Vladimir, just imagine how God feels when He looks down and sees all this corruption. You can picture it if you try. After all, God possesses all Man's feelings, only with Him they are stronger, sharper and purer.

But even with the feelings we have today — our human and parental feelings — we can still picture how our Parent, our Creator must feel.

Here He is looking down on His children, but all they can do is cry:

"We love You, only give us more of Your goodness. We are Your servants, we are powerless and ignorant, we are stupid. Help us, O Lord!"

Is it really possible for creations in God's likeness to conduct themselves this way? What could be more painful for a parent than the helpless moaning of his children? This is how doubts about the perfection of God's creations arose among the elemental beings of the Universe.

"But who could make such a fool of Man this way? How? When?"

"The only one who could make a fool of Man is someone possessing equal power of thought — in other words, Man himself."

The priests were the ones who launched mankind down the path of degradation. They took it upon themselves to prove to God that they were capable of controlling all mankind, on the premise that humanity's moanings and torments would force God to enter into a dialogue with them.

They counted on this because they know that God never talks with anyone, never interferes in human destiny, that all destinies are determined by the paths human beings themselves have chosen.

But if mankind were to be brought to the brink of total destruction, God might enter into negotiations with those leading mankind to that brink — with those influencing people's minds — in order to head off an utter collapse. The premise was that God would do this for the sake of all humanity.

Millennia went by. But God did not enter into a dialogue with the priests and did not bring about any new miracles to bring people to their senses. First my father, and later I myself, understood why.

If He had done this, if God had interfered in human affairs, then He Himself would have confirmed the speculations on the part of the elemental beings of the Universe that Man was an imperfect creation.

But, more importantly, His interference would have ultimately destroyed Man's faith in himself. Man would have ultimately ceased discovering the Divine elements within himself and relied solely on help from outside.

And so He waited, and believed in His children, observing events and suffering, enduring the mockery and the taking of His name in vain. He believed in His creation, Man. It is His own faith that is truly the Divine faith.

The priests had hoped that the solution would come about just at the point when a global catastrophe was imminent. They had hoped the scenario they had thought up would come to pass. Not one of them imagined that a single Man — a young

woman — in the space of a few short years would thwart their plans and efforts they had been making over the course of millennia and turn mankind back to its Divine pristine origins.

But Anastasia did produce this most extraordinary turnabout. She demonstrated to the whole Universe the power of God's creation, she demonstrated the Divine wisdom. And quite possibly for the very first time. Just imagine, Vladimir, the majesty and significance of that event. For the first time since the moment of the creation of the Earth, our Father heard talk of the perfection of His creation.

The marvellous future visualised by Anastasia is already alive in space, and being concretised moment by moment by a whole lot of people who are beginning to understand their own essence and purpose in life. Materialisation will inevitably follow.

"But when will it follow? The priests, after all, are also capable of acting and interfering."

"But not the high priests. The challenge now is to abort the programme created by the priests. My father spoke with one of them before his departure. The priests never meet amongst themselves. They are located in various parts of the globe, but can communicate at a distance by feeling each other's thoughts."

My father was standing on a small hillock. The dawn's rays were already skimming the tops of the cedar trees, illuminating my father's face and his profile. I heard this dialogue take place silently in space:

"I am Moisey, descendant of a dynasty that has been controlling the destinies of peoples for thousands of years. I am their descendant and forebear. I appeal to you, self-appointed High Priest, but not on bended knee. Do not waste your efforts trying to counteract Anastasia.

"My granddaughter's aspirations do not correspond, in any way, shape or manner, to the plans we have thought up. This lack of correspondence is pleasing to me, it strikes a chord in my soul. I am Moisey, I am a priest. We are equal in power. I shall shield my granddaughter with my own self."

And the high priest's answer:

"Yes, Moisey, you and I are equal in power. And thus I realise that you are not asking me to stop the attacks — it is advice you are seeking from me.

"I am the one who is now thinking of how we can help her, how to put an end to this monstrosity of a system. We created a monster, and it is stronger than us. You yourself, after all, participated in its creation.

"It has been devouring children and mangling people's bodies for millennia. Now it will take centuries of our efforts to stop it. But your granddaughter's thinking is more accelerated than ours. She can create millennia in the space of a single year. None of us at the moment is in a position either to help her or to harm her.

"The only thing I am certain of is that we should be creating our own lifestyle according to the image outlined by your granddaughter, and pour all our knowledge into our creations, so that we ourselves become an example for people to follow."

The priests did not use all that many words as they talked amongst themselves, but what they said made a great deal of sense.

"I don't think everyone will understand the priests' dialogue. It's not clear to me, for instance, what kind of a beast they are talking about, the one that devours children. And why, if they really want to help Anastasia, your father and the high priest still say they are not in a position to offer help."

"It's all in the speed of one's thinking, Vladimir."

"Speed of thinking? But why is that so important? What's the connection?"

CHAPTER TEN



The speed of one's thinking

It is now well known that the feature that distinguishes Man from all other life growing and thriving on the Earth is his capacity to think. But thought is found in creatures and plants too, albeit in embryo. Man distinguishes himself from all others by the *speed* of his thinking.¹

Back at the beginning, the speed of Man's thinking most closely approximated God's, and with a certain lifestyle could increase and even surpass the Divine. At least that was the way our Parent wanted it. If Man's speed of thinking had attained the level of the Divine, Man could even now be creating a living, harmonious world on other planets.

The whole question of the significance of the speed of one's thinking is the greatest of the secrets guarded by the priests. They did their utmost to eliminate even expressions referring to it from the language.

Perhaps you have heard such expressions as *slow-witted* or *with you it takes a long time to sink in*. What is the meaning here? It means that it is difficult or boring to talk with someone whose thought operates at a slower speed.

All people living on the Earth have varying speeds of thinking. The differences may or may not be significant. A significant superiority in speed of thinking may enable one Man to conquer a great many people, even whole nations.

¹On the speed of one's thinking see also Book 2, Chapter 29: "Why nobody can see God".

Imagine that a million people are given a specific problem in arithmetic to work out. The one who can think at a faster rate than the others will be the first to come up with the solution. He may solve the problem ten seconds faster than the rest — or twenty, or thirty seconds, or a minute, or even ten minutes faster. We learn from this simple example that one person may know the answer ten minutes earlier than the rest. Ten minutes before the other 999. He will learn something new, acquire knowledge faster than the rest.

This arithmetic example may seem harmless enough, but...

Now let's imagine that all people on the Earth are given a problem that takes a thousand years to solve. They start working on it. But one Man has three times the speed of thinking of the others. That means he will know all the intermediate decisions of mankind before everyone else.

What takes humanity 900 years to work out, he will solve in 300 years. That means that for 600 years he will be in a position to control and direct the actions of everybody else. He will be able to reveal to someone the correct intermediate decision which will help him further his goal or, alternatively, give someone a false hint, thereby throwing him backward. Or, what would even be easier for him, give the wrong clue to everybody at the same time, driving them all to a dead end, and then later 'make a discovery' in front of everyone — in other words, rule over them.

As far back as seven thousand years ago the priests realised the tremendous advantages available to any Man who possessed a higher speed of thinking than all the rest. They took it upon themselves to significantly widen the gap. They tried to increase the distance between their own thinking and that of others by using special exercises, but they failed to achieve any significant difference in those times. And so they thought up a system which would slow down the thinking of

every child coming into the world. The system they inculcated kept improving over the millennia and it is still operating today.

Take a close look at the lifestyle of the majority of people of our time. If you analyse it, you will see the multitude of efforts directed at stopping the operation of your thought.

Anastasia began revealing the priests' secrets to people. She told about how even a small child should not be distracted from what he is doing — in other words, the operation of his thought should not be stopped.

Then she showed you a series of exercises aimed at accelerating a child's thought. She told about how education as we see it begins with the correct presentation of questions to the child.

When a child is presented with a question, his thought begins to search for the answer and thereby gains more and more momentum. This means that the speed of his thinking is increasing minute by minute, and by the time he is eleven it will be many, many times faster than that of someone raised under a system designed to slow thought down.

Let us take a look at what is happening in the world today. Right from his mother's womb a child is surrounded by artificial objects. Any object is the embodiment of someone's thought. So the child is presented with somebody's thought — a primitive thought at that — a rattle, for example. A child just a little older is given a doll or a mechanical toy car. Children love to play, but they are still dependent on others, so they play with what others present to them.

Think about the difference, Vladimir. Your daughter, when she was little, kept shaking her rattle, and later got interested in dolls. Your son, on the other hand — the one Anastasia bore you — also likes to play, as all children do. But what he played with was a squirrel, a wolf, a bear, a snake and a lot of other creatures made by the Creator.

Now compare the two, only be sure to picture to yourself the degree of discrepancy in the speed of thinking between the one who created the child's rattle or doll and the One who created the squirrel.

So it turns out that one child comes into contact with an object comprising a primitive thought, while the other communicates with an object created by God. The vast discrepancy between the objects the children communicate with means that the speed of their thinking will be vastly different. One of them will have a greater speed of thinking — you yourself can guess which one.

When children in your society begin to talk, you determine for them what they can do and what they cannot. Children are persuaded, in effect, that they should not think for themselves, that everything is already decided for them. This means they don't have to think. All they have to do is follow somebody else's thoughts.

When children go to school, a teacher stands before them and explains the essence of things, along with the rules of conduct and the order of the Universe. The teacher not only explains — he demands that the children think the same way as somebody else has thought. And once again this serves to slow down the development of the children's thinking speed. Or, to put it more precisely, children are prohibited from thinking independently.

In your schools the most important subject — the one designed to increase the speed of children's thinking — is missing from the syllabus. This most important subject is replaced by a whole lot of other subjects aimed at slowing down children's existing speed of thinking.

CHAPTER ELEVEN



Training thought

Listening to Grandfather's account, I realised that Anastasia too, in communicating with our son, was constantly creating learning experiences for him, training his thought up to speed. Outwardly this looks like play, but thought is all the while being trained even when the child, through what looks like play, is developing purely physical abilities.

I have already mentioned how one morning while playing tag with a she-wolf, Anastasia executed the following trick: after beckoning to the wolf, she quickly began running away from it. The wolf gave chase. But when it had almost caught up, Anastasia suddenly leapt up against the trunk of a nearby cedar tree, pushed herself off from it with her legs, did a somersault and ran off in the opposite direction, while the wolf's inertia kept it dashing on past.¹

I watched as my son, too, played tag with a wolf cub. The young wolf always overtook the boy, no matter how fast he tried to run.

It would run just a little ahead, then turn and deftly manage to give a quick lick to the child's arm or leg on the run. Volodya would stop on the spot, rest a while, and then once again try to outrun the wolf, and once again the wolf would catch up with him.

When Anastasia showed our son the trick of leaping against the cedar tree to sharply change his direction, he really liked the idea, and tried to repeat it himself. He leapt up against

¹See Book 1, Chapter 6: "Anastasia's morning".

the tree from a run, but was unable to do a somersault and head off in the opposite direction. When he tried pushing off from the trunk the first time, Volodya landed on all fours. Falling again on his second attempt, he looked enquiringly at his mother. Anastasia told him:

"Before jumping up against the tree, Volodya, you should work out your next moves in your head."

"I did do that, Mama. I saw how you did it, you know."

"You saw how my body did it, but you did not conceive or feel how *your* body should do it, or what it should be governed by. You first need to train it with your thought."

How one could execute a physical exercise in one's thinking was something quite incomprehensible. However, the boy walked up to the tree-trunk and stood by it for some time, either with his eyes closed or making instinctive movements with his arms and legs. Then he stepped back and made a run at the cedar trunk.

This time he ran faster than usual. I was even a bit afraid something might happen to him, that he might hit himself against the trunk and get hurt. But he came through with flying colours. He pushed himself off and executed the somersault. After stumbling just a little on landing, he was able to start running back at once. He repeated the exercise several times, getting it more technically perfect each time.

Good exercise, I thought. "It develops all the muscles," I told Anastasia.

"Yes," she replied. "It develops the muscles, and, more importantly, accelerates the thinking."

I wasn't about to ask how a purely physical exercise could accelerate one's thinking, but it wasn't long before I realised that this was precisely the goal Anastasia had in mind in showing Volodya that particular trick. It happened like this:

Volodya summoned his playmate, the wolf, and they started off racing. The wolf had almost caught up to the boy when

Volodya did his somersault and ran back in the opposite direction. Not anticipating this turn of events, the creature kept dashing on past the cedar.

While the wolf stopped and tried to figure out what had happened, Volodya was already running headlong the other way in triumph. He was laughing, waving his arms, leaping into the air, making the most of his victory.

The young wolf, however, proved an exceptionally astute and clever rival. As Volodya was trying this trick for the fifth time, at the very moment he was approaching the tree, the wolf suddenly slowed its pace and stopped just a little space shy of the tree-trunk. When Volodya completed his somersault and was about to run off in the other direction, the wolf easily got in a lick as he landed, leapt in the air and wagged its tail. Now it was the creature's turn to triumph, while Volodya could only stare at it distractedly in amazement.

Anastasia and I sat nearby and watched the whole scene unfold. Once again Volodya attempted to outwit the creature, but once again he failed. On each occasion the clever wolf stopped just in time, waited for the boy to land, and managed to get in a lick, sometimes more than one.

Volodya began pondering the situation. His expression turned serious, even to the point of frowning. But apparently nothing came to him. Still pondering, he headed over to us and looked us enquiringly in the eye. Anastasia at once said:

"Now, Volodya, you will have to take into consideration not only your own thought, but also the thought of the wolf."

And once more the boy went off to think. I also began contemplating the situation. And I reached a firm conclusion: once the wolf had figured out the boy's manoeuvre, there was nothing more that could be done. The wolf would anticipate his actions, and while he was executing them, it would simply wait for him. Even if Volodya did the trick twice as fast, the wolf would still succeed in getting in its lick, and no

amount of thought would help. When I discerned from the boy's face as he approached us that he had come to the same conclusion, I said to Anastasia:

"Why are you tormenting the child like that? It's clear that he's never going to outrun the wolf now. And neither will you. That she-wolf of yours had no idea of what was going on when you ran away from her, but this young wolf has proved to be smarter than its mother."

"Yes, it is smarter than its mother, but Man should always be smarter. I am not tormenting our son. I simply suggested he think about it, take the wolf's thought into account and come to his own solution."

"But it's absolutely clear there's no solution here. If there is, then show me. It's hard for me to see my son with such a sad expression on his face."

Anastasia got up and beckoned to the young wolf, which came to her delightedly at once, wagging its tail. Anastasia gave it a cuff on the shoulder and ran off, signalling the wolf to follow.

Volodya and I watched how fast and easily Anastasia ran. The amazingly sprightly and fluid movements of this already mature mother were impressive in their beauty and forthrightness.

Yet still the young wolf's pace was just that much faster. Several times Anastasia was able to dodge it by sharply changing direction. The wolf momentarily lagged behind a bit, but was soon well on its way to catching up. There was no doubt but that it would overtake her in the long run.

Then Anastasia made a headlong dash for the same cedar trunk Volodya had used to push himself off from. A few metres before reaching the tree the wolf slowed his pace and, upon seeing Anastasia leap into the air, he sat down, preparing to lick her arm or leg the moment she landed. But...

She did indeed make her leap, but did not push off from the tree. Her body passed within a centimetre or two of the trunk. She kept on running, getting further and further away, while the astonished wolf went on sitting at the ready, trying to make sense of what had happened.

Volodya jumped up and down, clapping his hands and shouting with glee:

"I have got it, Papa, I have got it! I have to think quickly, for both myself and the wolf. I have to think quickly for myself and manage to think for the wolf more quickly than it thinks for itself, and put it all into action on time. I now know how to do it."

When Anastasia came over, he said to her:

"Thank you, Mama. The wolf will never catch me now."

The next time he raced the wolf, Volodya first tried twisting and turning as Anastasia had done, but then he went through a whole cavalcade of all sorts of tricks. He would grasp hold of a small tree-trunk on the run and use it to change direction faster than the pursuing creature. Or, leaping over a thick branch that had been broken by the wind, he would run up to it a second time, only this time jumping just on the spot, while the wolf made a headlong dash forward.

This is just one example — and there are a great many more. But the important thing is not the number of examples, but understanding the principle of the exercise.

CHAPTER TWELVE



The ultimate taboo

Not only for children, but for grown-ups living today too, the system pours forth floods of apparently meaningful information, but in reality practically all communications are calculated to draw Man away from information.¹

Take, for example, the TV you watch regularly. Every news broadcast tells about how one official is meeting with some other official, or how one leader meets with another leader. Their meetings are served up as news. But if you stop to think about it, you'll realise that there is absolutely nothing new here at all.

Officials have been meeting together for thousands of years now, hour by hour. Summit negotiations between various countries have also been taking place for thousands of years. But nothing ever comes from these negotiations, and nothing of substance ever changes as a result.

It does not change because they never talk about *the most important thing*. They never discuss the true cause of war. They talk only about effects.

Yet the media lead you astray by serving up every summit meeting as news.

Just think about it: the ultimate taboo subject in the whole world is the path of mankind's development.

Can you just imagine the passengers of an aeroplane in flight who couldn't give a care in the world as to where the

¹This and the following chapter are once again narrated by Anastasia's grandfather.

plane is heading or whether it is even able to land? You may think that passengers like that don't exist. Everyone boarding a plane has an idea of how long the flight will last and the destination city. But ask one or two or a thousand people living on Planet Earth, ask a million even, and nobody will be able to tell you just where mankind is heading.

The system created by the priests has blocked up human thought.

Modern Man with his extremely slow rate of thinking is not in a position to determine whether mankind — or even a single nation-state — is on the right path of development. He is not in a position to visualise even his own life.

In reality, all the leaders on the Earth are in control of nothing, absolutely nothing. There is not a single country in the world where you will find a clearly stated plan of national development. Such a plan is impossible without first determining a clear and explicit path of development for the residents of Planet Earth as a whole.

As a result of a simple scheme the priests devised in the process of constructing their system, all rulers are mere superintendents watching over the functioning of the priests' system. They are all wrapped up in their own country's scientific and technical progress, their military strength and the preservation of their own power. For this they are ready to sacrifice the quality of the air and water in their own country and collectively in the world. They are weighed down under the system created by the priests. Like the majority of people on the Earth, the rulers are active pawns in this system. Their thought is slowed down as much as anyone else's.

The speed of one's thinking! Oh how I hope that you or some of your readers can perceive this not just through cold logic but feel it with every fibre of your being — feel how important the speed of your thinking is for the whole Universe!

To find the right words, or to cite the examples needed for understanding, is not an easy task. Examples! Anastasia compared the modern computer to a prosthesis for the brain² — in other words, to a prosthesis for thinking. It is probably true that people most familiar with how a computer works will not only understand but also feel the importance of thinking speed more readily than others. After all, you too, Vladimir, are able to work on a computer. Maybe through the computer you will be able to more quickly appreciate the catastrophic consequences of the sluggishness of human thinking.

Anyone familiar with a computer knows how important for the computer is the size of its memory and its operating speed. Note, I said: *operating speed*.

Now imagine what could happen if one were to slow down the operating speed of a computer controlling an aircraft's flight or a nuclear power plant. The computer might allow an accident to happen, and that would mean a disaster.

The living biological computer native to every Man on the Earth is incomparably more efficient than the manufactured variety. It is called upon to assist in the controlling of an immeasurably more perfect and massive device — the planets of the Universe.

These *can* be governed when this biological computer operates at a speed approximating or surpassing that of the original. However, the speed has been diminishing, and is continuing to diminish. Anyone can see this for themselves if they but examine the situation more carefully.

When even the most state-of-the-art manufactured computer keeps getting loaded day by day, hour by hour, with all sorts of data — it doesn't matter what kind of data, only that it is being inputted — eventually it will start to work more slowly, or it may refuse to process any new information

²See Book 1, Chapter 17: "The brain — a supercomputer".

whatsoever. This happens when its memory is overloaded to the point it can no longer accept new data.

Most people on the Earth today have experienced something like this. And the system created by the priests has got out of control. It has started operating all on its own.

When I mentioned earlier the monster devouring the children, I was talking about the system which has got out of control. Take a careful look: when a child is born to an earthly mother, what is it that immediately takes it into its mighty clutches? The system.

What determines what food is to be given to the child? The system.

What determines what kind of air the child is to breathe and what kind of water he is to drink? The system.

What determines the selection of his path in life? The system.

The priests are losing control of the social order on the Earth, yet they are aware of the laws by which it operates and can still exercise an influence on the life of the planet. They are able still today to slow down or accelerate development in specific situations.

When the first book with Anastasia's sayings appeared, the priests took an immediate interest in it. Naturally! After all, these sayings came from the mouth of the great-granddaughter of a priest — not only someone familiar with the secret levers of control but also a young woman leading a lifestyle favourable to accelerating the operation of thought.

They realised that Anastasia had set herself the goal of transporting people across the dark forces' window of time. Theoretically, this is indeed a possibility. Transporting across time constitutes a change in consciousness. And it is possible to do something like this with a single individual.

Substantially changing the collective consciousness of mankind is a process extending over millennia, requiring the

participation of many generations. But a process extending over millennia cannot be called transporting people across a window of time.

Transporting people across a window of time means changing the consciousness of people already living on the Earth today — changing it to a consciousness which was or will be inherent in them under the conditions of a Divine, paradisaical existence.

The priests tried to figure out the plan by which Anastasia was going to operate. They did work it out and deemed it to be naïve, containing a plethora of questionable decisions. The means of distributing information through a book alone they regarded as clearly insufficient. Modern Man, they believed, requires a good deal of repetition for information to sink in.

Then they learnt that the book's author was an entrepreneur who not only was lacking even minimal authority among spiritually thinking people but was a complete unknown in such circles.

Consequently, the priests decided, a Siberian recluse would not be able to achieve anything significant in human society by the method chosen. My father shared this opinion as well.

The priests got their first shock and call to alertness when Anastasia's prophecies in the first book started coming true. She told you:

"I shall bring you many people who will explain to you what is incomprehensible."³ And people started coming to you who were not just capable of explaining something. People started to act. She said:

³This and the following references are drawn (though not word-for-word) from various chapters in Book 1. See especially Chapter 26: "Dreams — creating the future".

“Artists will draw pictures, and poets will write verse.” And both pictures and many poems came forth, dedicated to the new and marvellous reality of mankind’s being. She said:

“The book you write will be read by people in various countries.” And the book has been published in many languages.

The priests did not know what power or devices facilitated the realisation of Anastasia’s sayings. Yet they are coming true for all to see.

They realised that she was beginning to make her cherished dreams come true, but they could not discern the manner by which she reached the goals she set for herself.

This could mean only one thing — namely, that the speed of Anastasia’s thinking significantly surpassed that of the priests. The insightful combinations produced by her thought are incomprehensible. This means that the priests might lose the opportunity to influence human society for good.

This was not something the priests could permit.

While they were trying to figure out patterns of counter-action, something even more incredible came to light. New sayings of Anastasia’s were being made public. Many people now aspired to create the domains she had talked about.

And then Anastasia became the target for all kinds of counter-measures. One of the most effective of these was a disinformation campaign involving the magic word-symbol *sect*.⁴

Your press was filled with publications talking about various terrifying sects, including the so-called ‘Anastasia sect’. These publications used still other word-symbols like *totalitarian* and *destructive*.

This particular counter-measure has been used by priests from time immemorial. In ancient Rus’ it helped facilitate a

⁴In today’s Russian usage, the word *sekta* (‘sect’) is used as a synonym for *kul’t* (‘cult’). Therefore the accusation of being a ‘sectarian’ actually suggests adherence to some dangerous cult.

change in religion.⁵ This was a tactic that never failed. And in the latest case, too, the priests imagined that it had done its job. You and a whole lot of readers — both those who communicated amongst themselves and those who didn't know each other — were amazed to discover that people were labelling them 'sectarians'.

False rumours were cleverly and intensively circulated. This is why government agencies never reached a decision on the question of land-grants. There was active opposition, both vocal and hidden, to the initiative to allocate land for the establishment of family domains. The system had worked.

Lower-order priests figured that they were rid of Anastasia once and for all. The high priest was the first to discern that this was not the case. He realised that in visualising the future, Anastasia's thought had not only taken the system's counter-measures into consideration, but had also redirected them to serve the cause of good.

This is what happened. The domains established according to the principles outlined by Anastasia were impossible to construct along traditional lines. They required a detailed plan of development. They involved the working out of a long-term project which would take at least a year to develop — significantly longer in some cases. Action without sufficient preparatory thought could lead to the discreditation of the ideas involved.

By slowing down the process of land allocation, the authorities prevented quick action from being taken.

⁵*change in religion* — The reference here is to the official adoption of Christianity as a state religion by Kievan Rus' in A.D. 988. For a more detailed description, see Book 6, Chapter 4: "A dormant civilisation". *Rus'* (pronounced *ROOSS*) was the name given to the East Slavic state dominated by the city of Kiev between 880 and the mid-12th century, although Anastasia explains that it dates back much farther than that — see, for example, the closing statement in Book 6, Chapter 6: "Imagery and trial".

But slowing down the process of land allocation did not enable them to destroy the dream of a bright future or to slow down the speed of thinking on the part of many people who were in the process of imaging their future domain, not to mention the future of the country and a marvellous future for all mankind.

While Anastasia spoke about Russia's taking the lead in building this marvellous future, she well understood that it would be impossible to create a Paradise in just a single community or even in a single nation-state. Indeed, her dream was being adopted in the hearts of people in countries the world over. You can ascertain this, Vladimir, by the popularity of your books published in these countries. They are enjoying great acclaim today, but that is nothing compared to what the future holds. When people begin to realise...

Now the priests have recognised this. Anastasia is beginning to solve mysteries they have been beating their heads over for thousands of years. Here is one of them.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN



Divine nutrition

The high priest once told my father in conversation:

“Your great-granddaughter, Moisey, knows the mysteries of being which were concealed from us. She knows the secrets of nourishing both the body and spirit. You yourself, of course, ascertained this from her own words: *One should eat just as one breathes.*¹

“Our forebears once read these words on the walls of their secret temples. We believed them to be meaningful, but up until now their secret has not been revealed. In explaining just a little of it to those who will be creating their own family domains, she will thereby create the conditions for the speed of thinking of these new domain dwellers to exceed our own. Compared to children born in her domains we shall appear to be simply ignorant youngsters. In setting out her design, she showed us the only way out — each of us must set up the same kind of domain which she has described to everyone. We shall establish them, we shall try to make them better and more perfect than the rest, and for that we have great possibilities.

“She is revealing the mysteries of being to everyone, and by the time we learn about them, we shall already have *our* domains, while others will still be going about setting up their own. And then once again the difference in the speed of our thinking will allow us to foresee and consequently control life

¹Quoted from Book 1, Chapter 4: “Who are they?”.

on the planet. This is what I have been thinking. I should like to hear your opinion on this, Moisey.”

And my father replied:

“You want to hear my opinion because you have your doubts. You want to foresee what situation Anastasia will be visualising in case the priests — and you who have appointed yourself to the highest position — are the first to set up the domains which will draw you closer to the Divine being? You want to know whether her thought has taken such a scenario into account?”

“I am convinced that she has,” the high priest replied to Father. “And she herself does not conceal the fact. But I should like to hear your opinion on why she is openly daring us by giving us the opportunity to reassert our control over the world?”

“All because,” my father answered the high priest, “my great-granddaughter Anastasia is not about to enter into a confrontation with you. When the priests, as the rulers of the Earth, begin creating their own domains, their thoughts will be transformed. Their souls will become radiant with light.” [...]

“Thank you, Moisey! Our thoughts have come together as one. And I applaud the prospect of living in another reality — possibly in one where each of us can talk with God.

“I bow before your great-granddaughter’s thought, Moisey. May Anastasia succeed in finding the strength within herself to overcome the system we created like a wild beast, or a herd of beasts. Help her if you can, Moisey!”

“Try helping her yourself. I can’t keep up with her more youthful thought. I used to think her actions were illogical.”

“And I shall not be able to either, Moisey. She eats just as she breathes. We have been soiling our flesh. I have not the strength to nourish my spirit the way she nourishes hers. I can only guess at what is helping her.”



In the times of our pristine origins people's way of life was quite different from today's. They not only knew Nature, they controlled it. Through the sounds of Nature and the power of the light of the heavenly bodies they had access to the database of the Universe. They received information not just through their mind, but through their feelings too. The speed of their thinking was many times greater than that of people today.

The early priesthood realised that absolute control over mankind was possible only if they could achieve a considerably greater speed of thinking than other people, but how to achieve this goal? One of the ancient priests once said in a secret conversation with the high priest:

"We cannot accelerate our thought to achieve sufficient superiority over everybody else. But we can use special devices to slow down the thinking of all mankind."

"You said: *all mankind*. Does that include your own thought?" the high priest responded.

"Yes, in the final analysis, it does, but to a much lesser extent. The discrepancy will be tremendous. The advantage will be on our side."

"Since you are talking about it, that means you have already found a way of slowing down the thought of all mankind. Tell me about it."

"It is simple. We need to conceal from people the existing Divine method of nutrition. We need to have them consume food that does not accelerate, but, rather, slows thought

down. That is the main condition. The rest is a chain reaction. The degradation of thought will bring a number of factors into play which will influence the speed of their thinking. Compared to us everybody else will be inferior.”

“How can we conceal what God offers to everyone?”

“We promote the necessity of giving gratitude to God for what He offers.”

“I have it. You have come up with a monstrous plan, but it is perfect. People will agree to give gratitude to the Creator and will not see anything wrong with it. We shall think up rituals to draw people away from God’s first-hand creations. People will be thinking that they are giving God thanks. But the more time they spend on giving thanks, gathering around the idols we think up, the less communication they will have with God’s own creations, and the farther removed they will be from information coming straight from God.

“They will be receiving information from us, but imagining it is God’s will. Their thought will go off in the wrong direction. We shall lead it in the wrong direction.”



Centuries passed, and people spent more and more time on the rituals thought up by the priests, thinking all along that they were simply paying their respects to God. At the same time people communicated less and less with the Creator’s first-hand creations and, consequently, no longer had access to the information of the Universe in all its fulness — God’s information. They caused God pain and suffering, all the while believing they were bringing Him joy.

At the same time the priests began telling people what kind of food they should be giving preference to, at the same time creating for themselves the secret science of dietetics. The priests needed this to maintain their brain, their spirit, their physical health — and, consequently, their thought — in a more efficient operational state than other people's.

Thus they suggested that people plant certain kinds of growing things, but they themselves used other kinds for food — more specifically, in a greater variety than the rest. Thus began a monstrous degradation of human consciousness.

Man began to know diseases of both body and soul. People intuitively sensed the meaning of nutrition and over the millennia tried to come to terms with this question.

Wise men appeared who attempted to give advice on what food products were the most healthful. Many teachings on dietetics were introduced. It was a topic touched upon in books you are familiar with, such as the Bible and the Koran. Here is what it says about nutrition in the Old Testament, for example:

You shall not eat any abominable thing. These are the animals you may eat: ox, sheep, goat, buck, gazelle, roebuck, wild-goat, white-rumped deer, long-horned antelope, and rock-goat. You may eat any animal which has a parted foot or a cloven hoof and also chews the cud ... you may not eat ... the camel, the hare, and the rock-badger ... you shall regard them as unclean; and the pig, because it has a cloven hoof but does not chew the cud, you shall regard as unclean. You shall not eat their flesh or even touch their dead carcasses.

Of creatures that live in the water you may eat all those that have fins and scales, but you may not eat any that have neither fins nor scales; you shall regard them as unclean. You may eat all clean birds. These are the birds you may

not eat: the griffon-vulture, the black vulture, the bearded vulture, the kite, every kind of falcon, every kind of crow, the desert-owl, the short-eared owl, the long-eared owl, every kind of hawk, the tawny owl, the screech-owl, the little owl, the horned owl, the osprey, the fisher-owl, the stork, every kind of cormorant, the hoopoe, and the bat.

All seeming winged creatures you shall regard as unclean; they may not be eaten. You may eat every clean insect.

You shall not eat anything that has died a natural death. You shall give it to the aliens who live in your settlements, and they may eat it, or you may sell it to a foreigner; for you are a people holy to the Lord your God.²



Over the millennia various books were written advising people what and how to eat to be healthy. But not a single book, not a single wise-man — or, indeed, all the scholars put together — has ever been able to fully shed light on this question. The proof may be seen in the ever-increasing numbers of diseases of the human body and soul.

A whole lot of books were published advising how to treat disease. And today you have the science of medicine. They tell you it is constantly being perfected. But at the same time just look at how the number of sick people is constantly increasing.

So what is medical science actually perfecting? The results speak for themselves: *it is perfecting disease.*

²Deuteronomy 14: 3–21 (cited here from *The New English Bible*).

I can see that this conclusion sounds strange to you. But just think: why don't the whole masses of animals in natural surroundings get sick, while Man, who considers himself to be the most highly developed of all creatures, is unable to cope with his own diseases?

The science you call upon to treat disease has never, over the whole period of its existence, ever touched upon the ultimate cause of all disease. It has always given its attention to *effect*. People who are sick, of course, need doctors. But it is no less true under the current conditions of your world order that doctors need sick people to treat.

But even among the priests themselves the speed of thinking has been declining. Not to the level of everyone else's, but still diminishing. This phenomenon disturbed the priests more than any other. They paid more and more attention to the mysteries of Divine nutrition but could not unravel them.

One of the priests assigned to take care of the science of dietetics apparently figured out something and began writing it on the wall of the secret underground chamber where no one except a few of the main priests could enter.

He wrote: *One should eat just as one breathes.*

After writing the last letter of the last word of the sentence — or, rather, just before finishing the last letter — the old priest died. He had not managed to explain the meaning of this sentence to anyone — either to his descendant-successor or to any of the other priests.

Priests have been trying to unravel the mystery of the phrase "One should eat just as one breathes" over all the millennia since. They were afraid that somebody else might get wind of it and guess its secret before they did.

They erased it, rubbed it off the wall of their temple. But they transmitted it orally to succeeding generations of their descendants, in the hope that it would be deciphered in the future. All to no avail.

Astrologers, healers and wise-men appointed by political rulers worked on the question of nutrition over many thousands of years. Nobody was able to solve the puzzle.

If any of the rulers' wise-men had managed to figure out how Man should feed himself, then those rulers that considered themselves to be the strongest in the world would have ceased to fall ill, and their longevity would have increased.

If any of the earthly rulers had known what kind of food he should take in, he could have become the supreme ruler of the Earth. The speed of his thinking could have surpassed that of the priests.

But all the rulers of the Earth get sick and die. Their longevity is no greater than that of ordinary people, even though they may have the best healers and wise-men right at hand. And so the degradation of human society continues.

It seemed to be just in passing that Anastasia uttered that sentence to you: "One should eat just as one breathes." You published it in a book. You published it in the context of your experience with her and didn't give it any special thought.

But for the priests living today, the publication of that sentence, the one that had been erased from the walls of their temple more than five thousand years ago, became a cause for very great concern.

Time and again they gave careful reading to the books with Anastasia's sayings and realised that not only did she know the phrase, but she had full knowledge of Divine nutrition.

The speed of thinking of a Man possessing such knowledge would naturally be able to surpass that of all the priests taken together and, consequently, be able to control all humanity, including the priests. But in order to maintain control, he would have to conceal information, while here *she* has gone and revealed it to everyone. This means she has freed people from the priests' influence, thereby leading them to direct communication with the thoughts of God.

This was something they realised after seeing how Anastasia slipped in among her sayings information on the nourishment of Adam. In *Co-creation* you cited Anastasia's words about how people were nourished back at the time of their pristine origins:

"All around him were a multitude of fruits with a variety of tastes, berries and edible grasses. But during those first days Adam felt no sense of hunger. He remained satisfied with fresh air alone...

"One certainly cannot live on the air Man breathes today. Today's air is dying, and is often harmful to one's body and soul. You mentioned the saying that one cannot live on air, but there is another saying: 'I have been fed by air alone', which corresponds to what was available to Man in the beginning. Adam was born in a marvellous garden, and the air surrounding him did not contain a single harmful particle. Pollen had been dissolved into that air, along with drops of purest dew."

"Pollen? What kind of pollen?"

"Pollen from flowers and grasses, from trees and fruit, which diffused fragrances into the air. Some came from those close by, while breezes brought others from distant places. Back then Man was not distracted from his great works by any problems of finding food. He was fed by everything around him through the air. This was the way it was all designed by the Creator right from the very beginning, so that all life on Earth should strive to please Man, and the air and the water and the breeze would be life-giving, under the impulse of love."³

³Quoted from Book 4, Chapter 4: "The first day".

Of course, people's diet at the time of their Divine pristine origins was not confined to life-giving air. They consumed a lot else besides, but their body and soul were nourished by air and water to a significant degree.

When you published Anastasia's words about nutrition, the priests were astonished at how this simplest of truths had escaped them for so long. Yet all along they knew why this was so.

Secluding themselves in their temples, they were not able to breathe the pollen-laded air. In gathering people together for rituals, where the only thing the crowds raised was dust, they ended up breathing the dust of their own schemes.

The priests understood the significance of nutrition. Their diet included teas containing many healing herbs, along with a variety of fruits and vegetables. Among other things they attached considerable importance to cedar oil, which their attendants brought them from far-off places. Moreover, their diet also included honey and flower pollen gathered by bees. But Anastasia showed that this was far from being sufficient. It was a different kind of pollen, for one thing. The pollen that the bees gathered and packed into honeycomb was quite healthful, of course, but was a far cry from the variety that could be found in the air over one's family Space.

Bees, after all, gather pollen from a relatively small number of floral species. But the air contains all varieties, and it is distinguished from bee-produced pollen by its softness and its easy digestibility.

Airborne pollen is alive, capable of fecundation. With each breath a Man would take it in and it dissolved inside, nourishing his whole body, including his brain.

When the priests saw Anastasia talking about family domains — a hectare of one's Motherland for each family — they realised she was taking people back to a way of life that was part and parcel of their pristine origins.

They knew right away that family domains are not only capable of bringing people material benefits — there is something much more important. In the context of Anastasia's sayings people can form a Space capable of nourishing their body, soul and spirit, and show to everyone openly the truths of the Divine order of creation.

The time is approaching when mankind will be present simultaneously in two worlds. It will be able to make use both of the achievements of the technocratic, artificial world, as well as its own Divine pristine origins. By comparing these two worlds, not through hearsay but first-hand, through observing their own experience, people will be able to make their own choice, or create a new world. They will be able to create their own marvellous Divine future.

Anastasia showed people not only the meaning and essence of Divine nutrition, but how to attain it as well. Her family domains...

Picture to yourself, Vladimir, a morning-time. A Man awakens at dawn and goes out of his house into the garden of his family domain, in which are growing more than three hundred varieties of plants he needs.

He has taken up the habit of walking around his property every morning.

As he walks along the path his eyes are delighted by the lively variety of herbs, trees and flowers. These cannot help but delight and furnish him with positive emotions.

Nothing can give him a greater emotional charge or abundant energy than one's own family life-giving Space.

Many ages passed. In each of them attempts were made to attract mankind to all sorts of different values.

Man became enthralled with a huge house, the latest clothing, a new car or some other gadget. Man became enthralled with money and his position in society. But all such joys are

conditional and fleeting. They only bring a temporary sense of happiness and pleasure, and within a short space of time they become commonplace, bothersome and sometimes downright annoying.

An old and decaying house will begin to demand constant repair. A car, too, can start having frequent breakdowns. Clothes wear out.

Man has always intuitively felt the true beauty and perfection of the eternal, and that is why even a king surrounded by luxury and personal palaces has always needed a garden. This is a truth that has remained unshakeable for millions of years of Man's life on the Earth.

True delight and peace is attainable only in one's own family domain.

When a Man takes his morning walk through his family domain, every blade of grass is delighted and reacts to him. And, far from decaying, his garden grows with every passing moment of blessed living.

The Man understands that the programme he has set out — trees, bushes and fruit-bearers planted by his own hand — will not decay but live on through the ages. They will live for ever, provided the Man does not change his mind.

When the Man takes his morning walk through his family domain, he breathes its air, and with each breath takes in thousands of invisible particles — plant pollen. The air is saturated with them. Quite alive, they enter the Man, dissolving within him without a trace, nourishing his body with everything he needs. And the air of one's family domain nourishes not only the human body, but feeds the spirit with ethers and accelerates thought.

When the Man takes his morning walk through his family domain, he may stop all of a sudden and pick three berries off a currant bush and eat them. Why does he stop in front of a currant bush in particular? Why does he pick precisely three

berries? In what book of wisdom has the Man read that on this particular day he will need these three berries?

And he really does need them, as it turns out. He needs them on this very day, this very minute, and in this very quantity.

Then after taking another few steps, the Man bends over to smell a flower. Why does he do this? Who told him of the need to take in the aromatic ether of this flower in particular?

And several steps farther on he picks something more to eat...

When the Man takes his morning walk through his family domain, he smiles, thinking about something personal, while at the same time enjoying a surfeit of fruits — not thinking about them, but feeling them. *This Man has been eating just as he breathes.*

Who then has been calculating the Man's dietetic needs with such incredible accuracy? Where has all this information been recorded for every Man born on the Earth? This information — you realise, Vladimir — all this information is present in every Man born on the Earth. Note this:

Every Man contains a 'mechanism' (I can't seem to find an alternative word) capable of arousing the sense of hunger — a signal that his body and spirit require some kind of substance in the Universe. We need not specify just what exactly, the proportion or quantity — nobody can answer this question intellectually. Only your body knows about this and it is what selects just three currant berries out of the whole variety available.

But in order to afford the opportunity for the right choice, your body must have all the information available about them. And it is only in one's family domain that such information is accessible.

Let's say you go into a store where there are a whole lot of fruits spread out on the counters. You want an apple. You

see a whole huge variety of apples. Which kind to choose? An exact choice is impossible, since your body — which is capable of making an exact choice — does not have any information about the apples on the counters. It hasn't tried them. It doesn't know the taste and correlation of substances. Neither does it know when the apples were picked, which is very important as well.

As a result, the apples you purchase at the store may turn out to be beneficial, but their benefit will be not nearly so great as when your body is apprised of all the information about the product you are making it digest.

The product you ingest may even turn out to be harmful to your body — in which case disease makes an appearance. Such a thing could not happen in your family domain, since you know for absolute certain which tree produces the sweeter or more sour apples, and when they are ready for you. Your body receives all the information about all the fruits in your family domain.

It received all the information about them back when you were still in your mother's womb. And afterward, when you drank milk from your mum's breast. Your mum, after all, delighted in the very same fruits. And they contributed to the consistency of her milk.

And now as a grown Man...

When a Man is in the Space of his kin's domain, he tastes the fruits and berries — everything that went into the consistency of his mother's milk.

There is another concept in your civilisation — it's healthful for a Man to consume fresh produce. But what, exactly, is 'fresh produce'?

Not frozen, dried, tinned or sealed in barrels, like you thought, but produce that comes to you in its natural state. And you have cultivated a huge assortment of hybrid varieties

that can be preserved many days with the appearance of fresh produce. Believe me, the appearance of freshness is deceptive and harmful.

Now see if you can make sense of what I've just said and test it out for yourself.

Almost all berries can be considered 'fresh' for no more than a few minutes. Cherries (both sweet and wild) and apples will last an hour, tops. But still they change with every minute that goes by, mutating into something else.

Pick a cherry and leave it just overnight, then take it back to the tree where it came from and eat it. Then pick another cherry from the same branch and taste it. See — you will sense the difference — which cherry is fresher and tastier — even with your eyes closed.

As for raspberries, you'll notice the difference after only an hour, while some other kind of fruit might take twenty-four hours. And you will see that anyone who does not have a family domain, no matter how rich or important he may be, cannot take in *fresh* food. That means he is not as capable of quick thinking as he might otherwise be.

Even back in ancient treatises wise men attempted to set forth their perceptions as to what produce was the most healthful for Man in any given season. And this is very important. But among all of these there is only one treatise which remains inviolable, and that is the one which God Himself prepared for each individual Man.

Look for yourself and see how gradually, starting in the spring, the early plants bring forth their fruits. Others appear later in the summer, at its beginning or end, while the autumn gives rise to a variety of other plants.

What is there to write about here, when it has been so obviously set forth what one should eat and when. And not just in broad terms of months or seasons. The choice is hinted at moment by moment. You need only think about it, Vladimir,

to understand. It is as though the Creator is ready to spoon-feed any Man with His own hand.

Just think how perfect and exact His programme is.

There is a particular season of the year when any given species of fruit ripens. At the same time the planets are in a particular arrangement. And that is the most favourable season for Man to take in that fruit. It was at that very moment, the most appropriate moment as indicated by God, that Man decided to take in the fruit, as his body suddenly felt a desire for it. There was no question of Man's working all this out through calculation. Man did not make a problem out of what to ingest and when. He simply ate. He ate because he felt like eating, because it pleased him to do so. And at the same time his thought was elated with joint co-creation.

His thought danced ahead, no longer concerning itself with what had been planned in advance by the Father's hand. It desired to create even more so that everyone could rejoice in the contemplation at the sight of a new creation.

And the Father exclaimed in delight: "My son is a creator", as He fed His child with His creations.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN



A society of schizophrenics?

In listening to Anastasia's grandfather's account of what Man should eat and how, I couldn't help comparing what he said with the dietary régimes of people today, even rich people living in so-called civilised countries. A rather puzzling situation unfolded. Let's work it out together once and for all.

To begin with, we all know that it is healthful for Man to consume fresh and ecologically clean produce.

We all know that in Nature there are plants capable of treating all types of diseases of the body. Hold on — we need to be more precise: *in Nature there are plants capable of preventing diseases of the body*. Then why don't we have them available? Why and under whose influence have we chosen a way of life which destroys not only our bodies but our minds too? Someone out there must be simply laughing at us, befooling us into calling this way of life 'civilised' besides.

If we use terms like *civilised country*, *civilised society*, meaning by this a society of people which has achieved a certain (and, of course, correct) level of development, then this development should also be reflected in, among other things, questions pertaining to diet. And not just 'among other things', but first and foremost.

Now let's pay a visit together to a typical food-store or supermarket, the kind you find in any so-called civilised country. It could be either in the West or here in Russia — if we're talking about major cities, the difference in variety of produce isn't all that great.

We find that the majority of produce available is nicely packaged and has a long shelf-life. We find a whole lot of dried, frozen and concentrated products, which can hardly be termed 'fresh produce'.

At the supermarket we can also find so-called 'fresh' vegetables, beautiful-to-look-at tomatoes, cucumbers and so forth. But lately it has come to light that these are hybrids — specially cultivated varieties capable of preserving their good looks for a long time, but considerably inferior in quality to the normal, natural variety.

Just about any adult resident of a European country is aware of this. Europe already has a chain of stores with signage proclaiming they sell only ecologically clean merchandise, but at a price about five times higher than in other stores. This means that the public has now recognised that other stores (and there are far more of *them*) sell produce that is *not* ecologically clean.

But let us call a spade a spade. The public has recognised that a majority of their number have been consuming produce that is harmful to their health.

Hold on! What about the term *civilised society*? Is it possible for people in a 'civilised society' to consume food of inferior quality which is harmful to their health?

A more accurate description of such a people might be a 'muddle-headed society', or a 'society with a befuddled population'.

In 'muddle-headed societies', whose ranks Russia seems to be trying so hard today to join, one can outline a distinct system for befuddling the population.

Look at what is happening. Someone consumes inferior produce and takes ill. The sick person falls into the arms of a system called 'health care'. This system has at its disposal a huge quantity of drugs, hospitals and clinics — and this has to be paid for somehow. Huge sums of money are

continually being poured into it. We are told it is constantly improving.

But note: according to statistics the number of sick people is rising each year. Then along come new diseases which mankind never had to grapple with before — including a whole lot of mental illnesses, not to mention the fashionable profession of psychotherapy.

And the question resounds loud and clear: what is behind the degradation of the overall health of these ‘civilised societies’? Isn’t the health-care system itself at least partly to blame?

By comparing data from various sources, anyone who wishes to can determine that the overall degradation of humanity’s health is an actual fact.

Yes, we’re talking about physical well-being, but mental health is an even more dangerous factor.

We have only but to turn away from the obtrusive, monotonous flood of information that does not allow Man to think about what is really going on, and we begin to doubt (to put it mildly) the ‘normality’ of the majority of the population of these so-called ‘civilised societies’. We begin to look upon these societies’ chosen lifestyle as indicative of a schizophrenia disorder. Judge for yourselves.

Let’s say a Man living in his family domain wanted to eat — an apple, for example. What does he do? He goes out into his orchard, picks fresh fruit from a tree and eats it.

Then let’s take a look at the actions of another Man who lives in a city apartment in a developed society, who also wants to eat an apple. He takes some money, goes to the store and buys an apple, which is no longer fresh. He buys an apple which another person grew and packed in a crate. Someone else transported this apple in a truck or a plane. Then a third party built a store and placed this apple on one of the counters. All these operations, from the growing of the apple

right up to the final sale, are accounted for by special people who compile inventories and collect taxes, duties and other exorbitant charges.

Thus we have a whole chain of procedures whereby people are involved in the supposedly useful business of offering a fellow human being the opportunity to taste the fruit of an apple tree. And the one who tastes this fruit must first find work somewhere to earn the paper money and pay for this whole thought-up chain of intermediaries standing between the apple-tree's branch and Man.

Yet our society considers this normal. A befuddled society has no inkling that *someone* very much wanted to lead people away from their true purpose and have their attention occupied in senseless pursuits.

The process of drawing people into such absurdities has been a long one. That's not something you could do quickly. If you tried to do it quickly, even the most feeble-minded individual would be able to see the stupidity of what was happening.

Just think what a paradox it all is! One fine day you decide, as usual, to go out to your apple tree and pick some fruit. You no sooner step off your front porch and start heading for the tree than you catch sight of a whole queue of people.

"Who are you?" you ask the fellow standing closest to you.

"I'm an apple dealer," he answers.

"And who are these people behind you?" you continue to wonder, and hear in reply:

"Behind me is the person who trucks the apples to my store, behind him is the one who picks them from the tree, and around each one of us you see an entourage of people in fresh clean suits — they are the ones who record the quantity of apples that pass through our hands."

"But really, what are you, chaps? Don't tell me you're a bunch of schizos?" you blurt out in a flutter. "What's with all

the meaningless red tape? Who's going to thank you for such nonsense as this?"

And the reply comes:

"You will thank us — you will pay all of us money, and with that money we too shall buy apples."

"And where am I going to get all that money to pay you?"

"Go see your neighbour, the one with the pear trees. There's a job open for a record clerk. You can become a pear-tree record clerk, earn money, pay us and eat apples whenever you like."

How absurd! — you're thinking, no doubt. *Utter schizophrenia!* Of course it's absurd. Of course it's schizophrenia. But this is just the kind of thing that's going on right now with each of us in our society.

The conditions for a healthy life — and really, they are all too obvious — need to be set down in the form of a treatise. Well, here's one — a miniature treatise:

Point Number 1. Every Man living on the Earth should have his own domain, his own Space to guarantee for himself a supply of high-quality food.

Point Number 2. In his own Space Man should grow, preferably by his own hand, fruit-bearing plants — plants that he considers tasty and healthful. Say, for example, someone knows ahead of time that he doesn't like red currants — he need not plant these in large quantities. Altogether at least three hundred varieties of perennials should be put in. I shall not go over again the particular methods of sowing and communicating with the plants, as they were described back in the first book, when Anastasia was talking about the dachniks.¹ Naturally, this is not something that can be

¹See Book 1, Chapters 10: "Her beloved dachniks" and 11: "Advice from Anastasia".

accomplished in the space of a year — or even two or three. But it is entirely possible to ensure that one's children will have, in fact, an ideal source of food supply.

Point Number 3. Every morning upon awakening, a Man should take a walk through his family domain and, if he desires, eat some fruit or berries or herbs which have just that moment ripened to maturity. This should be done entirely according to one's desire, and not at the recommendation of some sort of dietician, even one with a post-graduate degree. Once your body has become familiar with all the taste qualities of the food growing in your domain, it will compile the ideal régime for you in terms of quality, quantity and the appropriate time for the food to be eaten. You don't need to go out to your garden just in the morning or according to a strict timetable somebody has thought up, but only when you have a real desire to eat.

In our modern living conditions, many people cannot stay all the time in their domain, even if they have one. But it is good to go out to it at least once a week.

And in case of illness, before taking any medicines, it is best simply to go out to your family Space and stay there for several days.

If you have already established your own Space, and if your body can access information about the plants growing in that Space, it will be able to determine with absolute certainty what is necessary for recovering your health.

According to Anastasia's affirmation, there are no diseases of the human flesh which cannot be overcome by the Space of Love you have created.

Of course we're not talking about the space of a city flat, but a domain established according to the principles she has set forth.

After formulating these rules on a pad of paper, I read them to Anastasia's grandfather and asked:

"Have I left out anything?"

"If you simply want to jot down a summary, this will do to start with. Only you really must say something about the neighbours."

"What have neighbours got to do with it?" I didn't understand at first.

"What d'you mean, what have they got to do with it?" Grandfather was taken aback by my query. "Think about it: if just on the other side of the fence from your domain there's a factory spewing forth deadly fumes, and the wind carries these fumes into the Space of your domain, what kind of air are you going to be breathing?"

"Nobody would build their domain next to a factory!" I protested, but said no more.

Then I remembered. In the city of Novosibirsk, there are dacha plots located barely half a kilometre from a tin-smelter. And in Germany there are farmers' fields right next to an autobahn with eight lanes of traffic.

And I thought: *Wow! Such a simple concept as growing agricultural produce for food is possible only in places that are ecologically clean — preferably not anywhere close to big cities. There's no way a simple concept like this is going to get through to Man. So I've really got to add one more point:*

Point Number 4. Your domain should be located in an ecologically clean zone. It should be surrounded by the domains of those who share your vision of creating family oases of Paradise. One breeze will carry life-giving pollen from your domain to your neighbours', while another breeze from their direction will bring you life-giving air.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN



Opposition

Many readers of the Ringing Cedars Series can already attest to the opposition that has pitted itself against a harmonious lifestyle — a lifestyle favourable to both physical and mental health.

I have mentioned on a number of occasions having received communications regarding anti-Anastasia statements purporting to come from Russia's Orthodox Church. And that churchmen themselves apparently instigated the rumours now spreading among government departments to the effect that all the readers of the Series are 'sectarians'.

At first I found it hard to believe that such communications were serious. But shortly afterward members of the Novosibirsk Readers' Club told me church representatives had paid a visit to the local Concert Hall where a reader's conference was to take place, asking management to forbid the event.

Then they showed me one of the Orthodox-Church-related sites on the Internet where a so-called 'Doctor of Theology' was making all sorts of slurs against Anastasia, and the language he used could hardly be termed theological. My readers protested in an effort to show that Anastasia's ideas were indeed positive. But apparently the 'Doctor of Theology' was not able to discuss this point, preferring instead to focus on the question of whether *Megré* was my real name or a pen-name.

After that, people started sending in newspaper articles from various regions of the country which looked almost like carbon

copies of each other. Indeed, from the writing style, uniform phrasings and malicious inventions, it was readily apparent that they had all been drawn from the same original source.

Finally, there was something quite extraordinary, in connection with the St. Petersburg *Vstrecha* drama company's performance of a play called *Anastasia*, based on the Ringing Cedars Series. On 23 July 2002 the troupe arrived in Vladimir¹ and staged a performance in the Taneev² Concert Hall.

The play was to have been presented in Tula³ on 25 July. On the 24th of July the local newspaper ran a front-page appeal from the missionary office of the Tula Diocese urging people to boycott the production, saying that both the books and the play were promoting a return to paganism.

It was a case of rampant fear-mongering. In spite of that, the Tula performance went ahead, playing to a full house. But when the artistic director of the *Vstrecha* Theatre showed me the article, I and others who read it immediately came up with a set of identical questions addressed to the missionary office of the Tula Diocese.

How can you criticise a play you haven't seen? The only performance before Tula had been in Vladimir only a couple of days before. To all intents and purposes Tula was the première.

¹*Vladimir* — the name of the city in Russia where the author resides. See footnote 1 in Book 5, Chapter 6: "A garden for eternity". 23 July (the author's birthday) was proposed by Anastasia as the date for *Dachnik Day* — see Book 2, Chapter 9: "Dachnik Day and an All-Earth holiday!"

²*Sergei Ivanovich Taneev* (1856–1915) — one of Russia's most revered composers and pianists, also a professor at the Moscow Conservatory. Many music-associated buildings and institutions are named in his honour. One of the largest music venues in the region, the Taneev Concert Hall, with its seating capacity of 600, also houses the Vladimir Philharmonic Society.

³*Tula* — a large city of a half-million inhabitants a few hours' drive south of Moscow, known for its production of samovars as well as armaments. It is not far from Leo Tolstoy's family estate of Yasnaya Polyana.

In St. Petersburg, however, Orthodox priests came to see it and afterward thanked the actors for a most spiritually inspired production. They said we should have more plays like this!

The conclusion is inescapable. A phenomenon like Anastasia is constantly under the watchful eye of some kind of opposing power. This power may be located entirely within the borders of Russia or outside as well. In any case it has at its disposal a far-flung network, capable of reacting to currents running through masses of people, capable of accelerating or retarding these currents at their own discretion.

The stories about the priests told by Anastasia and her grandfathers are taking on increasingly real and specific shape. They have begun to express themselves in concrete actions of today.

Her grandfather said that the high priest, who forms the ideology of whole peoples, has stopped opposing Anastasia, but the system created by the priests will carry on the opposition for centuries to come. And this has also been confirmed by real-life events.



The zealots who implement the opposition on a local level have proved themselves incapable of figuring out what is really going on. They seem to be acting as though they had been pre-programmed, making sweeping and completely unfounded accusations against Anastasia.

For example, in response to the question *Should we all go live in the forest?* Anastasia replies:

“There is no need to go live in the forest. You need to clean up the place you have been polluting first.”⁴

The press, however, has been putting out statements to the effect that Anastasia is urging people to abandon their city dwellings and children and go off to live in the forest.

So, one can draw the conclusion that some kind of agencies are actively endeavouring to hinder the promotion of Anastasia's ideas — namely, that each Russian family should be granted a hectare of land to establish a kin's domain.

Naturally, Anastasia's opponents try not to mention this idea, preferring instead to scare people with their fictitious inventions.

Naturally, I wanted to defend both the idea itself and the readers of my books from slander and from the other obstacles standing in the way of reaching this high goal. Defend them. But how? And from whom, specifically? After all, even the slanderers must have real names, they have their own masters and interests. But Anastasia's supporters have their own research centre. I don't know all their names personally, not by a long shot, but their ideas and conclusions are quite fascinating. For example:

The counter-action is aimed not directly at Anastasia so much as at the ‘national idea’ currently taking root in Russia. It arises from an intermediary source, as though local followers each received a cue to take action, independently of each other. These followers are to be found in various social strata, including the clergy.

Their methods are primitive: slander and the propagation of patently false rumours and, when necessary, taking over the movement's leadership and discrediting it.

⁴Quoted from two different paragraphs in Book 3, Chapter 21: “Should we all go live in the forest?”.

The research centre managed to establish who it was that stole a computer containing the manuscript for one of my forthcoming books, and found out about a secret plan for taking over the Anastasia website. But who tried to replace my Anastasia books with others that looked similar on the surface but in fact were aimed at leading people away from her ideas? And how could they possibly do this?

I was also told that the same forces were organising a smear campaign, using the same methods in each case, against Anastasia, Academician Shchetinin's school⁵ and the singer Nikolai Baskov.⁶ And just what, the reader may well ask, has Baskov got to do with all this? He is a very pleasant young man with a rich and powerful voice. And that is precisely what is driving these forces mad. Imagine this young Russian with his top-notch voice suddenly singing:

*The dawn is now breaking o'er the great ringing cedar's fair branches
And illuming the tribes of the pure Planet Earth with its lustre.
With a love-sigh the heavens pour forth all the help they can muster.
Interplanetary breezes caress the grand Dream with romances.*

*From every seed springs a mighty idea,
A Messiah from every child's perepeteia.
In a bright ray will awaken Rossiya...
God bless Rossiya and Anastasia!*⁷

⁵*Academician Shchetinin's school* — This school, founded at Tekos in the Caucasus by the renowned educational authority Mikhail Petrovich Shchetinin, is described in Book 3, Chapters 17: "Put your vision of happiness into practice" and 18: "Academician Shchetinin".

⁶*Nikolai Baskov* (1976–) — an internationally recognised Russian opera star, who has performed on a number of occasions with his mentor, Spanish diva Maria de Montserrat Caballé. In recent years he has become known for his rendition of popular songs, especially those based on operatic or classical pieces. Some critics consider him one of the most popular singers in Russia today.

This song was sung by a children's choir at the launch of the book *Who are we?* at the Oktiabr Concert Hall⁸ in St. Petersburg. It has been performed by modern bards, and was featured in the video *Take back your Motherland, people!* It was written by a schoolteacher from Belarus and seems to be taking on a kind of folk-song status.⁹ Perhaps Baskov will sing other patriotic songs which will strike a chord in Russian hearts. These new national initiatives, harbingers of a Russian *renaissance*, are obviously threatening to someone.

I was told there was no need for concern, and asked not to speak about what was going on. I was assured that this was simply a first opportunity to study the methods and pinpoint who was specifically behind the ideological subversion aimed at any positive tendencies in Russia.

And I would have gone along with that. Let it be dealt with by the 'competent authorities'. However — and you must excuse me for this — there is one subject on which I cannot remain silent, despite my promise to the contrary. If I did not speak out on this, I would forever lose my self-respect.

⁷Reminder: the words *Rossiya* and *Anastasia* both rhyme with *Maria* (and *idea*) — see footnote 1 in the Translator's Preface to Book 1, also footnote 2 in Book 5, Chapter 13: "Equestrienne from the future".

⁸*Oktiabr Concert Hall* (Russian: *Bol'shoi kontsertnyj zal "Oktiabr'skij"*) — a modern concert-hall with glass exterior, seating 4,000, opened on 25 October 1967 in celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution (which actually took place 5 November by modern calendars). It is still one of St. Petersburg's most prominent cultural centres.

⁹The song cited above actually belongs to Oleg Atamanov (1956–), a celebrated Russian bard, sometimes referred to as "the *bojan* of all the Russias". In ancient Russia, *bojans* were enlightened travelling bards who had mastered the power of word to such an extent that their songs and tales had the effect of putting the listener into an altered state of consciousness and leading to spiritual awakening. Atamanov is continuing this tradition today. Since 1998 he has recorded over forty albums, and has audiences weeping at his concerts.

I cannot remain silent about the attacks on Academician Shchetinin's school — on its teachers, on educational innovators in general, and especially on the children.

The pupils at Shchetinin's school, along with their teachers, have decided to build a second school, this time in the Belgorod Region.¹⁰ Under an agreement with a local organisation they began refitting the interior of an allotted accommodation to suit their needs. Accustomed to hard work, and experienced in design and construction, they quickly brought their task to completion. They wanted to afford other children, too, the opportunity to study in a *real* school. Only they were forced to abandon the premises they had just refitted. Why? Because their provocateurs were on the alert.

From the same source that instigated the rumours about all the Anastasia readers being 'sectarians' came exactly the same kind of accusations of Shchetinin's school being a 'totalitarian sect'.

As in the case of Anastasia, seemingly on cue, a number of Russia's so-called 'Orthodox' priests¹¹ began to confirm what had been said. Again, the same uniform phrasings, the sweeping accusations without any factual confirmation.

¹⁰ *Belgorod Region* (Russian: *Belgorodskaya oblast'*) — a large, primarily agricultural region located on the fertile plains of south-western Russia between the Don and Dniepr Rivers, north of the Black Sea. While today it is believed that the name *Belgorod* (literally 'White city') is derived from the proliferation of limestone deposits in the area, it may actually have a deeper meaning, originating from the name *Belbog* (lit. 'white god') — the god of light, goodness and happiness in the ancient Slavic tradition.

¹¹ *so-called 'Orthodox' priests* — Megré is questioning here the traditional application of the term *pravoslavnaia* (commonly translated *Orthodox*, literally signifying 'right-praising') to Russia's official church. The term *Prav'* (Order, or rightness) was one of the three concepts central to Russia's original 'paganism' (see Chapter 20), along with *Nav'* (the Inner, or invisible world) and *Yav'* (designating the Outer, or visible world) — cf. footnote 1 in Book 4,

According to a certain 'Father Alexei', the pupils at Shchetinin's school "have absolutely no experience in handling money". That's a lie, chaps. They do have experience. Only they are not fixated on money the way you are.

At Shchetinin's school they make use of 'sentencing circles', where the perpetrator appears in person in front of a whole group of people who are predisposed to react negatively toward him and express their censure.

That's quite an accusation! But haven't Cossacks¹² brought their own violators to 'sentencing circles'? They have indeed, and not just to censure, but to punish with whips. And haven't our political parties, either communist or democratic, not used similar methods? Does not the Russian Orthodox Church summon its violators to a 'circle' before defrocking them? The Church used to do worse than that — it used to burn them at the stake. And here we are simply talking about censure.

Perhaps the writer who described this in a negative light had in mind a circle consisting of his own persona? But that would no longer be a 'circle' but real totalitarianism!

Again, some articles complain that Shchetinin's school is protected by Cossacks and free access to its grounds is not always permitted.

Chapter 6 ("The first appearance of *you*"). It should also be noted that the term *Slavic* (as applied to a number of related East European peoples from Russians in the East to Poles in the West to Serbs in the South) comes directly from the root *slav* meaning 'praise' (compare also the Russian word *slovo*, meaning 'word').

¹²*Cossacks* (Russian: *kazaki*) — descendants of a race of independent professional warriors who traditionally hired out their services to the ruling authorities, especially in the Caucasus. Local Cossacks in the Tekos area today have a special relationship with Shchetinin's school.

But today, ladies and gentlemen, many schools are under security protection. And not only in our own country. Anyway, what business might *you* have at Shchetinin's school? Be God-fearing and take care of your own health. Aren't you the ones, after all, who are horrified at the fact that the pupils of this school don't drink or smoke, that they are constructing new school buildings themselves and are good students? You no doubt get a thrill of 'sublime pleasure' when you find drugs and foul language in schools!

I am not going to list all the nonsensical drivel written about this marvellous school. The writers have come under condemnation even from their colleagues.

An article by Alexander Adamsky¹³ is of particular interest. Here are some excerpts:

On Saturday 1 April, on the ATV creativity channel, they showed a pre-taped episode of the programme *Press Club*, devoted to what people refer to today as 'controversial press coverage' surrounding Mikhail Petrovich Shchetinin's school near the village of Tekos in the Province of Krasnodar. The *Press Club* producers decided to invite journalists writing on educational topics, as well as educators themselves, to discuss the whole question.

¹³Alexander Izotovitch Adamsky (1955–) — Rector of the Eureka Institute for the Study of Educational Policy in Moscow and member of the Public Chamber of the Russian Federation (a consultative body analysing draft legislation for the Russian parliament). Adamsky is an ardent supporter of innovative educational approaches that develop and support independent thinking on the part of children. Adamsky has been advocating transferring control of educational budgets to the schools themselves as well as opposing attempts by Russia's Orthodox Church to introduce 'Fundamentals of Orthodox Christian culture' as a compulsory subject in Russia's public school curriculum. The article cited here was first published in the newspaper *Pervoe sentiabria* (First of September) in 2000, issue 27, under the title "Anything you can't understand has no right to exist". (Note that 1 September, the first day of school, is termed 'Knowledge Day' in Russia.)

Both professionally and from a global perspective, the unique character of Shchetinin's system provokes controversy in modern educational circles. But there are what Alexander Radov terms 'educational killers' whose arguments vastly differ from those of people who question Shchetinin's views on particular matters of substance.

Such 'killers' do not argue; their aim is to destroy.

As long as education has existed, as long as anyone can remember, right from the times of Socrates, up-and-coming philosopher-teachers have been censured and beaten down for 'confusing young minds' and not teaching according to conventional norms...

So yet another round of 'pogroms' directed at Shchetinin is not coincidental. As Alexander Radov said during the *Press Club* discussion, even as in times past such attacks were organised by bureaucrats, today they are initiated by innocent-looking journalists. So it turns out that these 'nice boys and girls', faced with something that does not fit into — indeed, that is quite contrary to — their pre-conceived opinions as to what a school should be, what an educator should be, or how an educational system should be structured, find themselves quite incapable of accepting the existence of something their consciousness can neither fathom or even make room for. In other words, 'what I don't understand has no right to exist' — such is the 'killers' simple but deadly logic.

What we have here is the old world flushing out the dregs on the bottom — the last, clotted sediments of totalitarianism, which has been so aggressive and unshakeable in its hatred toward anything unlike itself. The old world, where there is no room for tolerance, where children must fit into a uniform mould and all teachers are obliged to teach one and the same thing.

The opening remarks on *Press Club* were telling: one of Shchetinin's attackers said there were grounds for censure, but first he wanted to hear the arguments *for*. Amazing how the old Stalinist logic survives — anyone is obliged to defend himself to start with, and then the prosecutors decide the degree of the defendant's guilt. That he is guilty in the first place there is absolutely no doubt. The question is only how guilty he is and what the degree of punishment should be...

It is useless to argue with such accusers, and to mention them by name would only play into their desire to be noticed — their desire for self-promotion and self-glorification which is what they are really after. One must be extremely patient here, realising that they are the mouth-piece for the old world of the obsolete, an outlet for gross ignorance and malice. In terms of the broader picture, they themselves are not to blame for anything, just as an infant is not to blame if he plays with matches and burns down his home. But what will become of the school, what will become of our educational future?

As we see it, Shchetinin has made a tremendous educational discovery which, naturally, has gone unnoticed by his persecutors. He has come up with a totally new educational content. He has established a lifestyle pattern at his school, on his 'educational island', so to speak, in such a way that this lifestyle pattern has become its educational content. Of course there is a syllabus — of course there are subjects — the kids study both mathematics and biology. But this is just the raw material, while the Tekos way of life has become the content — building construction, arranging for the provision of food, protecting one's living quarters, art, interpersonal communication. Moreover, everybody says that children are different, that they not only have different learning rhythms but also different

areas for the optimum development of their abilities. But so far it is only Shchetinin that has managed to make it so different children can learn entirely at their own individual pace. So a Shchetinin pupil may end up, for example, taking Grade 9 physics at the same time as a post-secondary course in architecture. This is *continuing education* in the true sense of the term.

Who else has been able to accomplish this?

It is a challenge even to imagine such a thing, let alone think it through and put it into practice.

Of course, Mikhail Petrovich Shchetinin is a genius. Of course he is an artist, a thinker and a prominent exponent of our culture.

But by the very same token neither he nor his creative genius can be squeezed into pre-set frames and clichés, either laudatory or derogatory. Shchetinin is someone whom one not only can but must engage in argument, someone to study with and, yes, someone definitely deserving of praise. An artist, after all, cannot live without some kind of praise or recognition.

But Shchetinin is not someone to be pushed around.

Nobody should be pushed around. And nobody should be utterly destroyed — because, sooner or later, shame will have its own. It's only in a mob mentality that people assert themselves by destroying others. The way to assert one's self in normal human society is by expressing respect and love — not only toward one's self, but toward others as well.

You can condemn such ideological 'killers' all you like, but what is that to them? They see condemnation as their reward. Their masters will make it all up to them. Meaning that they will keep trying all the harder. And they'll always get away with it. How can they be punished, anyway? People have simply

expressed their own opinions. They have simply made a mistake, and no punishment has been decreed for mistaken opinions. Yet they are not mistaken. In labelling the school a totalitarian sect they have merely been pursuing a specific goal, namely, stopping the public authorities from extending a helping hand to the new marvellous beginnings in Russia. Very few government officials, after all, will bother going to the school itself to ascertain the real status of things first-hand. They will most certainly try to keep as far away as possible from any contacts. *What if there really should be something wrong with the school?* they might ask themselves. Hence the school is put in a defenceless position — an easy target for the ‘killers’, who are just waiting to deal their well-calculated blows.

But what are we doing to help? After all, we see it’s not just the teachers that are under attack, but the children too. Look, more than three hundred Russian children are being trampled in the dirt, vilified and insulted, and this has been going on for two years now.

I don’t believe it’s Russians who are doing this. It’s nowhere near part of the Russian character. But we are passive observers of this poisoning. Highly-placed government officials and ordinary people alike are passively observing it. We are passive witnesses to an all-too-obvious pushing around and moral bashing of children. Who’s doing it?

Maybe Russian special-service officers can say. But God forbid we’ll have to tell our grandchildren that we once lived in a time when Academician Shchetinin’s school still existed in Tekos, home to three hundred children who dreamt about a marvellous Russia!

We ought to be able to tell our grandchildren living in their Russian domains that “we were around when this school you are so happy to go to now got off the ground. We saw it through during this difficult time.”

All that will come later. But right now...

Mikhail Petrovich, Tekos teachers, educational innovators! It's a challenge for you, of course, but you know... You know very well that "you cannot creep your way to the truth".¹⁴ And children too! Children of the Tekos school. Forgive me, young Russians, if I don't manage to do everything I'm supposed to. But I shall be able to. So will many other people. What's the weather like there at the moment — nice and warm, eh? That's good if it's nice and warm. May the Sun shine over you more often, and warm up the dream within each of you!



Hoping to get some advice on how best to proceed, I described the situation to Anastasia's grandfather. The elderly fellow stood there leaning on his walking-stick (or staff) as he listened intently to what I had to say.

After hearing me out, including my request for advice, the old fellow stood silent for a while. His facial expression betrayed intense thought. Finally, he lifted up his head and, squinting his eyes as though scanning space, began speaking.

"Neither my father nor I myself, not even the high priest, was able to guess how our granddaughter Anastasia would have any success in deciphering the secret of all secrets and answering the question as to why the Earth has begun morphing itself into such a stinky mess. The tribulations of the

¹⁴This is a quotation from Anastasia, reproduced on the back cover of the Russian edition of Book 2, *The Ringing Cedars of Russia*.

flesh and the agitations of human souls are something Man has brought upon himself.

"If Earth's earlier civilisations are supposed to be the smartest, why did they not preserve a happy lifestyle for their children?

"Everything today can at last be returned to the original world of God's creation. Nobody had any idea how to preserve it and avoid repeating mistakes of the past. And then, if you please, she created the unthinkable combination all by herself, with her own thought, and immediately translated it into reality. All questions will now be answered.

"Events that took millennia to unfold Anastasia has compressed into a single age. She is repeating them. Now everyone can experience the history of the Earth, the history of your country, for himself. They can evaluate, draw a conclusion and write that conclusion down in their own Book of Kin. Man will be able to learn for himself, with his feelings and his soul, the events of a whole series of millennia.

"You see, just as Anastasia is now being denigrated, your ancestors were denigrated in Ancient Rus' as their culture was devastated.

"They accused the paganism and Vedism of Ancient Rus' of being frightfully barbaric and a cultural wasteland. How can you make people feel and fully appreciate what things were really like back then?

"All on her own our granddaughter revealed the aspirations of our Russian ancestors and took upon herself the harsh blows of her attackers — themselves the descendants of those who slandered our ancestors in front of their contemporaries, in front of their children and grandchildren.

"It is as though she were inviting everybody living on the Earth today to choose themselves a role in a historical play, then act out this role and observe the situation from the sidelines. And even those who start observing the whole scenario

as spectators will be playing the *role* of spectators and thereby experiencing and appreciating the events taking place, and they themselves will be drawn into the action.

"I've got a bit ahead of myself. You wanted to know who is responsible for the insults and hindrances. I'll give you an answer. After all, that's not hard for a priest.

"It is people that have been responsible for obstructing anyone who has understood and been inspired by the ideas expressed by our granddaughter Anastasia. But not just *any* people. These people are bio-robots controlled by a tiny sect which arose a long time ago, and far away from Russia."

"But," I observed, "one of the clippings I have of signed newspaper articles states that the missionary office of the Tula Diocese has come out against Anastasia. I've read reports from people in various parts of the country on the unkindly attitude on the part of individual Christian congregations. Do they too include, as you say, bio-robots, controlled by some kind of sect?"

"The human bio-robots themselves are unaware of this control. They were simply pre-programmed a long time ago. The programmers had not foreseen anything on the order of Anastasia and so the programme experienced a major malfunction — pointing it down the road of self-annihilation."

"I can't put together details like that in my head. Where can I find confirmation?"

"If you can't put them together in your head, then put them all together according to your own sense of logic. Anyone capable of thinking will find it in their own sense of logic."

"Put it together logically?"

"Yes. Simple facts everybody knows. Take a look and see how one can reason, using only facts as a basis."

"How?"

"First of all, get a clear determination for yourself of just what Anastasia recommended everyone should do."

"Well," I said, "she recommended everyone obtain at least one hectare of land and set up a domain on it for their family and descendants. As she says, if every family creates this little corner of Paradise for themselves, the whole Earth will be transformed into a Paradise. She also explained how to grow edible plants to counteract human diseases. Furthermore, she talked about a healthy lifestyle, child-raising and an appreciation for Nature, stating that Nature is comprised of God's thoughts in solution. In sum, she set up a model whereby Russia can become a flourishing land and a home to happy families."

"In talking about kin's domains," Grandfather continued, "Anastasia in fact revealed the greatest secret of the Divine being. She showed Man the way back to Paradise. This becomes clear if you gather all her sayings scattered over the various books together.

"She revealed a secret which the dark forces had kept concealed for thousands of years. These dark forces had destroyed everything that could have helped people learn about it.

"In the second century of your so-called 'Common Era' the last book still written in Runic characters was destroyed. This book told about Man's Divine way of life. It talked, too, about the possibility of mastering the Universe through the harmonious mastery first of a plot of one's family land and then the planet called Earth as a whole.

"Man who had mastered the Earth to perfection was presented with the opportunity to master other planets in the Universe — not technocratically, but psychotelepathically."

"But didn't any of the great wise-men talk about the Earth the way she did, at least once?"

"There is not a single treatise extant today, Vladimir, where you will find the discoveries Anastasia has made. Moreover, in the past six thousand years people have been deliberately led astray, led away from understanding the Earth. They have

had all sorts of teachings thrown at them and told that that's where they'll find the truth.

"No sooner does Man study one doctrine than he recognises that there is no truth in it. He's presented with another to study, then a third, and so forth. So life goes on, and even upon reaching his deathbed Man still hasn't understood the essence of life.

"Yet Man is still intuitively attracted to the Earth, to the great adventure of understanding it. Realising that this attraction of human souls could not simply be cut off at the roots, the powers of darkness decided to cast a shadow over Man's attraction to the Earth.

"In short, there have been a great many deceptions throughout the ages. But over the past six thousand years nobody has interacted with the Earth with conscious awareness."

"'With conscious awareness' — is that what Anastasia recommends?"

"Yes, that is what she recommends, and what people take from her sayings. Anastasia has turned human society as a whole onto a marvellous path. And nobody will now be able to stop her. After all, a whole lot of people are already carrying her dream in their hearts."

"But still, the hindering and slandering of both Anastasia and her readers has not stopped. If they only realised they can't stop her, they'd give up their slandering."

"At the moment, Vladimir, through the efforts of the slanderers, the higher echelons of power are attempting to thwart the dawn of a new era here in Russia. In the near future they will try to present the idea in a distorted form in some other country. And they will try to discredit the idea.

"Anastasia was able to foresee all this ahead of time. Her course of action, carefully thought through in advance, impressed even the high priest. She realised that once she had revealed the essence of Man and the Earth, a lot of people

would not be able to hold themselves back from direct interaction with the Earth. Too hasty an action could be dangerous — after all, people would first need to create their Space in their thoughts.

“In Russia the slanderers are now trying to set up obstacles, but people are still not betraying their dream and are mentally creating their Space without letting up.

“Of course the system is strong, but you can’t just go accusing everyone indiscriminately. Church people are divided over Anastasia.”

“I know,” I said. “I have met with a number of clerics who understand and support Anastasia.”

“You and your readers must be aware of just who in the world might be disadvantaged by information surfacing in Russia today.”

“I would say there are many self-proclaimed ‘developed’ nations that would not want to see another, even more developed country on the horizon.”

“Yes, that’s logical. But each country has a lot of people. What do you think — are all of them up on what’s happening here, do they follow and analyse events taking place in Russia?”

“Not all of them, of course. But there are certain interested parties.”

“Who, for example?”

“Who? Well, for instance, companies that deal in medicines and supply them to Russia in large quantities, they would be disadvantaged if Russians stopped getting sick.”

“And beyond that?”

“Beyond that... There are a great many foodstuffs that we import from abroad today. If Anastasia’s plans were to be implemented, it would be the other way round: Russia would export foodstuffs to many countries. And in that she would have no competition.”

"Which means Anastasia's plan would turn out to be unprofitable — not to the populations of these various countries but to certain classes of people, and these might be located in just about any country, including Russia itself. Do you agree?"

"Yes. In general, I do."

"Now tell me, this class of people who possess enormous capital, might they not have their own intelligence services following global development trends?"

"Of course. All major companies have such services. If they didn't, they would go bankrupt. There are even schools set up to train such people."

"All right. So, major companies have services providing them with intelligence from various countries. And in turn they can influence the creation of favourable conditions for themselves?"

"Yes."

"You agree. Good. If you pursue this line of reasoning, you will come to the conclusion that national governments have similar services at their disposal. There are many examples of this in history. The most significant of all is a tiny Jewish group which is involved in the governing of America, Europe and Russia. Though they have merely been an instrument in the hands of the high priest."

"What's the connection between this group and the Christian dioceses that have come out against Anastasia?"

"I indicated that those who serve as bio-robots are this type of people. They arose under the influence of the priests' programme and the tiny Jewish group that is spread out in various places."

"Where's the proof of such statements?"

"In historical facts. They need to be examined meticulously and impartially."

CHAPTER SIXTEEN



To Jews, Christians and others

In appealing to Jews and Christians, I am counting on the understanding of at least some adherents of these two mutually exclusive ideologies. I realise not everyone is aware of the reason I felt compelled to touch upon this topic.

The mere mention of the subject in my previous book¹ touched off a chain of hurt feelings — even though the essence of Anastasia's sayings has only one aim, namely, to shed light on the causes of conflicts between peoples — the same conflicts that have been going on incessantly over the past five millennia.

As I was working on the present volume, common sense dictated that it would be better to avoid the theme of Jews and Christianity altogether. Why stir up a good part of my readership and cause them to become disposed against me? Nevertheless, in view of the information in my possession, I do not feel I have a right to withhold it, no matter how distasteful it may seem to some people.

In presenting descriptions of the Jewish pogroms which have been going on for millennia, I simply cited historical facts, trying my best not to offer personal commentary on the events described or to treat them too subjectively.

My only goal here is to try to prevent yet another large-scale pogrom against Jews which could take place simultaneously in several countries.

Such a pogrom could conceivably be significantly greater in scope than that unleashed during the era of Nazi Germany.

¹See Book 6, Chapter 6: "Imagery and trial".

In fact, it is almost inevitable. Only one thing can prevent it: a sufficient understanding of the causes of previous pogroms, along with corresponding actions to remove these causes.

I shall try not to resort to the statements made by the recluses of the Siberian taiga — Anastasia and her grandfather — even though they carry more and more weight with me personally with each passing year, since others might interpret them as sheer invention. I shall endeavour to draw proofs simply from well-known facts, or facts which can be easily attested by anyone who wishes to.

And so, as is known from historical sources, anti-Jewish pogroms date back to the time of the Egyptian pharaohs. And over the last millennium they have occurred approximately once every hundred years, in various countries which had become christianised by that time. And their scope has been expanding with each passing century.

The last large-scale attempt to annihilate the Jews occurred in Nazi Germany from 1939 to 1945. Jews were burned in concentration-camp ovens, shot execution-style and poisoned with gas. Various sources estimate the number of Jews exterminated during this time to be in the neighbourhood of six million.

The regularity of recurring events connected with the extermination of the Jewish populations of various countries over more than one millennium clearly and convincingly attests to the existence of certain causes behind these events. At the same time somebody has been attempting to carefully conceal the true causes.

The mass media — the press, radio and TV — have been painstakingly trying to avoid this most contentious issue. It only takes a single mention in the media to provoke accusations of inciting racial hatred.

In actual fact racism can be incited more readily by remaining silent about the sensitive and controversial issues facing society today.

A great many facts attest to society's sensitivity to the Jewish question. Many people will remember a speech by a Russian general, a member of the State Duma, in which he declared, in effect: "Get all the Jews out of Russia!"

A number of Duma members condemned the general. Naturally, he was given no coverage in the press. Nobody started an argument with him. Why? Was it because this general was just one lone voice supporting such a view, making it hardly worth wasting precious airtime on the whole Russian public's arguing with just one person?

I dare say, though, he is not alone. He has a lot of company, not just among his fellow-generals, but among Russian civil servants, among Russian youth.

The numbers of people willing to blame all their troubles on the Jews are steadily increasing. The silence on the part of the press is allowing them to build up to a critical mass. I can cite figures which more than eloquently attest to this.

Since 1992 more than fifty anti-Semitic books have been released in Russia by various publishing houses. This rather sizeable number does not include materials published by the underground press, nor a multitude of newspapers and magazines.

You won't find these publications gathering dust on store shelves or in publishers' warehouses. They are circulating from hand to hand. Many of them have been read so many times the covers are starting to fall off. These are publications in demand. And their readers tend to dismiss the absence of any discussion of the issue in the press by simply saying "the whole press is in the hands of Jews". Their arguments are so well developed that anyone without a thorough grounding in the subject will find it a challenge to counteract them.



I was sitting in my train compartment, on my way back to Moscow from St. Petersburg, when I walked two men and a girl. The men wore dark-coloured shirts and wide army-officer belts. They looked very much as though they had been exhausted by some rather strenuous activity and immediately lay down on the upper bunks.

I struck up a conversation with the girl, who, like the men, was dressed rather severely. It turned out they were on their way home from a convention of (as she put it) 'the patriotic forces of Russia'.

"And what issues were discussed at your convention?" I asked her.

"The struggle with world Jewry," she proudly replied.

"How can you, being here in Russia, struggle with someone who is, let's say, in Europe or America?"

"We've got our supporters in Europe, and in America too. We haven't contacted them all, but we know of many movements that share our views. Patriots in various countries are soon going to unite against world Jewry."

The girl was talkative, chatting on audaciously. Either by instruction or at her own initiative she was taking on the role of agitator for her (as she was convinced) 'patriotic' movement.

I asked the girl:

"Tell me, have the Jews harmed you personally in any way?"

"Sure they have. Because of them I'm forced to live in a poor and filthy country which keeps kowtowing to the West and licking up its crumbs."

"But what makes you think the Jews are the cause of the failures in our country?"

"Cause they've got this special plan of action. They deceive and plunder one country, then another, then a third. And no sooner does the first get back on its feet than they start cleaning it out again. They don't even consider us human beings.

Just look at what's written here. This is a copy of several passages from their Talmud."

Handing me a slim pamphlet, she opened it to a particular place and I began reading.

I shan't reproduce these citations here, as back then, during our conversation, it was hard for me to tell how much they actually corresponded to the Talmud. I was already aware that, according to the Old Testament, the Jews consider themselves to be a chosen people. But that's not the point. I was so struck by this young 'patriot's' rampant aggressiveness that I felt it was high time to get to the truth of the matter.

The root cause of the incessant conflicts within many countries lies in the existence, within one and the same society at one and the same time, of two mutually exclusive religious ideologies.

Let us examine the question of just *what is religion?* First and foremost, *it is an ideology which shapes a particular class of Man, plugging him into a particular programme of action.*

Religion — in this case, the religion of the Jews — defines the Jewish people as exclusively chosen by God, and even concretises and regulates its actions in respect to other peoples.

Christianity, on the other hand, says that a Christian Man is a servant, and some will get to relax in Paradise only after this earthly life. It's hard for rich people to get to Paradise. You must love your neighbours and share your possessions with them.

The Talmud says: "It's all yours", while the Bible says: "Give it all up". A good combination! These two mutually exclusive ideologies arose from one location — i.e., Israel. But that doesn't mean that they were worked out by Jews themselves. That's not the point. What is significant here is the inevitability of conflict.

The inevitability of conflict between adherents of the two ideologies can be attested by examining even the behaviour of very young children. Let's say we tell one child that all the toys he sees belong only to him, while we encourage another

child to give up the toys he owns when another needs them — what then is the result?

The second child may agree to hand over his toys once or twice, but he won't exactly feel love for the one who takes them. Sooner or later he will want at least something back, but nothing will be offered to him. As a result he will either start crying or try to use force.

And so it turns out that two differing ideologies may serve to facilitate conflict even between children as yet unborn.

In a case like this nationality doesn't even come into the question. You could turn all the ethnic Jews into Christians and all the Slavic peoples into practising Jews and still get the very same conflicts.

It is not nationalities that are constantly warring with each other, but differing ideologies exploiting nationality for their own purposes.

We have heard even very cultured and enlightened people warn us from time to time about the necessity of a tolerant attitude toward different faiths. The State Duma has adopted a law punishing those inciting ethnic or religious hatred. On TV we see leaders of different denominational groups getting together to participate in secular governmental receptions.

It all gives the appearance of something good, proper and normal. But it does absolutely nothing to reduce extremism. We still keep seeing placards with inflammatory slogans saying *Kill them!* and we still hear reports on people setting off explosions at non-profit organisations.

So, what's going on? It's all quite simple. The situation cannot be changed simply by eloquent words and appeals. To the contrary, such words only serve to conceal the real state of affairs and make it worse. It remains concealed, waiting for the 'zero hour' to explode and destroy the state.



“Let’s show a tolerant attitude toward all faiths!” Let’s indeed. I myself — like many others, I think — have nothing against a tolerant attitude.

But what then happens with the faiths themselves? This is what happens. Each of them tries with all their might to become as strong as possible and attract to their ranks the greatest possible number of followers. Finally, once they think they have achieved a sufficiently solid power base, two ideologies inevitably find themselves on a collision course, as is clearly confirmed by the history of incessant conflicts in the world. But over the course of many centuries mankind, as though pre-programmed, continues to make the same mistakes over and over again.

Did the priests know about this — the ones who created the two ideologies? Yes, they knew. How could they not know, these people who are capable of exercising a psychological influence on millions of people in various countries all over the world, capable of pre-programming human beings?

Was their aim really to make the Jewish people happy by telling them they were ‘chosen’? History shows quite a different motivation. Over the centuries the Jewish people have been used as a ‘throwaway card’, or scapegoat, serving as a shield to divert people’s attention from those who are ‘playing their own little game’, using both Jews and Christians as pawns in a simple chess match. This kind of pre-programming causes only suffering to both parties.

You can see for yourselves where all this is leading today. The world is witnessing an ever greater accumulation of aggressive energy. Conflict continues between Israel and Palestine. With their military technology and American support, Israel can occupy Palestinian land and subject the inhabitants to its own demands. But this is by no means favourable to the development of mutual respect between two neighbouring

peoples. Quite the opposite: the amount of aggressive energy directed at the Jews is sharply rising throughout the Muslim world. This energy will inevitably find its outlet, including incessant acts of terrorism on both Israeli and American territory. But it is not just the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that is at play here. More and more inhabitants of our planet are realising that the current path of development of our global civilisation is heading for a dead end.

People are being devoured by AIDS, drugs, crime and technological disasters. The overwhelming majority of Earth's inhabitants are deprived of the opportunity to consume food that will not harm their health, to drink clean, uncontaminated water and to breathe pure, unpolluted air.

But what if these masses of people were to acquire information about the true cause of social and technological disasters? What if leaders appeared who could show them the true instigators of this depressing global situation, and expose their game, their aims, their tricks?

This, and this alone, is what the world ideologists are afraid of. It is for this reason, in an attempt to shield themselves from universal human outrage, that they keep tossing out again and again that time-tested card, namely the Jews. *You bet — they're to blame for everything — down with them!* Angry masses launch attacks on Jews indiscriminately. That's what's been going on, over and over again, throughout the ages. They attack them, thinking they're getting rid of something evil, whereas all they're doing, in fact, is 'letting off steam'.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN



Going deep into history

The account told me by Anastasia's grandfather struck me as being quite extraordinary, and yet quite simple in its proof of the extraordinary.

Subsequently I began comparing his arguments with those from other sources and was amazed at how closely the details coincided. These were facts which nudged logical thinking to certain conclusions. And now I shall try reconciling the conclusions drawn by Anastasia's grandfather with those of other sources.

Back during the years 30–100 of our Common Era small groups of believing Jews and dissidents living in Israel, Palestine or other parts of the Roman Empire, began to merge into an independent movement within Judaism. This resulted in the formation of a small Christian community comprising people who earnestly believed in the precepts of Christ Jesus and His imminent resurrection — an account attested in a great number of historical monographs, including the Bible.

In a word, there is no question that the mighty Christian doctrine began with the gatherings of a small Jewish community.

But now let us try to determine how the teachings of this small community suddenly found its way into not only the Roman Empire but also the territories of present-day Europe and Russia. How did people in so many countries come to hear of it — given that so few people knew about it even in Israel itself?

According to Anastasia's grandfather, the priests who controlled the Jews of that period realised that by tinkering with (or, rather, re-working) the Christian teachings in a certain way, these teachings could shape a type of slave mentality which would be very easy to control. This mentality either partially or almost completely rules out independent logical thinking, and Man begins to believe what he is told by the clergy or by someone else. More precisely: one ends up with bio-robotic people, subject to whatever programming has been instilled in them.

(A bio-robotic Man is a Man who consents — not entirely of his own free will, of course, but under the influence of special occult programming — to believe in an unreal world. And given that this unreal world has been constructed by someone for a specific purpose, this someone claims that he knows the laws of the unreal world and demands that Man subject himself to them. Whereas in fact he is subjecting the Man personally to himself.)

Next, the priests of Judaism, who at the time had not just the knowledge but also the practical experience of inculcating self-serving teachings into masses of people, trained hundreds of preachers from Christian ranks, gave them money and sent them off to various countries to instil the priests' own self-serving teachings into the local populations.

An incidental proof of this may be seen in the following.

At the end of the second century of our Common Era a number of Jewish Christian communities suddenly launched a comprehensive missionary campaign in various countries. This campaign was preceded by a period of intensified evangelisation (the publication and copying of the Christian Hebrew Bible).

Everybody knows perfectly well that even today publishing books requires money. In ancient times the production of each book required not just money, but big money. A goodly

sum would have been needed, too, for travel to other countries. It was largely merchants, or wealthy and prominent people, who could afford such travel. So how could such an extravagant, large-scale operation be carried out by a community consisting mainly of rural residents?

Of course there must have been expert theoretical training and a considerable amount of financing involved. The attention the priests paid to these rural residents, together with their moral and financial support, served to turn ordinary peasant believers into fully-fledged fanatics.

Just picture to yourself a Hebrew villager who is suddenly told:

“We see in you the makings of a great missionary and preacher. All you have to do is study up a bit, we’ll give you money and you’ll teach people, only... Only not here in our country. You’ll be going to other countries.”

And so they studied up, got their money and off they went — travelling to other lands. So, what was the result? Any success? Not a bit. The Jewish preachers were rejected by the people in every country they went to. It was more than just a simple rejection — at first they were listened to, then asked to leave. The more obtrusive among them were beaten or had dogs set upon them.

This is confirmed by many historical facts known from the Roman Empire of the period, where the major contingent of preachers was sent.

The only significant result of this massive campaign was the organising of a network of Christian communities in various parts of the Roman Empire. But there was no way they could shake the foundations of the traditional sects of the time. Ancient Rome was left just as pagan as in earlier times. These sects exerted no influence either on the political life of the Empire or on the formation of the new type of Man — the bio-robotic slaves the priests had dreamt about.

And the Roman emperors had absolutely no regard for this first wave of preachers.

The Emperor Nero, who was generally tolerant of the various pagan beliefs on the whole, took a particular dislike to the Christians. Christians were expelled from Roman territory by various emperors: Dionysius (249–251), Diocletes (284–285) and especially Galerius (305–311), one of the leading persecutors of the sect.

It was not until the second wave came that the preachers had any success. Unlike their predecessors, preachers of the second wave were no fanatics. The priests prepared them in such a way that they could speak eloquently about their faith on the one hand, while on the other they had a knowledge of psychology and were capable of influencing a person by using his aspirations to achieve their own ends.

The mission of the second wave of preachers was focused solely on the rulers — persuading them that their authority could be enhanced and perpetuated by the Christian faith, that it would make their state completely governable, controllable and flourishing.

It was to this end that certain dogmas were introduced as well, such as *All power is of God* and *The ruler is God's vicegerent on the Earth*.

Confessions opened the door to controlling the thoughts, hopes and actions of every citizen of a country. In a word, the preachers began persuading the rulers that the christianisation of a state would create the most favourable conditions for governing.

And on the surface it did, but only on the surface. In falling into these traps, the rulers had no idea they were actually falling under the control of other powers.

Christianity began noticeably consolidating its position in the Roman Empire beginning in 312 C.E., when Emperor Constantine was persuaded how advantageous the presence

of Christian churches within the state would be for him. He agreed to offer them patronage, even while still maintaining the temples to the Roman gods.

This led to a significant improvement in the position of Christianity within the Roman Empire, an increase in its wealth, and successive generations of Christian archbishops attaining a level of power rivalling that of the Roman senators.

This phenomenon, along with many others to follow, attests to the fact that Christian teachings were unable to develop and exert any serious influence on society without the support of secular rulers. Christian leaders themselves were always among the pretenders to power.

While the Roman Church continues to enjoy great power even today, the Roman Empire disappeared. A coincidence? An exception to the rule, or a predictable pattern? This question can be answered by examining the history of nation-states in the ensuing centuries, right up to the present day.

There is not a single state on our planet anybody could name which began flourishing with the arrival of Christianity. On the other hand, one can name off a whole list of states which succumbed to the same sad fate as the Roman Empire.

And one more interesting historical fact: in every single country where Christianity was officially adopted, it wasn't long before non-Christian Jews began to appear and start engaging in rather strange activities. They became wealthy with extraordinary ease.

In every Christian country they pursued their activities on such a large scale that they couldn't help but be noticed by both the citizenry and the governments of these countries. And when they reached a certain level in a particular land, the people started reacting violently toward them and the government began expelling them abroad.

We have access to a whole lot of reports of anti-Jewish pogroms in various Christian countries, dating back to the

beginning of the eleventh century. In 1096 dozens of Jewish communities were plundered on the Rhein and their residents exiled. In 1290 Jews were expelled from England. At the end of the fourteenth century more than 100,000 Jews were exterminated in Spain. (Granted, some time later Jews quietly began coming back to these countries.)

This list of historical facts could all too easily be added to. But no need. It is already absolutely clear that these situations, so similar to each other and constantly repeating themselves over many centuries, are the result of pre-programming.

And since losses have been suffered by both the members of the Christian world and the Jews themselves, there must be a third party involved which remains free from loss. For this third party both types of Man — the Christian and the Jew — are reduced to the status of mere bio-robots, easily manipulable.

Who is this third party? Historical researchers attempting to dig out the roots and discover the essence of the lawlessness that has been taking place constantly in the world over the millennia have always pointed only to the Jews. They are to blame for everything, or so the claim goes. But if there exists a third power, both the Jews and the Christians turn out to be nothing but puppet bio-robots in the hands of this third power.

But is it possible to determine and prove its existence today? Of course it is. By what means? By means of historical facts and logical thinking. You can judge for yourselves.



Within the Jewish society there is one tribe in particular — or layer, ethnic division, caste: you can call it what you like — the name doesn't really matter. For brevity's sake let's call them *Levites*.

Some historical sources say the Levites were descendants of the Egyptian priests. Other more familiar sources, in particular the Old Testament, give us to understand that the Levites occupied a special position among the Jews.

For example, according to Hebrew law they were exempt from participation in military action. They were not compelled to pay taxes or tributes to anyone. The Levites were not included in the Hebrew census described in the Old Testament.¹

When the Hebrews were on the march and the time came to make camp, the tribes of Israel — numbering anywhere from 50,000 to 150,000 — pitched their tents in a circle, each one in a pre-designated spot. There were indications of the north, south, east and west co-ordinates as well as the locations where guards were to be posted. The Levites invariably occupied the centre. Hence protection of the Levites fell within the duties of all the other Hebrew tribes.

And just what did the members of this class of Levites do?

It was their duty to appoint from among their ranks officials to conduct services, and enforce Jewish laws — laws which, among other things, regulated what to eat, what to do with apostates and where to go. The laws were strict and specific. They covered all one's waking hours from morning 'til night. They showed what lands people could occupy. Also whom they should fight.

Thus the Levites were the *de facto* rulers of the Jewish people. And, all things considered, most definitely qualified for the job.

¹Special provisions for the Levites are described in the first chapter of the Book of Numbers in the Bible (verses 47–54).

It is hard to tell whether the Levites were actually Jews themselves. Few of the laws every Jew was supposed to abide by extended to them. For example, while universal Jewish law required circumcision of a child on the eighth day after birth, the Levites were exempt.

Thus, with their knowledge of the secret science of the Egyptian priests and their capacity to do experiments, engage in observation and contemplation free from military duties and the work routine everybody else was so accustomed to, they have been in a position to constantly perfect their knowledge from generation to generation right up to the present day.

Now, how could that be — ‘up to the present day’? People may wonder why we haven’t heard about the ethnic group or social class known as the Levites. The English, Russians and French, for example — everybody knows about them. But why do so few people know about the most intelligent people of all, the Levites, especially since they are the ones governing everybody?

The reason is that just like the Egyptian priests, they too must remain in the shadows. In case anything happens, full responsibility will fall on the Jews, the ones who carry out their will.

Jews have been persecuted for centuries in various countries of the world. Persecuted for what? For using any means they can to make as much money as possible. And many of them are successful.

Anyway, what have the Levites got to do with this? What benefit or interest would it be to them if Jews in England, Spain or Russia went about their politicking and transferred a major part of public or private funds to their own bank accounts — in other words, pocket the money for themselves? Wouldn’t both the rulers and the people of some country or other catch sight of this ugly phenomenon, and start a violent

reaction against Jews and mistreat them? Something like that could go all the way up to the Levites. Hence the impression of illogicality in the actions of the 'wise Levites'. And what point would there be in the Levites' helping the Jews with sound advice or in coming up with clever intrigues for them — manipulating whole nation-states at a time?

Well, as it turns out, there *is* a point. A matter of simple, direct and specific interest. Money! Wealthy Jews, no matter what country they find themselves in, are obliged to pay a part of their profits to the Levites. Proof? Take a look! According to the Old Testament, the Hebrews are obliged to give a tenth part of their income to the Levites. Here is the exact wording from the Bible:

All the contributions from holy-gifts, which the Israelites set aside for the Lord, I give to you and to your sons and daughters with you as a due in perpetuity. This is a perpetual covenant of salt before the Lord with you and your descendants also.

The Lord said to Aaron: You shall have no patrimony in the land of Israel, no holding among them; I am your holding in Israel, I am your patrimony.

To the Levites I give every tithe in Israel to be their patrimony, in return for the service they render in maintaining the Tent of the Presence. In order that the Israelites may not henceforth approach the Tent and thus incur the penalty of death, the Levites alone shall perform the service of the Tent, and they shall accept the full responsibility for it. This rule is binding on your descendants for all time. They shall have no patrimony among the Israelites, because I give them as their patrimony the tithe which the Israelites set aside as a contribution to the Lord. Therefore I say unto them: You shall have no patrimony among the Israelites.

The Lord spoke to Moses and said, Speak to the Levites in these words: When you receive from the Israelites the tithe which I give you from them as your patrimony, you shall set aside from it the contribution to the Lord, a tithe of the tithe. Your contribution shall count for you as if it were corn from the threshing-floor and juice from the vat. In this way you too shall set aside the contribution due to the Lord out of all tithes which you receive from the Israelites and shall give the Lord's contribution to Aaron the priest. Out of all the gifts you receive you shall set aside the contribution due to the Lord; and the gift which you hallow must be taken from the choicest of them.

You shall say to the Levites: When you have set aside the choicest part of your portion, the remainder shall count for you as the produce of the threshing-floor and the wine-press, and you may eat it anywhere, you and [your sons and] your households. It is your payment for service in the Tent of the Presence...²

Someone might wonder how the Old Testament, more than two thousand years old, relates to our modern times. There is an answer. Aren't there still rabbis and other clerics among Jewish believers today? Of course there are! And, of course, the majority of Jews still observe their religious canons. If that is so, then just try to picture the colossal amount of capital held by the Levites, scattered through the banks of various countries!

Besides that, they don't have to worry about maintaining or multiplying their capital. Most bankers in a lot of countries are Jews, and that is their job. Of course, at the right moment

²Numbers 18:19-31 (cited here from *The New English Bible*). Note that "the Tent of the Presence" corresponds to "the tabernacle of the congregation" in the older Authorised Version of the Bible.

the Levites can drop a hint as to where their capital should be invested. They can suggest which régimes, alliances or groups opposing existing governments should be either supported or, alternatively, exterminated by financial intrigue.

There might have been reason to doubt Anastasia's information on human society all over the globe being controlled by just a handful of priests. But now, after going through this chain of logic, there can no longer be any doubt for anyone still capable of logical thinking. I'm not talking about fanatics.

The logic may be outlined as follows:

Approximately one million Jews came out of Egypt under the control of the priests. The priests' close assistants were the Levites, to whom they entrusted the task of shaping the Jews into a pre-determined type of individual Man. To this end they created an ideological religion, which set up a series of rituals along with a unique way of life.

The Levites managed to carry out their appointed task. The ideology created several thousand years ago still weighs on the Jews even today. It is what distinguishes them from the host of other nationalities living on the Earth.

One of the basic tenets of this ideology is the declaration that, of all the national groups populating the Earth, God selected the Jews alone as His chosen people.

So, this ideology still exists today, the Jews still exist today, and the conflicts continue and many people know about them. But where are the Levites? Do we ever hear much about them? Hardly at all. And therein lies their subtlety — or their wisdom — you can call it what you like, but they exist.

Now picture to yourself a rather small group of people living on this Earth who possess a greater degree of esoteric knowledge than anyone else — a group that has, over the millennia, been constantly adding to their experience of practical influence over masses of humanity.

Is there any body that can be compared with them — say, some sort of state-sponsored institute set up to study issues of national development or the formation of ideologies?

This is not possible for a variety of reasons, including the following:

The Levites have been passing their esoteric knowledge down to their heirs over the generations, and are continuing to do so today.

Modern science rejects esoteric knowledge and therefore does not consider it a serious object for research, to say the least.

This absurd situation did not come about haphazardly. But why is it *absurd*? Judge for yourselves.

On the one hand, the state accords official recognition to a number of religions, and they too are quite esoteric. The state even sets up favourable conditions for their financial support. Yet the state does not make any provision for *scientific study* of esoteric tendencies. This means, in effect, that within the territory of the state there are legalised structures capable of influencing the mentality of its citizenry. But the secular government has only the foggiest idea of what this influence consists of in actual practice. So, in the end, who is controlling whom?

Secondly, not only the government but all its thinking citizens should try to learn the lessons of history. History makes a very good school of life. But, for this, one has to know one's history. Those who rule the world know it perfectly well. Most people, however — and that includes those in the government — know next to nothing of the history of the state in which they live. More than that, the little history they do know is distorted. Russia is a perfect example.



It wasn't that long ago that we heard in our schools and colleges, in art and especially literature — just about everywhere, in fact — how terrible life was for our grandmothers and grandfathers in Tsarist Russia. For most of us this belief was a sacred cow. For most of us it went far beyond a belief — people made such a fuss over those that delivered us from the terror of tsarism. For many people the commissars in their leather jackets were heroes, while the symbol of reactionary extremism became the priesthood.

And then all at once, before our very eyes — note, not over two or three generations or centuries, but right before our eyes — history changed.

The commissars in their leather jackets, it turned out, were scoundrels, subjecting the people to genocide. And after tsarism we lived in the most terrible and totalitarian state in the world. And again, the majority of the people believed it. And once more the majority made a fuss over those who had delivered them from the yoke of a totalitarian state.

I am not about to say which of these régimes is the better or the worse. But it seems that we should all ponder this phenomenon of change — something amounting to a whole sea-change in our consciousness over an extremely brief period of time. We should ponder the question of why it changed so radically. Did the changes take place all by themselves or under somebody's manipulation?

Here, too, it is not difficult to guess: for a long time now it has been all too easy to manipulate our consciousness, and this is what is still going on today. We are like guinea-pigs in somebody's hands.

It is only the masters of manipulation that are competing amongst themselves. It is they who render us incapable of perceiving historical reality.

But let us try to discern just what this reality, in fact, is all about. Let us try to determine historical reality not on the basis of somebody's words, but of our own power of reasoning.

Note how every day on the TV, programme after programme keeps showing us first-hand how husbands subtly betray their wives and vice-versa. We are constantly being called upon to pay attention to scores of non-existent problems, but God forbid any serious issue will be raised by our politicians, journalists or writers! Such an issue makes a brief appearance only to be immediately lost in the daily soup of gossip, violent TV series, psychotropic advertising and mud-slinging.

What we need is a thoughtful analysis of what's been going on, a critical analysis of the status of life on our planet today, and the working out of a plan for the future. We need a new ideology. An ideology that won't cause the world's peoples to come to blows with each other, but will actually unite them.

But repeating a thousand times how necessary it is to do this, even shouting it a thousand times, won't make it happen. Even if we were to gather all the leading scholars of the world and sit them down together to work out this new ideology, again, nothing would come of it. Only an unending argument.

If science were capable of working out such an ideology, it would have come up with it and put it into practice long ago, at least in some country or other.

Anastasia. It doesn't matter any more who she is. That's not the point.

In the face of this ongoing lawlessness, Anastasia has given to the world the idea of family domains. Now it is becoming abundantly clear that in very simple terms she has outlined a philosophy, a new ideology, which has remained and still remains unshaken in human hearts ever since the creation of the world.

Kings and paupers, Christians and Jews, Muslims and Shintoists, Russians, Chinese and Americans, have always found the greatest grace and solace for their souls in the bosom of Divine Nature.

Anastasia's philosophy is the philosophy of uniting mankind not with words, but through concrete action, by merging the interests of different peoples of the world. Experience has shown that it is accepted by people of different nationalities, including Jews. And I have documented proof of this.

And I invite Jewish analysts, Christians and ideologues of patriotic movements to examine her ideas and philosophical aspirations. My invitation extends to leaders and followers of any religious denomination, either large or small. The very act of examination is a creative process in itself, which can lead to a union of opposites — to a “*conjoint creation and joy for all from its contemplation*”,³ as God Himself wanted.

³Quoted from Book 4, Chapter 2: “The beginning of creation”.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN



Take down Jesus Christ from the cross

I'll say this right off: one must be careful not to confuse the teachings of Jesus Christ, the selfless deeds of Russian church elders, with the occult set of rituals we are confronted with today. It is quite possible for the most beautiful teachings to be neutralised by occult devices.

As you must realise yourself, Christ Jesus has nothing to do with them. Moreover, He himself continues to hang on the cross to this day, thanks to the efforts of the occultists and our own ignorance.

I have deliberately devoted a number of chapters to the power of the energy of human thought, through which people are able to create images. If this is understandable, then tell me: which is the clearest image of Christ Jesus prevailing in your thought — in the thoughts of the majority of believers? A straw poll points to a crucifix — the image of Jesus Christ crucified on the cross.

You will find crucifixes in every Catholic and Orthodox church. Who thought up an occult device like this, and for what purpose? Did Christ Jesus himself want this particular image to be front and centre, predominating over all the others? Of course not!

But we — yes, we — continue to project the image of the crucifixion — note, not the resurrection, but the crucifixion — through the power of our own thoughts. And the image we kiss is not of the resurrection, but of the crucifixion.¹ And that is how we still keep Him on the cross.

This simple occult device uses the energy of collective human thought in shaping an image.

And Jesus Christ will remain hanging on the cross until we realise this and take him down from it with our thoughts — until we stop giving in to occult machinations.

Right from the start, in shaping the various religions the priests tried to imbue them with their occult rituals and teachings.

Any religion — even the very brightest, one which summons people to kindness and noble deeds — if interwoven with the priests' nuances, can be a powerful device in their hands. This device has enabled them to subjugate whole entire nations and set them at odds with each other, to the point of utter self-annihilation. That's the way it has been and still is today. Many contemporary religions still today involve occult rituals and teachings whose meaning and degree of influence on mankind is known only to the priests.

The projection of Jesus Christ's crucifixion by a great many people's thoughts is due to a particular occult ritual. But the people themselves involved in this projection — or, rather, their souls — will be crucified over and over again as long as they project this image.

The collective thought of the crucifixion is so strong that it can penetrate right through to the flesh of people today. Jesus' bleeding wounds periodically appear on the bodies of certain believers — this is known as the *stigmata mystery*.² Many

¹In some Christian churches, including the Russian Orthodox, kissing a crucifix is part of accepted ritual.

²*stigmata* — marks or pain sensations in places on the body corresponding to Jesus' wounds from the crucifixion. The word *stigmata* comes from the Latin word for *marks* in the Vulgate edition of Galatians 6: 17: "I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus" (quoted here from the Authorised Version). The majority of stigmatics are said to be female members of Roman Catholic orders.

scholars believe that the *stigmata*, or bleeding wounds — are a symptom of mental illness. I would add that this is not a disease affecting a single individual, but rather a whole segment of society, and that its root cause is an occult ritual observance induced by the priests.

However, instead of making a thorough investigation of this phenomenon, some enterprising people have exploited it for commercial purposes. Take, for example, the city of San Nicolás in Argentina, home to the stigmatic Gladys Motta:³ all around her house are signs of a brisk trade in everything directly or indirectly connected to her.

Anastasia's grandfather put it this way:

"People murdering each other, along with what you call *terrorism*, is rooted in the teachings of the priests which they have infused into many religious denominations, both large and small.

"They are the ones who came up with the doctrine that Man's true Divine life is not on the Earth but somewhere in another dimension. They are the ones who invented the image of a Paradise apart from the Earth God Himself created. It is because of this doctrine that so many religious fanatics manifest an attitude of neglect toward life on the Earth. It takes but a small amount of pressure exerted on their mind to induce them to kill either themselves or others.

³*Gladys Quiroga de Motta* (1937–) — one of the more celebrated stigmatics in the world today. An ordinary housewife living in San Nicolás de los Arroyos (a small town 230 km north of Buenos Aires), Ms Motta had her first vision of the Virgin Mary on 25 September 1983, a vision repeated many times since. Ms Motta's stigmata first appeared in November of the following year and then twice a year since, during Advent and Lent. Every year on 25 September thousands of pilgrims (now more than a million annually) descend upon the town, hoping to benefit from her presence. In recent years the increased tourist trade in San Nicolás, including the sale of 'Blessed Virgin Mary' souvenirs, saved the town's economy following the privatisation of the local steel mill.

“Anastasia has tried to bring this information to our attention through many different words and phrases. But not everybody will grasp what she says. Not everyone will understand my words. You, Vladimir, along with your readers, should give careful thought to what we have said, and cite your own examples and proofs. A number of different voices blending into a single whole will be able to bring liberation.

“Look carefully at the root cause of war and terrorism today and you will clearly see the influence of this monstrous teaching.”



The Siberian elder went on at some length on this subject. He appeared to be just a little excited, sometimes pausing to stroke the cedar pendant hanging around his neck before returning to the topic of how we ourselves need to be more aware of the manifestation of occult rituals and teachings.

“No spiritual teachers will be able to save people from these doctrines if the people don’t start thinking for themselves and learning to recognise them,” Grandfather said.

Believing that I had grasped the significance of his statement, I set about investigating the phenomenon of terrorism in our lives. In the future this is something we shall have to do all together. I shall merely start the ball rolling.

CHAPTER NINETEEN



Terrorism

And so, in recent years, a wave of acts of terrorism has swept across many lands. Memories of large-scale events, such as those of 11 September 2001 in America, still haunt people's minds. A fearful terrorist act took place even more recently in our country: from the 23rd to the 26th of October 2002 terrorists held more than 800 people hostage at the Moscow Theatre Centre on Dubrovka Street during a performance of the musical *Nord-Ost*.¹

In between these two major acts of terrorism quite a few others have occurred, not quite so spectacular, in various parts of the globe, claiming human lives.

On each occasion different governments have angrily denounced the terrorists involved. Their 'special services' keep mouthing assurances that the guilty parties will be punished, at the same time increasing the level of precautionary security measures.

¹*Nord-Ost* (lit. 'North-East' in German) — a Russian musical play based on a novel by Veniamin Kaverin and telling a romantic story set in the Severnaya Zemlya Archipelago (in Russia's Far North) in 1913. During the performance the premises were seized by a group of well-trained and well-armed commandos (including a group of women with explosives strapped to their bodies) who demanded from the Russian government the immediate withdrawal of Russian troops from the war-crippled Chechnya republic. The theatre was eventually stormed by Russian élite 'special troops' but the deadly gas they used ended up killing 130 hostages on the spot and causing many more to die afterward. The theatre was closed temporarily after the hostage crisis, but re-opened with the same production the following February. Subsequent attendance was poor, however, possibly because of fears of renewed attacks, and the play was cancelled in May 2003.

An international coalition to combat terrorism is already at work. Even today, however, the problem shows no signs of letting up. Quite to the contrary, it is taking on ever greater proportions and becoming increasingly refined in its methods. It is hard to escape the impression that someone has been making masterful ploys to keep leading both governments and their special services down the wrong path.

The true source and chief organiser of many of the world's terrorist acts came in for a brief mention not too long ago in Russia. During the October 2002 hostage crisis the major TV networks featured a whole host of interviews and commentaries. This included statements from the Emergency Response Headquarters, presented by the Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs, among others. This trim, grey-haired man spoke tersely, almost in military fashion. His speech included no hesitation-sounds like *uh-uh... uhm...* His sentences were marked by thoughtful content and sensitivity, indicating that his thinking was relatively quick and precise.

He was one of the first to declare that "we're dealing here with religious fanatics". Quite possibly not very many people paid attention to this particular phrase, but for many who did understand, it resounded like a bolt from the blue. For the very first time — from the lips of a Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs yet — one of the fundamental tenets of terrorism was called by its real name.

This was followed by the floating of another concept: *Islamic fundamentalism*. Rumours began circulating that Islamic fundamentalists had declared war on Christians and Jews — Israel, Russia and the United States of America in particular.

The question arises as to how to fight against religious fanaticism. I suggest we all calm down and take a more thoughtful look at the situation.

Let us first decide whether religious fanaticism is found only in Islam or whether it exists in other religions as well.

Of course the latter is true. Let's not forget history. Think of the numerous Christian crusades. Think of the painting of the Boyarynya Morozova.² Think of the names of all the martyrs ready to sacrifice their lives for the sake of some religious dogma — martyrs who were elevated to sainthood after death.

The fact becomes patently obvious that it is not religion as a whole, but rather specific dogmas infused into various religions which make people indifferent to their own life. The religious suicide-fanatic is quite confident that, far from being indifferent to life, he is crossing over into real life.

How does this happen? Among any community of believers, Muslim or Christian, there can always be found a group of radical adherents to a particular dogma, whose faith can be honed by occult rituals to the point of fanaticism. The result is a kind of bio-robot who believes in something he himself can't see or understand logically.

Subsequently, those who are familiar with the functioning of the mind know perfectly well what buttons to press on this bio-robot, and they press them. Not with their fingers, of course. They simply indicate the target the bio-robot is to destroy for the sake of a bright future. Then the bio-robots

²*painting of the Boyarynya Morozova* — a famous canvas painted in 1887 by the Russian artist Vasily Ivanovich Surikov (1848–1916), showing the chained Boyarynya (Duchess) Feodosia Morozova on a horse-drawn sleigh surrounded by her 'Old Believer' supporters, all crossing themselves with two fingers, in defiant protest against the politically motivated reforms of the Russian Orthodox Church. The Church's new decree at the time that three fingers were to be used in making the sign of the cross was one of the main points of contention in the *raskol*, or schism, that split the whole institution apart in the 17th century. Tsar Alexey Romanov (father to Peter the Great), who instigated the reforms, had the Boyarynya (pron. *ba-YAH-rin-ya*) arrested in 1671 and planned to execute her, but fear of public unrest caused him to commute her sentence to imprisonment in Borovsk, where she was kept in a pit and died in 1675.

begin to work out the termination operation on their own and proceed to carry it out. Their own earthly life no longer has any meaning for them. They are, after all, confident in their own transition to a better, heavenly existence.

And so long as there exists the doctrine of goodness being attainable not on the Earth, but somewhere else, no army or 'special services' will succeed in eliminating suicide-bombers.

Let us picture the following situation. Let's say the 'special services' belonging to the major powers have got together and through their joint efforts have managed to get rid of every last terrorist on the globe. But what will that change? New terrorists will simply be born — as long as the doctrine which produces them continues to exist.

So what is the solution? Of course one cannot do without traditional precautionary measures. But along with these it is essential to understand how dangerous the doctrine is and to eliminate it before it produces more and more suicide-bombers.

Understanding! That is the most important thing today! Otherwise the struggle against terrorism will simply turn out to be a joke.

Picture the following situation. A religious fanatic, a suicide-bomber, seizes an aeroplane and aims it at some significant target in a major populated area. The authorities start negotiating with the terrorist — they tell him they are ready to meet any demands he has. But what these negotiators do not realise is that the religious fanatic's real goal is not the satisfaction of his demands. His aim is to die and assure himself entry into the non-earthly Paradise he has imagined for himself.

This dogma of a non-earthly Paradise, projected by the collective thought of people of various denominations, influences unbelievers too. For millennia now it has been exerting a most destructive influence on all mankind.



What I'm about to tell you now may seem unrealistic, even fantasaical. Still, the only way to solve this problem without violence may be the following.

It is absolutely essential that Orthodox Church patriarchs, Islamic muftis,³ religious elders and (above all) Christians, Catholics and Muslims come together for a conference, to carefully examine the situation in the world today and change the life-destroying doctrines in their religious teachings. It is essential that religious fanatics be helped to regain their human perspective on life. It is essential to declare: "Our Father is here, on the Earth, and not somewhere else!"

And what if the religious leaders don't get together? What if they don't make any declaration like that?

Not to worry.

It has already been made!

People aren't turned on any more by the leaders of our religious denominations exhorting everyone to live in 'peace and friendship' with each other. Just the mere statement that "we will have nothing to do with terrorism" is no longer believable. A more radical step is required.

I indicated that a meeting and declaration such as this may be dismissed as unrealistic. Let's examine why. Why are we reluctant to believe that highly-placed, highly religious leaders would not be able to simply come to an agreement amongst themselves? After all, if *they* can't come to an agreement, then what can you expect from rank-and-file believers?

³*mufti* — an Islamic leader who has studied and is authorised to interpret Islamic law.

If they can't come to an agreement on their own, then common-sense elements in society and governments need to give them some help.

It is absolutely essential that they talk amongst themselves and agree. Otherwise bombs will start talking for them, in a big way. Much better for the *mind* of Man to do the talking. The mind of the children of God.



At first glance it may seem as though it might take a rather long time for Anastasia's ideas to effect any positive transformation in Russia, let alone other countries, seeing how gradually human consciousness ordinarily changes. However, experience has shown that in the case of many readers it can change instantaneously.

Let's look at what might happen in Chechnya⁴ if the Russian government, the State Duma, had adopted a law granting every willing family a hectare of land on which to establish a domain of their own along the lines recommended by Anastasia. The twenty thousand refugees who have been living with their families in tents for three years now would be granted their own domains. Over those three years each of those same tents which are now forming dirty tent cities would already be standing in its own splendid garden. Some of the residents would have already managed to build themselves a house.

⁴*Chechnya* — a small, mainly Muslim republic within the Russian Federation (see footnote 4 in Book 5, Chapter 17: "Questions and answers").

Who is stopping this from coming about today? Somebody who favours not peace, but its opposite. Somebody who is trying to prevent any positive changes from taking place in Russia.

Your efforts are wasted, chaps! I doubt any of you has even the foggiest idea of just who Anastasia is, or what powers she embodies within herself.

I'll say one thing: it's not simply that she *will* create what she has thought up, she has *already* created it. It's already coming to pass, and your opposition confirms it. Any building site has its share of garbage, but sooner or later they clean it up and plant flowers.

CHAPTER TWENTY



Pagans

The main criticism levelled against Anastasia comes down to the allegation that she is a ‘pagan’ — without even the slightest proof or examination of the ideas put forward by this taiga recluse. Though Anastasia herself clearly and distinctly called herself a *Vedruss*.¹

Well, then, if she is a ‘pagan’, what does that imply? Japan, even today, is practically a pagan country. The Roman Empire, in its heyday, was pagan, too. Our forefathers and mothers were also pagan. But much more than that. At the time when the Egyptian state and the Roman Empire were flourishing, Vedic culture was still reigning in Russia.²

So, should we be proud of our pagan history and heritage, or be ashamed of it?

We are told that our heritage is something to be ashamed of.

The words *paganism* and *pagan*³ have been turned into word-symbols — symbols designating something bad or terrible.

¹*Vedruss* (pron. *vid-ROOSS*) — see Book 6, Chapter 4: “A dormant civilisation”.

²*Vedic culture* — see the section on ‘Vedism’ in Book 6, Chapter 5: “The history of mankind, as told by Anastasia”.

³*paganism, pagan* — In Russian, the word *paganyi* (now spelt *poganyi*) means ‘foul’, ‘unclean’, ‘vile’ and has been frequently used by Christian ideologists — in conjunction with *yazychnik* (‘pagan’) — to refer to adherents to Russia’s pre-Christian religion, as well as ‘non-believers’ in general. Thus under the influence of the Christian church over centuries the term *yazychnik* has acquired a strong negative connotation. *Yazychestvo* (‘paganism’) and *yazychnik* (‘pagan’) — both stressed on the second syllable — are derived

The word *Christian* has also become a word-symbol. But it symbolises, by contrast, spirituality, decency, enlightened thought, closeness to God.

Today we have the opportunity to observe the Christian as a type, and judge his worth by his fruits.

We can judge by our own modern way of life... What am I saying? — *we* are not in a position to judge anything! We simply can't compare this type with the way of life led by our pagan forefathers and mothers, which people today are all too prone to curse, hidden as it is from our sight.

In sum, what we are told about the history of our country (as served up to us) is the following:

Our ancestors were some kind of horrible dark people, but then 'enlighteners' arrived, bringing with them a new ideology worked out in Israel — namely, Christianity.

The Russian Prince Vladimir adopted it and baptised the whole nation of Rus'.⁴

Not long ago we celebrated the millennium of this event. But what is a thousand years? A mere split-second against the backdrop of billions of years. Well, let's think in terms of

from the word *yazyk* (literally, 'tongue' — meaning a territory where the population shares the same language) — and were used by early Christians in Russia to refer to the totality of Russia's (non-Christian) people, who spoke a language different from that of the Christian newcomers. The English term *pagan* is derived from Latin *paganus*, meaning 'rural' or 'of the village' — rural areas were much slower than urban populations to accept Christianity. Note that for the same reason the word *villain* (derived from *village*) in English has also acquired a negative meaning.

⁴*Rus'* (pron. *ROOSS*) — the name given to the large East Slavic state in the tenth century, north of the Black Sea, with its capital at Kiev. In 988 Prince Vladimir of Kiev accepted baptism from the Byzantine (Eastern Orthodox) church and shortly thereafter presided over a mass baptism of Kiev residents in the Dniepr River. In return he obtained the hand of the Byzantine Emperor's sister in marriage as well as a military alliance with Byzantium.

not a split-second, but a single day. That's very important — being able to compress time. Now you will see what comes from this line of reasoning.

Let's say you awake one fine sunny morning and see visitors at your door. They proceed to tell you that your parents are bad and horrible pagans, that you must become Christian and instead of communing with Nature, you must ask forgiveness for your sins, since your parents were such sinners that their sins have attached themselves to you.

And right off you agree with the foreigners' statements. You follow them to their temple and kiss their hands. You ask for their blessing and try not even to think about your parents. You try to erase them from your memory, leaving behind nothing but the notion *horrible pagans*.

This is the picture that emerges from our figurative compression of time.

Over the past thousand years the 'foreigners' have focused our attention on a multitude of different events: they tell about who went to war with whom, what splendid buildings they constructed, who married whom among the princes or kings, who gained power and how. But by comparison with one's attitude toward one's parents and their culture, this has no essential significance. All these other events, disasters and woes will simply be a consequence of the fundamental act of betraying one's parents.

"But we never betrayed our parents," someone will argue. "Such events took place more than a thousand years ago, and those were quite different people who lived back then."

Well, I could paraphrase it, and expand the time frame, but it wouldn't make a scrap of difference.

Your distant (very distant) foremother was a pagan. She loved and understood Nature. She was acquainted with the Universe and knew the meaning of the rising Sun. She gave birth to you... She gave birth to you, in the far-distant past, in

a marvellous garden. And your beautiful foremother rejoiced over you, and your father was happy at your appearance.

And your forefather and foremother wanted you, so far-far distant from your present-day self, to make this marvellous Space even more marvellous — to make it so that it would come down to you in the present day, enhanced by each succeeding generation, so that you, today, would be able to live on an Earth transformed into a planet of Divine Paradise. They did this especially for you.

They were pagans, and were able to understand God's thoughts through Nature. Your distant (very distant) mama and papa knew how to make you happy. They knew because they were pagans.

Your father died in an unequal battle with foreign mercenaries, fighting for your future.

Your mama was burnt at the stake because she refused to exchange your marvellous future for what you see around you today.

But today still came...

And today the descendants of the pagans are still on bended knee, still kissing the hands of the descendants of those who burnt their mothers and slew their fathers.

They kiss their hands and make up songs about Russia's unconquerability. They sing songs about the Russian spirit, slavishly crawling on their knees for more than a millennium now.

What kind of freedom is that? Hey, you who have been oppressed by a thousand-year yoke, intoxicated by the drug of foreign ideology, it's time to wake up!

Whoever is able, wake up and start thinking! How could it have happened that Anastasia, a Siberian recluse, a Russian, after saying only a few words about Russian history, was immediately met with such opposition — and not just anywhere, but right here in Russia itself?!

If this country, as we believe, was not seized by ideologues from abroad, then who is behind all this opposition? It turns out that it is the Russians themselves who are opposing even the slightest mention of their past, of their parents. As though they — Russians — had quite lost their marbles.

No, not quite, and this is evident from the multitude of letters, songs and verses, the constantly increasing print-runs (already totalling millions of copies) of books containing the sayings of Anastasia.

The hearts of Russians are starting to beat in time with the hearts of their forebears — both distant and not-so-distant — who dreamt about their children's happiness. The opposition is being provoked by mercenaries and their accomplices. What kind of mercenaries? What kind of mercenaries' accomplices?

Can you seriously think that the transformation of the whole Russian people's way of life was brought about simply by the word of some Russian prince named Vladimir? Especially in view of his rather shaky hold on his princely throne. What, did he just happen to be sitting around one day and say: "Well, lads, I've decided you're all going to have to forget your parents' culture and be converted to Christianity"?

And the people enthusiastically replied: "Sure, we're tired of our ancestors' culture — come on, Prince, baptise us"?

Absurd? Of course it's absurd. In actual fact, Prince Vladimir first tried to strengthen his hold on power through changing the religious views of the ancient Slavs, setting up a pantheon of pagan deities. Pagan belief, however, would not permit the hallowing of the social relations that would result. It rejected the attempted justification of social and proprietary inequality, Man's exploitation of his fellow-Man and the divine right of kings. Hence Prince Vladimir, in order to satisfy his political ambitions, was obliged to select a foreign religion for the Russian people.

It is no secret that the choice fell upon the Byzantine variant of Christianity, precisely because it allowed for the virtual subordination of the clergy to the prince's authority, never mind the legal question of subordination to the patriarchate at Constantinople. But we are assured that Vladimir took this step for the benefit of Rus's enlightenment and prosperity.

We are all aware that a change of ideology is almost invariably accompanied by social disasters and bloodshed. But in this case it wasn't merely a question of a change of ideology. It was a sharp sea-change in religion, culture, way of life and social order.

Compared to the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 this was a revolution 'seventy times seven'. And if it too had been followed by a bloody civil war, it would have been a civil war 'seventy times seven'.

But in those early times there was no civil war. There was no civil war simply because pagan Russia was inhabited exclusively by pagans. We are told there was opposition, including armed opposition between pagans and Christians in Rus'. But if Rus' was wholly pagan, then where did the Christians come from? They came from other countries, along with the mercenaries.

Prince Vladimir at the time was a long way from being the most powerful prince in the region. Of course he had his own armed garrison. But we learn from history that this garrison was far from being equal to any serious military confrontation. Additional support from the populace was always required. The basic armed forces in Ancient Rus' were always made up of the People's Militia.

But what kind of popular military resistance can we talk about if the people as a whole were opposed to baptism?

Foreign mercenaries, perhaps? Of course! But was the Prince's treasury wealthy enough to hire and maintain an entire army? Of course not! But the Prince still obtained the required funds. From whom?

From the patriarchates of Rome and other christianised countries — these patriarchates had become fairly wealthy by that time.

And so it happened a thousand years ago that the half-Russian Prince Vladimir, in return for the boost to his power, allowed foreign emissaries to conduct their propaganda campaigns, along with their schemes and provocations — and in the long run to commit acts of violence against the Russian people.

Rus' turned out to be a tougher nut to crack than the Roman Empire, and not easily given to being influenced by propaganda. This resulted in the Prince using mercenaries to reinforce his garrison and — again, with the mercenaries' help — to get rid of a part of the rebellious population.

My opponents may argue that this is only one version of events. No, my ideological friends, we are talking about objective historical reality. It can be proved even without the phenomenal abilities of Anastasia or her knowledge of history. I as a simple human being can prove it to you here and now, and that means a whole lot of other simple human beings will also be able to figure it out.

Perhaps those devotees of occult ideologies can tell me how many millions of Russian fathers and mothers they burnt alive at the stake? Name your figure — even a conservative estimate will do. Or are you going to tell me that this never happened? But it did! Your own sources mention it. Think back.

At a congress that took place in Russia back in the fifteenth century, a group of Volga elders raised the question of abolishing the death penalty for heretics. Note that this was already five centuries after the christianisation of Russia, and here are the sons of Rus', still resisting. Not only was the death penalty not abolished, but the Volga elders faced an unenviable fate.

But if you still wish to look upon what I have said as simply *my* version of events, go ahead. Only let us then regard *your* statements as a version too, and then let's compare both versions.

A comparison will easily show that your version is completely illogical, that it is founded merely on statements which you demand to be accepted as truth. Besides, you are unable to present a single document confirming, for example, that pagans in Rus' offered human sacrifices.

Show people what archæological evidence you have, go dig up the victims. You won't find any, because there weren't any.

Show us the pagan books outlining their world-views. Give people a chance to compare the cultures of both civilisations.

You refuse to show them? Why? Because you know very well that once people become acquainted with such texts, they will see the utter absurdity of their modern lifestyle.

And so it turns out that your Utopian version is not backed up by any proof, and so you demand that everyone simply *believe* and that's it. "Believe in us, or else you'll be labelled a godless non-believer."

There is evidence to show that Rus' was enslaved by deception and force. I shall not go through the whole list — a single example will suffice.

From those times right up to the present day Rus' may be considered an enslaved country. And foreign ideology is still prevalent in the Rus' of the present. Even today Rus' is still paying tribute money, only in a different form — the flight of capital, the sale of mineral resources, the stranglehold of poor-quality foreign food products on our market. And today the ideological component is very closely monitored.

The mere mention of the culture of Ancient Rus' is enough to call counter-measures into action — including the never-ending scheming and attacks on Anastasia.

You speak of freedom of speech, but why are you so afraid of her words? Why do you try to discredit your own country's culture and not allow people to get to know it? I know why. The culture of our ancestors is marvellous, joyful and highly spiritual!



In my previous volume, called *The Book of Kin*, I cited Anastasia's account of a wedding rite involving two lovers.⁵ This rite still existed a scant two thousand years ago in Rus'. The publication of this book gave rise to a number of conclusions on the part of scholars and researchers. I have already mentioned that over the past while Anastasia's sayings have been subjected to investigation by scholars in various disciplines. Some of them carry on their work openly and even try to have their findings published, while others simply send them in to the Anastasia Foundation⁶ for reference. So as not to leave them open to attack, I shall not name names, but simply convey the gist of their various reports.⁷

⁵See the section entitled: "A union of two — a wedding" in Book 6, Chapter 5: "The history of mankind, as told by Anastasia". All further quotations from Anastasia in this chapter are taken from this same section.

⁶The *Anastasia Foundation for Culture and Assistance to Creativity* — a non-profit organisation based in the city of Vladimir. See Book 5, Chapter 15: "Making it come true".

⁷Five different reports are cited (the first at some length), set off by asterisks in the English translation.



Anastasia's presentation of the wedding rite prevalent in the culture of Ancient Rus' is a unique and priceless document attesting to the high level of knowledge among the inhabitants of the time. The whole rite is based not on belief in the supernatural but on the *knowledge* of that which we today term 'supernatural'.

The individual components of this rite may be seen even today among various peoples. But in the modern interpretation these components are purely ritualistic, senseless and deficient in nature and, consequently, not up to the task of cementing the union of two people in love to the same degree of effectiveness as back when they were applied with full conscious awareness.

In today's version of the rite, some of these components seem meaningless, grounded in a kind of superstition. At best, they fall into the category of so-called 'esoteric' activities. Anastasia's description takes us from a misperception of the rite as a senseless act to an awareness of its pre-eminent rationality and indicates not only knowledge but the ultimate height of spirituality among those generations of Slavs which came before us. [...]

A comparative analysis of today's wedding rites and the one described by Anastasia fosters the impression that today's rites are more characteristic of an undeveloped primitive society, while those of Ancient Rus' belong to a civilisation which is highly developed in every sense of the word. For example:

Among a number of peoples today, including Russians, there is a ritual activity of showering the newlywed couple

with cereal grains. One of the mothers or grandmothers or relatives of the newlyweds scatters cereal grains in front of the couple on their way into their home or throws it over the couple themselves as a token of happiness for the future family.

This kind of activity today is associated with superstition or esoterica. There is no other rational explanation for it. What sense is there in seeds of grain simply falling on the floor, asphalt or pathway leading to the house where they will immediately get trampled on and crushed?

The ritual described by Anastasia also includes a special act involving cereal grains. But here, right off, one can associate it with several distinct and clearly thought-through rational purposes. All the wedding guests — relatives, friends and acquaintances — bring with them seeds from their best plants, and each one plants by his own hand the little seed he has brought with him in the spot designated by the newlywed couple.

In terms of material wealth, it is not simply betokened but actually achieved in practice by the special act described. In just a brief space of time — an hour or two — the newlyweds have the makings of their future orchard, drawing upon the best fruit and berry plantings in the neighbourhood, as well as a vegetable garden and a green hedge wherewith to frame their Space. [...]

No less important is a second, or psychological, aspect of this special act. Many of us know about the improvement in one's mental state upon entering into natural surroundings. Such pleasant sensations are enhanced by contact not with someone else's garden plantings but with your very own. The strength of spirit and level of emotions you should feel upon entering a garden where every little tree, bush and blade of grass was created as a gift for you directly by your parents, relatives and friends is something

we can only guess at, as it is doubtful that anyone living on the Earth today is able to have such a Space as this.

And by all appearances it was not just material prosperity but, more importantly, one's inner positive emotions resulting from such a special act, that played a fundamental role therein. [...]

In current esoteric literature a lot is said about the energy of *kundalini* and *chakras*.⁸ The information presented basically focuses attention on the possibility of the existence of chakras. There is little doubt as to the existence of the energy of love or the energy of sexual attraction between men and women.

The vast majority of people have experienced the effect of this energy on themselves. However, neither the theoreticians of the past nor our modern sciences have ever touched upon the possibility that Man can actually control this energy.

The rite described by Anastasia has shown for the first time how Man can control, transform and maintain this energy. [...]

In actual fact, the young lovers materialise the love which has been bestowed upon them — or which has entered into them. With the help of this energy they shape a visible and tangible Space around them. They see to it that this great energy remains with them in perpetuity.

Why was this possible for them, but not in our present reality? Let us compare the actions of two loving couples — in the past and present.

The average loving couple today spends their time either at entertainment venues or alone together on walks

⁸*kundalini* — the power (energy) coiled up in a form of a serpent and located at the base of the spine, at the body's lower *chakra* (energy plexus). Many oriental yoga practices aim at spiritual enlightenment by awakening the kundalini energy and moving it up the spine to the higher *chakras*.

or at home. They often enter into sexual relations even before marriage. [...]

The basic goal of most lovers today is the official recognition of their relations by a secular marriage bureau or a church. Research has shown that young couples do not adequately plan for their future life together. If a couple should try to determine their course of life together after marriage, it is a vague conjecture at best. Psychologists observe that it is the hope of each would-be newlywed that, after joining together, their life will be improved by their partner.

They all hope that the elevated, life-fulfilling state of love will carry on after marriage. But the love is fleeting. The surrounding space becomes routine — far from reminding them of their earlier feelings of being in love, it starts to become irritating through its routineness and primitiveness.

The irritation can also arise in the couple's relationship to one another. Few suspect that something other than this irritation is at the root of the couple's actions after marriage. Dissatisfaction actually results from an inability to make proper use of the state of love. [...]

As practice has shown, neither secular laws nor religious admonitions are capable of ensuring continuing mutual affection or even an attitude of mutual respect.

Now let us take a look at the actions of the young couple in the account presented by Anastasia and try to come up with a logical, scientific interpretation.

First, the declaration of love in itself is quite striking:

"With you, my beautiful goddess, I could create a Space of Love to last forever," the young man told his intended. And if the girl's heart responded in kind, she might answer: "My god, I am ready to help you in your grand co-creation."

Now compare this with the declaration of love formulated by the famous poet, which comes the closest to describing the gist of modern attitudes toward the energy of love:

*I love you so, what can I say more,
What else could I tell you besides...?*⁹

As we can see, the first declaration above proposes right off a distinctly formulated grand act, namely the creation of a Space of Love. In effect, it is a scientific materialisation of love. The second declaration, on the contrary, does nothing more than state "I love you" with no further action specified. It is simply that neither he nor she have any idea how and for what purpose to use their energy of love. [...]

The lovers in Anastasia's account, by mutual agreement, set about forming a Space of Love for themselves and their future generations. They go off by themselves, and may even spend the night in the shelter they have built on their chosen plot of land, but refrain from entering into sexual relations. Is this some kind of ritualistic abstention? [...]

Such instances of abstention are part of many peoples' religious beliefs. They are also found in secular ethics. Young people in love should not enter into sexual relations before their marriage is registered or, alternatively, before they are wedded in a religious ceremony. However, the vast majority of young people today pay no heed to religious admonitions or public condemnation, but freely launch into pre-marital sex. Why? The most probable answer lies in the complete illogicality of both the social and religious

⁹From Tatiana's declaration of love in her letter to Onegin in Alexander Pushkin's *Eugene Onegin* (better known in the West as Tchaikovsky's opera of the same title), Act I, Scene 2 (JW translation).

requirements — the lack of a plausible explanation as to what the energy of love is all about — or, more accurately, simple ignorance thereof.

The energy of love activates a whole complex of feelings in Man. It accelerates the mental processes. And this energy can be compared to an apex of inspiration which presupposes a series of grand acts to follow.

Thanks to their knowledge, as well as a highly developed culture of mutual human relations, the young couples of Ancient Rus' quite naturally directed the energy of love and sexual attraction toward the act of creating a Space for their future life together.



What two young lovers create together can hardly be surpassed, one would imagine, with the help of scientific investigation. The following statement of Anastasia's attests to this:

The world of academe is in no position to create even the similitude of a splendid domain because, again, there is a law of the Universe which says: A single Creator inspired by love is stronger than all the sciences combined, which are deprived of love.



All the actions of the participants in the events reflected in Anastasia's account of the wedding rite are infused by logic, rationality and the highest degree of culture and spirituality. By comparison, what a sorry spectacle is offered by our modern wedding ceremonies, with the main focus on the *reception*, where the guests gorge themselves on food and alcohol.



In terms of their emotional richness, along with their meaningful and informative content, Anastasia's presentations of the parables and rites of Ancient pagan (or, to use her term, *Vedic*) Rus' by far surpass all the ancient tales we know of, describing our past history. Even the famous *Song of Igor's campaign*¹⁰ pales before them.



¹⁰*Song of Igor's campaign* (Russian: *Slovo o polku Igoreve*) — a celebrated poetic chronicle of Ancient Rus', dating back to the twelfth century.

Through her narratives on Vedic Rus' Anastasia is, in effect, revealing to us the highly spiritual culture of a civilisation of which we were hitherto unaware. She is radically transforming academic concepts as to the history not only of our country but of humanity as a whole.

Such an unexpected sea-change, not to mention the simplicity with which it was brought about, has thrown many leading lights of contemporary academia into confusion. And in an effort to somehow maintain the framework of the academic positions they have attained, they try to pretend that nothing has changed, that they know nothing about the information presented.

They are like ostriches hiding their heads in the sand. The information is real, it is truly priceless and sensational, and it will come to be demanded more and more by society at large.



I have presented to you, dear readers, the pronouncements of a number of academic researchers. As you can see, they confirm the informational significance of Anastasia's sayings and even talk about the subsequent confusion among contemporary scholars.

But confusion is one thing. The opposition — the concentrated efforts being made to stop the spread of this information which sheds light on the history of our country and our people — is quite another.

Somebody has felt very threatened by the possibility of our digging into the knowledge and culture of our forebears.

Who might that be? Under whose influence are they operating today — these people that are calling our ancestors ‘barbaric pagans’, perverting that great word *pagan* to suggest something backward, or evil? What programme are they following?

And how come our historians have accepted such a definition? It couldn’t have been *our* historians that did that.

Maybe they’re not historians at all? If they haven’t been able to tell us up to now anything concrete about the history of our country of just one thousand years ago, but keep on insulting or tacitly allowing others to insult this period of our history, then these are not historians of Russia, but traitors or mercenaries, acting on behalf of somebody else.

And we shouldn’t be relying upon them any longer. It is vital that we ourselves, through our joint efforts, bit by bit, use analogies to restore our own past and rehabilitate both our forebears and ourselves. If we don’t...



Many readers the Ringing Cedars Series have already begun to write a Book of Kin for their children.¹¹ Some of them will certainly want, too, to express their thoughts on the history of Ancient Rus’, to tell their children about where we came from. But what can we write about our past? Are we really going to carry on with that nonsense we have been told for so long?

¹¹See especially Book 6, Chapter 10: “The Book of Kin”.

Maybe it's better not to write anything about our past, just pretend it never existed. But that won't work. If we act that way, then our children after us will keep getting served up the same story over and over again in a way that will suit somebody's particular interests.

Someone may wonder how we, as ordinary folk — not scholarly historians — can restore a history of two or three thousand years ago. We can! Since we'll be doing it not because we're carrying out someone's instructions, but according to the dictates of our hearts and minds. I shall attempt to start the ball rolling, but let us all together begin gathering whatever stories, facts and analogies we can, and putting together our own family histories.

Let us all begin thinking and reasoning about this together. As I said, a lot can be restored even just using analogy. Here's an example. Take a look.

More than two thousand years ago the mighty Roman Empire was in its heyday, including Roman law, the Roman Senate and the Roman Emperors. The cities of the Empire were adorned with epochal edifices, and Rome already had a water supply system. There were libraries, and a flourishing of art. The Roman Empire waged quite a number of wars.

In contrast to the developed states of the pre-Christian era, there is virtually no information about the *Russian* state — its political structure, its territories or culture. Maybe it simply didn't exist? Of course it existed. We know from historical sources that by the time Rus' was baptised it already had cities and princedoms. And Prince Vladimir, who oversaw the baptism of Rus', was by no means its first prince. The same sources tell us about his father, Prince Sviatoslav.¹²

In other words, Rus' existed contemporaneously with the Roman Empire. It had its cities and a multitude of wealthy settlements. Yes, wealthy, because the cities of Ancient Rus'

took shape not just as capitals of princedoms, but as trade and handicraft centres serving the many settlements in the outlying area.

Poor settlements do not give rise to cities. There would simply be no one to finance their construction and no consumer demand for what they produced.

And now let us try to determine whether pre-Christian Rus' was a strong or a weak state? Let us suppose, for the sake of argument, that it was extremely weak. Not only that, but historians claim that Rus' was divided into petty independent princedoms which were constantly warring with each other.

But once again the question arises: if pre-Christian Rus' was so weak, a state torn apart by internecine conflicts, why did it not fall prey to attacks by more powerful states?

As a weak state by comparison with its neighbours, not to mention the Roman Empire, the Russian state could have been easily conquered and transformed into a tribute-paying colony. But here is where the enigma and the mysteries begin.

In all the annals of the Roman Empire and other states of the period there is no mention of any attack on Rus'.

We ourselves know that up to the time of the official baptism, Rus' was a free and independent state, unconquered by any other.

So, why did no one try to conquer pagan Rus'?

¹² *Prince Sviatoslav I of Kiev* (942–972) — a warrior prince of Kievan Rus', said to be the first Slavic prince with a completely Slavic name. The name is comprised of two ancient Russian roots: *sviat* (holy) and *slav* (praise/glory), which had the same meanings as the Old Norse names of his mother (Olga) and father (Rurik), respectively. He is known largely from what is described in a document known as *Povest' vremennykh let* (Chronicle of ancient years, sometimes referred to as the *Primary chronicle* or the *Tale of bygone years*), which refers in large part to Scandinavian and Byzantine influences on Russian culture and religion. But not all Russian scholars accept this document as historical fact.

Perhaps it was because it had an extensive, well-organised and well-equipped army? But no, that it did not have. Even during the time of the princes there were only small armed garrisons whose numbers were far from equalling those of the Roman legions.

We shall never understand the historical truth if we start with a false reasoning about pagan Rus' — especially Vedic Rus'.

On the other hand, everything falls into place if we accept and understand the opposite hypothesis.

Vedic Rus', before the time of the princes, was a highly spiritual, highly organised civilisation. It was that same 'lost civilisation' on the Earth about which legends would be subsequently told.

I deliberately referred to Ancient Rus' not as a *state* but as a *civilisation*, since the benchmark of statehood for that period is considered to be Egypt or Rome. These were under the control of supreme rulers, priests and an élite that had enriched itself at the expense of slaves.

The social structure of Rus' was significantly perfected and more civilised in comparison to Egypt or Rome.

In Rus' at that time there was absolutely no slavery. Neither were there any petty princedoms warring amongst themselves. Rus' was comprised of marvellous kin's domains. Decisions were taken at popular assemblies known as *veche*. Information was circulated by 'wise-men'.¹³

¹³*wise-men* (Russian: *volkhvy*), also known as *Magi* or *wizards* — a reference to ancient 'scientists' with particular knowledge of the workings of Nature, often possessing exceptional powers. In Ancient Rus' one of the *volkhvy*'s major tasks was the development of agricultural symbology and fertility rites to guarantee abundant harvests. Many *volkhvy* also fulfilled the role of travelling community teachers. Further details will be presented in *Rites of Love* (Book 8, Part 2 of the Ringing Cedars Series). This is the same reference that is found regarding the 'wise men' who visited the infant Jesus in Bethlehem, according to the New Testament (see, for example, Matth. 2:1).

But note how the concepts have been distorted, including the meaning of the word *civilisation*. Egypt, where all the people were subject to the rule of the priests and pharaohs, was known as a highly developed, 'civilised' state, while Rus' at the same period was called backward, uncivilised and weak, without any kind of real statehood. That's pretty steep! If there was no slavery, and no petty-tyrant despots, does that mean there was no state — that Rus' was uncivilised?

Again, the same question: why then did nobody conquer Rus'?

There were, of course, *attempts* at conquering the Vedruss people. But those who tried it always endeavoured to erase the results of such attempts, even from their own memory.

Here is what Anastasia told me about one of these attempts that took place more than two thousand years ago.

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE



Combat

In those days the Vedic way of life was still the prevalent culture in Rus'. The Vedruss people still had no cities. Rus' was made up of a large number of settlements, rich in extraordinary foods, the joy of life and bright people who lived in their family domains.¹

There were other countries at that time, which boasted of great cities where the power of money was becoming more and more dominant over human aspirations. And there were great armies, and with their help rulers attempted to bring the whole world under their own control. And many countries bowed under the control of the dark forces.

Once an élite Roman legion was sent to Rus'. Five thousand warriors approached the boundary of the first settlement they came to. And they threateningly made camp right on the outskirts of the little village.

The military officers called for the village elders to come to them. And the elders came, knowing no fear in the face of this ominous force. The officers explained that they came from the most powerful country of all and that, consequently, all the settlements must pay tribute to them. Anyone unable to pay would be taken into slavery.

The elders replied that they were not disposed to share their food with any evil-doers, thereby feeding hordes of dark forces.

¹The text of Anastasia's narrative is reproduced in this chapter without quotation-marks for each paragraph.

Whereupon the commander-in-chief said to the elder most advanced in age:

"I have heard about your barbarity and your unusual way of life. Your mind is incapable of even appreciating the correlation of forces here. With a mind like that you will never be free in a civilised Empire. You will either exist as slaves or not exist at all."

And the Vedruss village elder replied:

"It is the one who is not capable of using Divine provisions for his food that is not allowed to exist. Look."

And with these words the elderly Vedruss took two identical fresh and beautiful apples out of his pocket. He surveyed the officers, all glistening in their armour, but his gaze rested on a young private soldier. He went over to the soldier and held out one of the apples, saying:

"Take this, my son, may this fruit be a delight to your soul."

The young private took the fruit and tasted it right there in the sight of all those standing around. His face lit up with a delight that provoked envy among the others.

Then the elder, still holding the second beautiful apple in his hand, turned again to the commander-in-chief, went over to him and said:

"My soul has no desire to offer this marvellous fruit to you. What that means, try to understand yourself." And he placed the second apple at the feet of the commander-in-chief.

"How dare you, old man, answer back that way to a commander distinguished in battle?" a Roman orderly exclaimed, as he picked up the apple and gasped in amazement.

And all the commissioned officers and their subordinates were in shock from what they saw. For the beautiful apple had begun rotting right before their eyes in the orderly's hands. And right before their very eyes a swarm of midges suddenly appeared and devoured the rotting fruit. And the Vedruss elder continued:

"Nobody can buy the fruit of Divine grace for gold or take it by force. You may call yourself a lord and master and imagine yourself defeating countries, but the only thing you will eat that way is rot."



"This is not mysticism, Vladimir, you must understand. Fruits grown with love can give their grace only to those who themselves have instilled love in them, or to those to whom the growers give them of their own free will. This is the order of the Universe, and for proof of this you need only take a careful look at the present day. People are doomed to eat fruit which is far from fresh."

"But what about the wealthy?" I queried. "And those that rule the world?"

"They face even greater problems with food. They are afraid of poisoned fruit and dainty dishes. And before they eat anything themselves, they have those around them taste it first. They post guards and special servicemen around their foodstuffs, but to no avail... Many a ruler has died in agony from eating bad food.

"You will note that many people are trying today to produce health-restoring cedar-nut oil. Only the healing properties of this oil vary, depending upon the thought of the producer.

"And that Vedruss elder was no mystic. He was merely outlining what every child growing up in Vedic Rus' knew about all the time."



But the aged Vedruss's remarks provoked anger and he was taken captive. He was put into a cage so that he could witness the torching of the houses and gardens in his village. And so that he could watch its men, women and children parade before him in chains.

The commander said to him spitefully:

"Look there, old man. There are your fellow-villagers, now they are slaves. You made fun of me in front of my retinue in a bad way, and the fruit you gave me showed immediate signs of decay. Now all your fellow-villagers are slaves, and they will now produce undecaying fruit for us under pain of death."

"Under pain of death," observed the elder, "one can only grow that which brings death, even though it may have a pleasant appearance. You are primitive. You will not be able to conquer my country. I have released a pigeon with information about you. Once they see it, my magi will tell everyone the news."

The commander issued an order. Runners fanned out to all the Vedruss settlements with a view to delivering the order. It demanded that each settlement send representatives to see how strong, well-trained and well-equipped were the Roman troops. And how they were capable of wiping any bravely resisting settlements off the face of the Earth and taking the children and young women as slaves. And for everybody to bring tribute to his warriors so fearsome. And from now on to collect tribute for the Empire, and deliver the tribute to the Empire in person.

On the appointed day, at dawn, ninety Vedruss lads appeared before the huge camp.

Out in front stood Radomir — whom you have heard about before — wearing a long shirt Liubomila had sewn for him with love. And all the young men with him had on light-coloured shirts.

No helmets of iron covered their light-brown hair. Their heads were framed instead by bands woven from grasses. They carried no shields to protect themselves from fatal blows. Only two swords hung from a belt around each one's waist. They stood silently holding their steeds by the bridle; many of their horses did not even have a saddle.

The officers in command of the five-thousand-strong well-trained troops, who had gathered together in council, stared at the ninety young lads. The commander-in-chief came over to the cage in which the head of the razed Vedruss settlement was being held, and asked:

"What can the presence of these lads possibly mean? I ordered the elders of all the settlements to come and hear the decrees of my country's Emperor."

The Vedruss replied from his cage:

"All the village elders know what you want to tell them. They do not like what you have to say. And they decided not to go meet someone they do not like. In front of your troops' camp you see but ninety lads from the next village. They are wearing swords. Possibly they want to do battle."

Oh you brainless barbarians! mused the commander-in-chief. *I could send a single detachment to fight them and it would be a light task, of course, to kill them off completely. But what good would come from a bunch of dead bodies? Would it not be better to explain the situation to them and bring them back hale and hearty to the Emperor for slaves?*

"Listen to me, old man," the commander addressed the Vedruss elder. "The young people will pay heed to what you say. You explain to them the absurdity of such an unequal combat. Tell them they ought to submit to us. I'll spare their

lives. Of course they'll be taken captive and I'll make slaves out of them. But they will not be living in a barbaric land, they'll be provided with food and clothing if they become obedient slaves. You tell them, old man, how utterly absurd it would be to shed their blood in such unequal combat."

The Vedruss elder replied:

"I shall try. I shall tell them. I can see for myself the blood boiling in these young Vedruss lads."

"Then go ahead, old man."

The Vedruss elder began speaking from his cage in a loud voice so that the warriors standing before the camp could hear.

"My sons, I can see the two swords hanging from each of your belts. I can see the spirited steed that each of you has by his side. You are holding them by the bridle, you are not over-exerting them with your own weight, but you are saving their strength for battle. You have decided to go into battle, under the wise Radomir. Answer me."

The commanders and troops watched as Radomir stepped forward. After making a deep bow before the elder in the cage, he responded by confirming the elder's words.

"I thought as much," said the Vedruss elder, and went on: "You are their leader, Radomir. I believe you are aware that the forces you see before you are not equal to your own."

And once more Radomir bowed in acknowledgement of the elder's affirmation.

The officers were satisfied with this dialogue. But what they heard next astounded them like nothing they had ever heard before. The elder went on:

"Radomir, you are young and your thought moves swiftly. So spare the visitors' lives. Do not kill all of them. Make them depart and put down their weapons and not play with them any more."

At first the officers were in a state of shock upon hearing the elder's extraordinary words. Then the commander-in-chief exclaimed with irritation:

"You're mad! You're out of your mind, old man! Who is in a position to spare whose life here — you have absolutely no idea! You have just condemned all your fellow-villagers to death. I'll give the orders now..."

"You are too late. Look, a few moments ago Radomir was standing there contemplating, but you saw how he acknowledged what I said. That means he understood my words and will not kill you."

A second later the officers saw the ninety young men standing in front of the camp suddenly leap onto their steeds and head at full speed toward the camp. The commander-in-chief managed to order a detachment of archers to prepare themselves to meet the Vedruss warriors with a hail of arrows.

But when the warriors on horseback came within shooting range, they suddenly jumped down off their horses and began running alongside them.

As soon as they got close to the Roman troops, the Vedruss lads formed an oval encircling half their number along with the horses, while the other half cut through the Roman ranks, which had not yet completely come together, and started fighting. In each hand they held a sword, which they wielded equally deftly with either hand. But they simply knocked the weapons out of their opponents' hands without fatally wounding them.

The reserve legionnaires had a hard time picking their way through the disarmed and wounded Roman soldiers lying on the ground to replace them in combat. In the meantime, the small Vedruss contingent determinedly pushed through to the tent of the commander-in-chief.

Radomir used his sword to hack open the lock on the cage where the Vedruss elder was being held captive. After bowing to him, he easily picked him up by the waist and set him on a horse.

Two of the young warriors of Radomir's contingent seized the Roman commander-in-chief, threw him over the rump of another horse and brought him into the centre of their oval.

The valiant warriors quickly pushed ahead, not back the way they came, but forward, and before long they left the crush of the Roman troops behind, jumped on their horses and dashed off. But after only a few minutes' ride they stopped at a small hillock and dismounted. Almost all of them then lay down on the grass, stretched out their arms and stayed motionless.

The captured Roman commander was amazed to see the Vedruss lads lying on the ground fast asleep. Pleasant smiles brightened their faces. In the meantime their steeds peacefully nibbled at the grass beside them. Only two watchmen kept an eye on the actions of the Roman troops.

Left without their regimental superior, the Roman officers argued for some time, blaming each other for what had happened, and then argued over who should take charge and how to proceed.

At long last they decided to despatch a thousand horsemen (almost all the cavalry) in pursuit of the Vedruss warriors. The remainder would follow the pursuers at a distance, in case of unforeseen events such as the appearance of reinforcements on the Vedruss side. The basic motivating factor behind this decision, however, was fear.

The thousand-strong detachment of well-equipped cavalrymen launched into the chase. No sooner had the ranks of the Roman cavalry begun leaving the camp than one of the warriors of Radomir's contingent, seated on his steed, gave a blast on his horn.

The warriors lying on the grass sprang up at once, seized their horses' bridles and began running. Having rested themselves after the battle, the Vedruss lads ran very fast, but gradually, very gradually, the pursuing Roman cavalry started catching up to them.

Anticipating victory, the cavalry commander ordered his bugler to signal an escalation of the pursuit, and the bugle sounded. But the thousand eager legionnaires were already spurring on their frothing horses in a mad rush to shorten the interval between them and the Vedruss lads running on foot ahead of them. There now remained a very small space between the two.

Again the agitated commander ordered an acceleration of the chase. And once again the bugle sounded forth. But by now the mad gallop proved too much for some of the broken-winded Roman horses and they fell in their tracks. Paying no attention to them, the horsemen were already drawing their swords to attack the fleeing Vedruss warriors, when suddenly...

At the sound of the horn all the Vedruss runners leapt onto their horses and... they soon began to put an ever-increasing distance between themselves and their pursuers.

The captured Roman commander-in-chief realised that the Vedruss warriors had been saving their horses' strength up 'til this point and now there was no way his men would be able to catch up. They changed both the Vedruss elder's and the Roman commander's horses. The commander also observed that the lads were not sitting upright, but lying prone along their horse's rump, clinging on to the mane, once more sound asleep. He wondered about their need to conserve their strength at this stage of the game. It was only later that he would find out why.

The Romans, stimulated by the chase, kept feverishly whipping their horses. Many of their steeds fell beneath them, while the sturdier specimens among them, given the weight of the heavily armoured soldiers on their backs, could not keep up with the Vedruss horses, which remained untired by the pursuit.

Once the cavalry commander was able to discern the folly of trying to overtake his opponents, he ordered all his men

to stop and dismount. But by now it was too late. A good number of the Roman horses were broken-winded and fell to their knees.

"All rest!" came the command to the Roman cavalry. And then the soldiers, who had just dismounted from their exhausted steeds, saw the Vedruss contingent sweeping down upon them like a whirlwind.

The young warriors held a sword at the ready in each hand. Bounding all along the edge of the circle of dismounted Romans, they inflicted light wounds on soldier after soldier, knocking their weapons out of their hands.

And the Roman legion was seized with horror. And they all began running for help toward the infantry that was following behind. The Vedruss contingent came after them on horseback, but for some reason kept their distance. Nor did they touch the Roman soldiers which had fallen from exhaustion.

The fleeing Romans — by this time no longer running, but swaying from fatigue as they walked — stopped dead in their tracks at the sight of Radomir with his two swords at the ready, along with his horsemen right behind him, all calm and full of energy.

The Roman soldiers dropped to their knees, and those that still held weapons placed them on the ground in front of them. Now utterly powerless, they began awaiting the anticipated vengeance at the hands of the Vedruss warriors.

Radomir and his companions walked among the Roman soldiers seated on the ground, their swords sheathed. And Radomir and his companions began talking with the soldiers about life. Taking off their grass headbands, they gave them to the legionnaires so they could apply the healing herbs to their wounds. The herbs stopped the blood flowing from the wounds and took away the pain. And they returned the commander-in-chief to his legion.



Some time later, upon returning from their campaign against Vedic Rus', the fine-looking columns of soldiers marched into Rome.

The Emperor had been informed by courier-runners about the strange events that had befallen the Roman legions' élite soldiers. After he had the opportunity to see his soldiers and officers for himself, he was overcome by a sense of embarrassment that lasted for several weeks.

Whereupon he issued a secret order to eliminate all the detachments from his army that had participated in the Vedic Rus' campaign, both soldiers and officers, and have them transferred — to various corners of the Empire. And he gave strict instructions that nothing should be heard about the campaign even by their friends and close relations, not even a word.

The Emperor himself sent troops to Rus' no more. And in a secret book written for his successors he implored:

"If you want to keep the Empire intact, as to a war with the Vedruss people, do not even think of such an act."

The Emperor was no fool. He was alarmed to see his troops returning from their campaign all healthy and unharmed, but carrying no spoil with them. Indeed, their faces betrayed no anger or even a desire to serve in war again. If he let men such as these remain in the Imperial army, who knows whether they might infect the whole corps with the same desire not to go to battle any more.



All the same, the Emperor's successor made another attempt to conquer the Vedruss people. Having learnt a lot about their tactics from those that had had contact with them, he sent *ten thousand* soldiers on a second campaign to Rus'. Once more the soldiers arrived at a small Vedruss settlement, where they speedily made camp and set up fortifications. Runners were sent to summon the elders.

But at the appointed hour the Roman officers looked and saw coming toward them from the Vedruss village only a little girl about ten years old, accompanied by a little boy who could not have been more than five. The soldiers parted ranks to make way for them as they arrived, arguing with each other. Tugging at his sister's skirt, the boy said:

"Sis Palashechka,² if you don't let me conduct the talks myself, I shan't think proper of you."

"What improper thing would you think of me, you little scamp?" the sister asked her brother.

"I shall think of you, Sis Palashechka, that you were born a jolly naughty girl!"

"It's not proper to think that."

"It's not proper indeed. So let me conduct the talks with the enemies."

"And if I agree, how will you think of me then?"

"I shall think that you, Sis Palashechka, are the prettiest, cleverest and kindest girl of all."

² *Palashechka* (stress on second syllable) — an affectionate name in Medieval Russia.

"All right, brother, you start the talks. I don't find it proper to talk with addle-brained people."

The children presented themselves boldly before the Roman officers, and the girl's little brother addressed them, without the slightest hint of trembling:

"My daddykins told me to tell you all that in our village everybody is gathered round for a celebration at our feasting-ground. It is held there every year. And every year the people enjoy themselves at the feasting-ground. It's not proper, my daddykins says, it would be wrong for him to leave the celebrations and come and talk nonsense with you. So he sent me — and my sister tagged along."

The commander-in-chief even let out an audible squeal upon hearing the boy's audacious remarks. His face turned pale, and he grasped at his sword.

"You insolent young whelp, how dare you speak to me like that? I'll make you a slave in my stables well into your old age! Your sister, now..."

"Hey, there, gramps!" the sister interrupted. "Hey, there, gramps! Give up those silly playthings of yours — your swords and shields and spears — and run back home lickety-split. You better run while you still can. See that cloud coming? It won't talk with any visitors. It'll attack you without any words first."

With that the girl unwrapped the bundle she was carrying and, taking out a thimbleful of some kind of pollen-dust, sprinkled it over her brother. Then she took the remainder and sprinkled it on herself.

In the meantime the cloud-horde kept approaching steadily over the land, all the while buzzing and increasing in size, until it finally descended upon the camp. And before long the Romans' armour lay on the ground — their shields and spears and swords. The officers' and the soldiers' tents were left empty. The brother and sister stood

among the troops' discarded things, and the little brother said to his elder sister:

"You still didn't let me speak with the enemies, Sis Pala-shechka! I didn't finish telling them everything I wanted to."

"Anyway, you started. You mustn't be upset if I interfered a bit — you're a Vedruss warrior, a defender of your Motherland!"

"Well, okay. I shall still think that I have a well-behaved, kind and beautiful sister."

Picking their way through the discarded armour, the brother and his beautiful sister headed back to their village.

The receding cloud already looked quite small from where they stood. Even so, within it were ten thousand élite Roman warriors fleeing home in terror. They kept falling and getting up again. And kept on fleeing in panic.

Do not think there is any mysticism here, Vladimir. The Vedruss people simply made a decision. In each domain — and there were more than two hundred domains in the settlement — they opened up ten beehives,³ each hive containing approximately fifteen thousand bees. You can figure out the size of the cloud for yourself. A huge number of bee-stings will first cause serious itching and pain. A person could then fall into a fatal sleep.

And so the happy Vedruss people continued to live in peace of mind, knowing neither war nor trouble of any kind. No external foe posed a threat to them for a long, long time. And yet... Rus' was still conquered, after all. It happened when it fell prey to cunning snares, thereby producing a power which acted against its own self and brought about its fall.

³*beehives* — The Russian term here (*koloda*) designates a special kind of beehive, made out of a hollow log. For a description, see the section entitled "Who gets stung by bees?" in Book I, Chapter II: "Advice from Anastasia".



Thus Anastasia recounted several stories about life in Vedic Rus'. Possibly others might have information — in the form of ancient tales — about how people lived in those times. There's no point in looking for written records since, as we know from history, they were all carefully destroyed. They were burnt in Italy, England and France, and especially zealously in Russia.

But those who feverishly destroyed the culture of our forebears could not eradicate its imprint in the depths of human hearts and souls.

We must perfect the knowledge of our history. We must know it and respect it. But we must also reflect on the understanding that Vedism, Paganism and Christianity are all stages of our history. Not one of these stages should we neglect. By attacking one of them, we shall only go on attacking ourselves.

We should treat Christianity with understanding and respect. And other faiths as well. Only then will all the stages of our history form a solid foundation for a marvellous future. But this is what can follow from knowledge and understanding. From giving a proper evaluation to each stage of our history, from seeing each stage of our history as lessons for building the future. Otherwise we shall go on living in the world of the absurd.

Governments and legislators in various countries are currently struggling with terrorism. They pass laws forbidding the incitement of racial or religious hatred. And yet at the same time these countries officially permit and support denominational teachings in which acts of mass terrorism are carried out for political purposes, supposedly in the name of God.

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO



The marvellous Vedruss holidays

We can get some idea of the Vedic culture by looking at certain holidays which have survived into our modern times. Even today they still remain among people's favourites, even though only a few elements of the original pristine rites have been preserved. What holidays are these? I'm talking about New Year's, Shrovetide¹ and Trinity Sunday.² Of all the many holidays I could mention I shall simply cite here this most prominent example, where the greatest changes have taken place.

This holiday occurs at the beginning of June. As you know, in current practice Trinity Sunday is a day when people go to the cemetery to visit their relatives' graves. Upon arriving at the cemetery they sanctify the graves and tidy up the enclosures.³ A lot of them bring a bottle of liquor with them; after

¹*Shrovetide* (Russian: *Maslenitsa*) — the week prior to the beginning of Lent (in February or March), marked by a carnival or public festivities. *Maslenitsa* (from *maslo* = "butter") is actually the ancient Russian holiday marking the coming of Spring. Even in its present-day form it includes a large number of old 'pagan' elements, such as the ritual making and eating of pancakes (symbolising the Sun) and the burning of a straw-stuffed figure representing Winter. After the Russian Orthodox Church's attempts to eradicate this and other pagan celebrations failed, the Church included these pagan festivities in its own calendar of 'Christian' holidays and continued to venerate Russia's ancient pagan gods under the guise of Christian saints.

²*Trinity Sunday* (Russian: *Troitsa*) — In contrast to western churches, which celebrate the Trinity the first week after the late-spring holiday of Whitsuntide (Pentecost), the Eastern Orthodox Church includes the Trinity in its Pentecost celebrations.

³In Russian Orthodox cemeteries family graves are usually located within a fenced enclosure.

having a drink at the gravesite, they leave a small glass and a piece of bread for the deceased. They talk amongst themselves, reminiscing about the deceased's life. Many people feel obliged to weep at gravesites.

The degree to which this original pagan ceremony has undergone profound change is confirmed by the following.

During Vedic times, and even later in the pagan period there were no cheerless, mournful rites as there are now. Each holiday gave people a charge of positive energy, and transmitted to young people the knowledge of their forebears.

And remembrance days in Vedic times were quite different from those of today. There were no processions to the cemetery or lamentations over the graves of the deceased. In fact, during Vedic times there were no cemeteries at all. The deceased were laid to rest in their own family domains without burial vaults or even headstones to mark the occasion. A small raised mound of earth was created, but even this over time became flattened to ground level.

The Vedruss people believed that the best memorial to their forebears was to be found in what they had created during their lifetime. Their knowledge of Nature and of Man's capacities led them to conclude that if all the relatives were to visualise death, their collective thought would prevent the deceased's soul from being reincarnated.

On the day of remembrance of one's forebears all the members of a family would gather in the morning in the oldest domain. In front of everyone the eldest — usually a grandfather or great-grandfather — would approach the youngest generation of children, and begin to talk with them, more or less as follows:

“When your Papa was the same height as you are now,” the grandfather would tell his grandson of about six, “he planted this little sapling. Time went by and now that little sapling has grown into a large fruit-bearing apple tree.”

Whereupon the grandfather led his grandson over to the apple tree and touched it himself as his grandson stroked the tree.

Next, the grandfather went around to other trees and bushes, telling who planted them. All the other members of the family were able to help the grandfather with their own reminiscences, telling amusing anecdotes or the impressions they had had at the time the trees were planted.

Finally, the family members all gathered around the domain's centrepiece — the family tree, which was usually a cedar or an oak.

"You see this tree," the eldest family member continued. "It was planted by my great-grandfather's great-grandfather."

A general discussion then ensued as to why this variety of tree was chosen over some other. Why had the distant forebear planted the tree in this particular spot, rather than further to the right or left. Some people asked questions, while others answered them. Occasionally an argument would break out. And it often happened that, in the heat of the argument, all of a sudden one of the children, without being aware of it himself, came out with a strange-sounding declaration:

"How come you do not understand? I myself planted this tree in this particular spot, because..."

The adult family members realised at once that their little one harboured the soul and feelings and knowledge of one of their own distant forebears. And how proud they were that his soul was not aimlessly drifting through the waste spaces of the Universe, that it had not broken up into small particles, but continued to live in perfection, in life eternal.

Paganism, and especially Vedism, could scarcely be termed a 'religion'. It would be more accurate to refer to it as *the culture of a way of life*. It was the greatest culture alive on the Earth, belonging to a highly spiritual civilisation. This civilisation did not need to *believe* in God — its people *knew* God.

This civilisation's people communicated with God, they understood the thoughts of the Creator.

They knew the designated purpose of every blade of grass, of every midge, of every planet.

This civilisation's people continue to rest in our souls even to this day. They will most certainly awake. The happy, life-delighted creators of a marvellous planet, the children of God — the Vedruss people.

These are not simply empty words. There is as much evidence to back them up as can be desired. One proof is found in Japan.

As is known, in the sixteenth century Christians began a considerable proselytising campaign in Japan. However, upon observing the results of the Christian missionaries' activity, Tokugawa Ieyasu,⁴ the Japanese ruler at the time, outlawed Christianity in his country.

Japan, with its native religion of Shintoism, is the closest country today to paganism. The word *Shinto* translates to 'pathway of the gods'. According to Shinto, Man's ultimate goal is harmonious co-existence with Nature.

What then? Is the Japanese people's way of life something terrible and uncivilised? That's how people see Man's life during the pagan period. But it's not true. Quite the opposite.

Many Japanese write poetry and have a reverent attitude toward Nature. The whole world is entranced with Japanese *ikebana*.⁵ And yet the attraction to this refined art is not restricted to Japan's professional florists. *Ikebana* is something you can see in practically every Japanese household.

The Japanese show special treatment to their children. Adults go the greatest possible lengths to ensure complete freedom for their children.

⁴*Tokugawa Ieyasu* (1543–1616; surname cited first) — the founder of the Tokugawa shogunate of Japan which ruled the country from 1600 to 1868.

⁵*ikebana* — the Japanese art of flower arranging.

A nation of poets and artists, it would seem. Yet the level of Japanese technology surpasses that of even the most developed countries of the world. It is a challenge to compete with them in the field of electronics or motorcar manufacturing. In referring to a modern pagan country like Japan, we are talking only of *elements* of paganism. Just think what type of Man one could have in a fully pagan culture!

One thing is clear: in terms of the level of knowledge and spirituality he would significantly surpass the type of Man prevalent today. But it was in somebody's interests to befool us by insisting upon our belief in the exact opposite.

Japan is not an exception — it is by no means the only example. From deep in our millennial past come names of such geniuses among poets, thinkers and scholars as Archimedes, Socrates, Democritus, Herclitus, Plato and Aristotle. They lived between two and six hundred years B.C. And where did they live? In Greece — which at that time was also a pagan country.

Japan, Greece, Rome, Egypt, with their ancient temple structures, classical art, holidays and traditions, all bear witness even today to the cultural level of these peoples. But what can our own historians tell us about *Rus'* of that time? Absolutely nothing.

How does one find tangible evidence that Vedic *Rus'* was home to artists and poets, not to mention glorious warriors who never attacked anyone but were skilful masters of weaponry?

I said to Anastasia:

"Unless we can find tangible proof of the culture of Vedic *Rus'*, nobody will believe in it. Your accounts of it will be treated as mere legends. Beautiful legends of course, but still legends. I'm convinced there's no point in searching historical works. So you are all that's left. Can you point to any tangible proof, Anastasia?"

“Yes, I can. For there is actually a great deal of proof.”

“Then tell me: in what spot should we go with excavation?”

“Why start with excavation? There are a great many human dwellings that offer proof of the Vedruss culture.”

“What kind of dwellings? What do you have in mind?”

“Look carefully, Vladimir, at the houses people are constructing today, and compare them with the houses that have been built in the village where you now live. Almost all the old houses in this village are decorated with traditional Russian wood-carvings. You also saw even older houses when you visited the museum-town of Suzdal.”⁶

“Yes, and they are all decorated with even finer carvings. And not just the houses — the portals and garden gates too, they’re all works of art.”

“In other words, the deeper you go into your people’s past, the more beautifully appointed human dwellings you see.

“In museums, too, you can see beautiful wood-carvings adorning distaffs, mugs and other household items which were in common use three to five hundred years ago. You will notice, Vladimir, that the artistry of the masters keeps increasing, the farther one travels back through the ages.

“Creativity like that on a massive scale has not been found over many centuries in any country in the world. Note, Vladimir, that these were not individual artists working on commission for a few rich bigwigs, but absolutely the entire population participated. Judge for yourself: if you see an ordinary distaff in a museum, it did not belong to the Tsar, or the Tsar’s wife, or some kind of bigwig. You are looking at an object which was found in every home. People used these

⁶*Suzdal* (pron. SOOZ-dal) — like the neighbouring town of Vladimir (about 30 km distant), one of the oldest cities in Russia. For further information see footnote 1 in Book 5, Chapter 6: “A garden for eternity”.

lacy wood-carvings to decorate all their buildings, including the fences; they decorated all their household items, and embroidered their clothes. If this had been done by master craftsmen, it would have taken an unimaginable number to produce all the examples we know about. Each Vedruss family did this on their own.

"The whole population were engaged in artistic pursuits. And this tells us that the whole population lived in plenty. A good deal of time is required if one is to spend a lot of time on artistic creations. Your historians are all wrong when they say that people in ancient times spent their whole day bent over, tending their agricultural lands. If that were true, they would have had no time for artistic pursuits. And yet they did. And as for their skill with weaponry, judge for yourself: if they were able to build such beautiful log mansions with an axe, they must have wielded it like a brush in the hands of an artist.

"Do you know what kind of competitive entertainment they thought up for Shrovetide? They drove into the ground two large upright logs about three metres apart. Two male competitors went up to these logs, carrying an axe in each hand. After being blindfolded, the men worked with both hands simultaneously, competing to see who could cut down their log first. But that was not all — they had to cut it down so that it would fall exactly on their competitor's log and knock it over."

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE



Significant books

One day I asked Anastasia's grandfather if he had ever had the opportunity to read any spiritual or scholarly books. His answer struck me as rather strange:

"If you mean taking a book into my hands, leafing through the pages and reading the words printed in the books, that's something I've done only on one occasion. But everything written in significant books is known to me."

"How so? And what are 'significant books'? If there are significant books, that means there must also be insignificant ones, eh?"

"Indeed. But why are you stuffing your head full of all this?"

"What d'you mean, why? A cultured and civilised Man ought to be well-read. When I speak at readers' conferences, I'm often asked whether I've read this book or the other. But I've only read just a few books in my lifetime. So I'd like to know which books I should read first. A lifetime isn't enough to read all of them, even if one read all day from morning 'til night. That's why I need to know about these 'significant books', so as not to come across as an utter ignoramus."

"You know, Vladimir, when you're asked at your readers' conferences what books you've read, you can say you're familiar with all of them."

"I can't do that unless I have actually read them all. They might ask me, for instance, what a particular author said in his book. If I've never even held his book in my hands, there's no way I could come up with any kind of answer."

"Simply tell them: 'This author has nothing substantial to say.' Tell the one who asked you the question to prove otherwise. You know, Vladimir, it only appears from the numbers that there's a lot of books out there. In fact you can count the number of significant books on your fingers."

"But how do I know whether a book is significant or not?"

"With the help of a criterion."

"Can you let me have this criterion? At least to borrow?"

"Of course I can let you have it, and all your readers too. The point is that the criterion for determining the significance of a book is people's way of life."

"What d'you mean — their way of life? What's that got to do with it?"

"People live in various parts of the globe. Human societies are conditioned by national differences. National cultures vary from country to country. As does their way of life, and their longevity. The culture of various peoples is shaped under the influence of, among other things, a significant book. Generally: a book that determines a people's philosophy, gives rise to a particular religion and, consequently, a way of life."

"In China, for example, Confucius' teachings¹ are considered significant. A special view of the world has been developing there since ancient times. To put it briefly, it views the world as a living organism."

"Part of this cosmic organism, or system, is the concept of *yin* and *yang*.² If you are interested in the Chinese people's way of life, if you think it might serve as an example for the rest of mankind, then read Confucius' book. If you are

¹ *Confucius* (*K'ung-fu-tzu*) (551–479 B.C.) — ancient Chinese thinker and philosopher whose teachings on morality, justice and social relationships (collectively known as *Confucianism*) are still respected and practised today in a number of Asian countries, including China, Japan and Korea. They are set forth in a publication known as *The analects of Confucius*.

interested in the Japanese world-view and their life-achievements, then read a book about that country's traditional religion — Shintoism. In many respects it helped shape the Japanese people's way of life.

"If you think that the happiest people live in the Christian world, then read the Bible. Significant books are those books which shape a particular way of life of a part of human society."

"But in Christian spiritual literature, after all, there is a lot more besides just the Bible."

"Yes, indeed. But there is absolutely nothing new in them. As a rule, in every significant book there are one or two basic thoughts or philosophical conclusions. All other books on a similar theme simply repeat this thought and contribute nothing new to one's world-view.

"Take, for example, one of the basic thoughts of the Bible — namely, that God must be bowed down to and his instructions carried out. This has given rise to a whole lot of books outlining the best way to do this. Some books say you should cross yourself with two fingers, others with three. They tell how to build temples with the best-looking outward appearance. They cite hundreds of examples of acts of worship by various people, devotees of genuflection. They talk of wars and arguments over particular methods of worship.

"People get immersed in these arguments and lose their ability to discern the basic thought. They no longer use the basic thought as a standard with which to compare others.

²*yin, yang* — the two opposite (though complementary) principles of Chinese philosophy, underlying both Taoism and traditional Chinese medicine. The *yin* (originally denoting a shady slope of a mountain or river-bank) represents a darker, passive feminine entity, symbolised by the elements of water or earth, while the *yang* (from the designation of a sunny slope) encompasses a brighter, active, masculine force, symbolised by fire and wind.

What happens is that in reading a whole lot of books about one and the same thing, they do not obtain any new information, but merely atrophy their analytical abilities. And they don't even bother trying to determine whether God really wants Man to bow down to Him, or whether He wants something quite different.

"As you can see, the hundreds of thousands of 'spiritual' books that have appeared over the past two thousand years all say pretty much one and the same thing.

"The appearance of a new well-grounded thought about the interrelationship of God and Man signals the appearance of a new significant book for the first time in two thousand years. With its appearance, its predecessor in the ranks of significant books passed into the ranks of historical documents."

"You're talking about the appearance of a new significant book? What's it called?"

"*Co-creation*. It contains new thoughts. And it is well-grounded. The main thought of this book states in a clear and well-grounded manner precisely what Gods wants of Man, and what Man's purpose is. You wrote this book from Anastasia's words, and you will remember, Vladimir, God's response to the question from the elements of the Universe:

'What do you so fervently desire?' everyone enquired.

And He, confident in His dream, replied:

*'Conjoint creation and joy for all from its contemplation.'*³

"But where is the proof that this declaration actually represents God's will?"

"The proof is everywhere. In the declaration itself. In the human heart and soul. In the logic of thinking. Judge for yourself:

³Quoted from Book 4, Chapter 2: "The beginning of creation".

if you accept as a premise God's creation of the Earth and Man, then the feelings ensuing from that on the part of God will correspond with those of Man — the parent of his children. All loving parents wish conjoint creation with their children.

"The second part of the declaration specifies what kind of creation God desires: 'and joy for all from its contemplation'. So tell me, what kind of creations can bring joy to absolutely everybody?"

"That's a hard question to answer. Some people get joy out of a good car, while others couldn't care less about cars. Some like eating meat, while others don't eat meat at all. There's even a popular saying: *There's no accounting for taste*. It'd be hard to find something that everybody could embrace."

"And yet, it is possible. Think about air, water, flowers, for example..."

"But those have already been created, while we're talking about conjoint creation."

"Yes, air, water and vegetation have already been created. But they're not always the same. Man is capable of making his air filled with dust, smoke and lethal gases, yet the same Man can fill it with ethers, aromas and flower pollen.

"Water can vary too. You can use chlorine-smelling water, for example, or you can drink genuine, refreshing water. And in among the great variety of plants you can either manufacture bloody chaos or create living scenes of extraordinary beauty and grandeur, attractive and delightful to the eye. There's a statement about that in *Co-creation*."

"If the book *Co-creation*, as you say, is significant, then isn't it also supposed to transform the life of society or somehow influence it?"

"Yes, that's a law. A new thought inevitably embodies itself in a new way of life for society."

"But when will this come about? Two years have gone by already since that book was published."

"To put it more accurately, not two years *already*, but *just* two years. In this relatively brief space of time, however, it has already co-created a great deal. You yourself were saying, weren't you, that many people are already attempting to build a new way of life for themselves. They're even creating national development programmes."

"Yes, I did say that. There are indeed manifestations of this already."

"You see? It took three hundred years to make Christianity noticeably felt, and here look at what's been accomplished in just two years! Anastasia's thoughts are materialising in a real way of life among many peoples, they are uniting their aspirations into a single creative impulse of universal co-creation."

"She launched a new way of thinking into Space, and this is an event of colossal proportions. This means that the book in which these thoughts were set forth for the first time will be accorded a similar evaluation."

"I guess that means that I too will be one of the world's significant writers?"

"You will not be *one of*... You will be *the* most significant, Vladimir. My granddaughter would not even think of secondary roles for her beloved."

"It's not working out quite that way. The popular newspaper *Argumenty i fakty* (Arguments and facts)⁴ published a book rating putting *The Book of Kin* in second place overall in Russia."

⁴*Argumenty i fakty* — a leading weekly newspaper on current affairs. Founded in 1978 by the *Znanie* (Knowledge) organisation, it was designed primarily as a Soviet propaganda tool, but during the *glasnost*' (openness) era of the late 1980s the paper was gradually transformed into a forum for real discussion. In the early 1990s it claimed to have a print-run of 33.5 million and was listed in the *Guinness Book of Records* as having the largest circulation in the world.

"After a time a great many people will become aware of the significance of the books you have written. And then a simple first place in the ratings won't seem like all that much. A mere six years has passed since you wrote your first book. You were a nobody back then, but today — you are more than just famous. I've heard that you've been awarded recognition as a People's Academician and presented with a certificate."

"You're right, only this recognition wasn't from a traditional academy, but a public one."

"Well, there you go — a public academy.⁵ Treasure this award, it's higher than the traditional variety. The people have spoken. The people who have realised the significance of your books, they're the ones who've decided that *you* are significant. It means they've actually understood Anastasia's thoughts and appreciated them. It's not just ordinary people who have been able to do this, it's people who will be able to go further and embody, understand and materialise her thoughts. That's how it will be. Only don't give yourself airs — hold out until the time comes, without giving in to pride."

"I'll try my best. I'll read over Anastasia's sayings again. It goes without saying that I won't read crime novels or any kind of fiction. There's really nothing in the way of new thoughts in them. Just light entertainment fluff."

"But I do have one question I'm unable to find an answer to. You can't really tell whether a book is significant or not until after you've read it. But there's a huge number of books out there — you walk into a library and the shelves are lined

⁵*a public academy* — In Russia today, apart from the state-sponsored and state-controlled Russian Academy of Sciences (known by its Russian acronym of RAN) and its branches, there are a large number of independent academies created by individuals or groups of citizens, or by other non-governmental organisations. These are sometimes referred to as 'public' (Russian: *narodny*) — in the sense that they have been created by members of the public rather than State.

with tens of thousands of books. Many of them have pretentious titles, even ones like *Conversation with God*, or *Truth unveiled* or *All the secrets of life*. In actual fact, however, you can read and read and still not come across any new thoughts. For every ten thousand there's maybe only one significant book, but then my chances of stumbling across it are one in ten thousand too. What to do?"

"Well, I'm telling you: before starting to read anything, take a survey of how people live in various corners of the globe, take note of situations that appeal to you in their lifestyle, and then read their book, and ponder it."

"But what if I don't find anything appealing? All peoples have similar troubles. There are differences, sure, but in the main... Take the environment, for example — there's nowhere in the world where it's not going downhill."

"Well, then, if you don't find anything appealing, then give some thought on your own as to how to build a harmonious way of life, and when you come up with something, you'll write a book about it yourself."

"All by myself? Without reading anything else?"

"You're contradicting yourself, Vladimir! You were the one that said you can't find any books worth reading, and behind those outrageous titles there's only a proliferation of words without any sense, without any new thoughts. And at the same time you are doubting — you think you can't be intelligent without reading a whole lot of rubbish. In any case I can tell you that every Man, right from birth, aspires to read the most important book — one whose language is distinct from printed letters — you remember: 'The Divine language has fragrance and colour...'"⁶

"I understand."

"So read and ponder what you've read."

⁶Quoted from Book 4, Chapter 11: "Three prayers".

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR



An exercise for teleportation

“You’re right, Vladimir,” Anastasia’s grandfather continued. “In terms of the present state of consciousness of most people today what Anastasia creates can seem incredible.

“Still, once the conscious awareness and state of mind belonging to our forebears at the time of our pristine origins are fully comprehended, these same people will look back and laugh at the astonishment they are now expressing.

“I’ll tell you now about just one exercise that will enhance your ability to easily teletransport your second self — that is, to transport yourself to a neighbouring town, or a different country or time period. Anybody can do this as long as they’re not lazy about it.

“Remember one time you saw Anastasia, in response to your request, move her body in a split second from one side of the lake to the other, and then move it back again?¹ And she didn’t hide the fact that any Man is capable of doing the same. One must mentally visualise all the cells of the body, down to the tiniest ones which aren’t even visible under a microscope, and disperse them into space with one’s thought, and then gather them together by the power of thought in the new place. Just watching this can astonish the imagination.

“Anyone can do this whose speed of thinking allows them to visualise in a single moment all the details of their body. Even a microscopic error, though, is enough to prevent the cells from gathering together after dispersal.

¹See Book 4, Chapter 21: “Where do we go in sleep?”.

"I've done this on just three occasions over my lifetime, and each time I prepared for it a year or more in advance. I can't do anything like that any more. Either I'm just a bit past my prime, or I've got too lazy. But even my granddaughter, who was able to demonstrate her teleportation abilities so easily, said that this shouldn't ever be done unless there is an acute need for it. And she explained why.

"Still, she transported you on several occasions to different times and cities. You saw images and you felt as though you were present at the events you witnessed. Am I right?"

"Yes, you are," I confirmed. "It was when I described how she transported herself and me to another planet, without our bodies.² Our bodies remained on the Earth. A lot of people didn't believe such a thing was possible."

"They'll believe it when they're able to do something along those lines themselves. I'll teach you how. Just listen carefully and try to make sense of what I say.

"Man is made up of a multitude of energies which comprise his being. Feelings, thought, imagination — that's all Man too. But these energies cannot be seen by the eye. We shan't say whether these parts of the body are material or not. In this case the degree of their materiality isn't important. What *is* important is that they exist, and that these are also *you* — a Man.

"The material human body is one of many elements comprising a Man. Man can live without a material body, only then he would have to be called something else. The material body affords a visible opportunity to define the degree of harmonious balance among all the other energies.

"Now imagine that you or some other Man took all your energies, by your own free will, separated them from your body and transported them to a different space."

²See Book 4, Chapter 22: "Other worlds".

“Is that something anybody can do?”

“They can. It happens to a certain degree with everyone when they sleep. But don’t get carried away, keep on listening. I said that Man is capable of transporting, by his own free will, his whole complex of feelings to some other place.

“That requires just a bit of training. Here’s a training exercise.

“First, you need to find a spot where you won’t be disturbed. It can be just an ordinary room with a bed. As long as no distracting sounds can enter.

“So, you lie down on the bed and relax your body. See to it that your arms, legs and head are all lying freely in a comfortable position. Then, without moving, try to direct more of your blood toward one hand (as opposed to other parts of your body), purely by your will. If you don’t succeed right off, try again, until you feel a slight tingling in your fingertips on the hand you’ve been directing the blood — and your energy — toward.

“You should spend no more than thirty minutes a day on such attempts, but keep them up until you are able to freely direct the flow of energy and blood at will — first to one hand, then the other, then to your feet. Once you achieve the desired result, you should be able to direct energy to the brain as well.

“If you succeed at this, you will notice a significant benefit to your health. You’ll be able, for example, to remove a pimple or sore from your arm or leg or any other part of your body. You’ll be able to reverse hair loss. But, most importantly, you’ll be able to supply your brain with supplemental energy.

“I should also point out that in order to achieve such results, you should refrain from eating meat for several days before beginning the exercise. You should have a varied diet of fresh and easily digestible foods — foods containing ethers.

In your present living conditions these are hard to come by. But here are some foodstuffs which can give you a lot of things you're missing: take approximately ten grams of cedar oil each morning, then about twenty grams of honey and five of flower pollen. You should repeat this three hours before bedtime.

"Once you have completed this first part of the exercise, you can then go on to the second. For this part, tell me, what are some of the most common actions people perform every day around their home?"

"Probably food preparation is the most frequent. The majority of us, of course, prepare food every day. Peeling potatoes, for example."

"So, choose an action which you repeat most often. Which specific action it is doesn't really matter — the main thing is that it is one you are very familiar with. You mentioned peeling potatoes. This may well be the most familiar for some people; others can choose something else.

"Now take a watch and note the time as you begin this particular action. While you are carrying it out try not think about anything else. Remember all the details as well as what you feel while doing it. If you're peeling potatoes, for example, take note of how you hold the knife, where the scraps fall, how you washed them, and the sensation of the water. Remember how you put the potatoes into the pot for boiling and set it on the stove. Remember how you cleaned up the scraps when you were finished.

"When you decide that your actions are completed, look at the time and either remember or write down how many minutes you spent on them. Let's say it took twenty minutes altogether. Now set your alarm-clock to go off in exactly twenty minutes. Go into the other room, the one where you mastered the first part of the exercise while lying on the bed. Lie down on the bed again, relax, close your eyes and picture yourself in the room where you peeled the potatoes.

“It is essential to visualise everything down to the minutest detail. If you visualise everything correctly and consistently and in all the details, the alarm should go off at exactly the moment that you have finished your visualisation.

“If you’re lazy and leave out a lot of the details, you’ll finish your visualisation before the alarm goes off. If, on the other hand, you’re slow and lethargic in your thinking and visualisation, the alarm will go off before you’ve finished.

“Some people will need a whole year’s training to do this, others two years, while there are those who might learn it all in a month. Once you learn to make your visualisations coincide with real time, you’re close to being ready for teleportation. You can then go on to the third part of the exercise.

“In Part Three you have to mentally enter another room of your home and carry out a series of actions which you do only rarely. First measure the time it takes you to carry out the actions in visualisation. Let’s say you go into a room, fill a watering-can with water and proceed to water some flowers. After doing this and getting up from the bed, check your watch to see how many minutes the visualisation took you, and either memorise the figure or write it down.

“Then go into the room you recently entered in your mind and repeat the action of watering the flowers. The time should coincide right to the minute. If it doesn’t, well, that means you need more training. Once you’ve got the times to coincide, then you’ll be able to do a great deal with your second self — you’ll be able to visit not just other rooms in your home, but your neighbour’s home too and even other countries. For this you will only need a few reliable details. After analysing them, you’ll be able to re-create the whole environment in detail and actually go there.

“Not everyone will manage to do something like this, but I can tell you with certainty that once you have been in an

overseas city, you'll be able to go there again and again by transporting that second self of yours.

"Once you master this, though, you need to be mindful about one particular danger — you shouldn't detach your second self from your body for very long."

At this point I'll digress from Anastasia's grandfather's account and tell you in more detail about the danger involved.

After doing this exercise (for curiosity's sake) and achieving the results he spoke of, I tried teleporting my second self to the island of Cyprus, to the city of Paphos, which I had visited earlier.³

Lying on the sofa in my office, I relaxed and pictured myself getting ready for the trip, going to the airport, boarding the plane, landing at Larnaca and checking into the hotel I had stayed at in Paphos. Then I took a shower and walked down to the sea-side.

Coffee in the evening, the local music, a morning stroll on the beach, bathing in the sea — it was all there.

I returned — or woke up, I'm not sure which is the more accurate description here — three days later. And I could barely lift myself out of bed. My body, to put it mildly, had been wanting to go to the bathroom for a long time, and nobody had bothered to take it there. It was also very hungry, but nobody had fed it. I finally managed to get up and take a look at myself in the mirror. I wasn't happy with what I saw. A three days' stubble had sprouted on my face, and my facial expression was peeved and joyless. And I felt very sorry for my poor body, which had been abandoned the past three days.

The whole experience taught me a lesson: that Man's body is nothing but an utterly helpless piece of flesh without the

³See Book 5, Chapter 19: "Who controls coincidences?"

energy of the second — or is it the first? — human self. Yet helpless as it might be, it still belongs to me and I have no right to leave it unattended, even for the sake of a trip to some overseas resort. I also observed that when you travel without your body, though the sensation may appear complete, and you feel the sea water and the warmth of the Sun's rays, the body still doesn't get a tan.

At first I regretted the time wasted on the training. But later I managed to make profitable use of it in the ability to foresee, with the help of my second self, some events that hadn't happened yet. This is how I managed to write on several topics which I'm about to present to you now.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE



Give children their Motherland

In Ukraine there is a city called Kharkov.¹ In this city there is an orphanage. A fine orphanage, with cozy rooms, a handsome aquarium and a large swimming pool. It has received significant support from local authorities and the business community. In showing me the facilities, the head of municipal education department remarked that children from this orphanage go to the regular public school. As I looked out the window I could see groups of children on their way back from school. Only one little girl was walking apart from the rest.

"That's Sonia.² She's in Grade One," the director explained. "She always walks alone. She thinks that she will soon be adopted by a Jewish family."

"Why a Jewish family?" I asked. "She doesn't at all look like a Jewish child, with her fair hair. She looks Ukrainian more than anything."

"Someone at school told her that *Sonia* is a Jewish name, so she must be Jewish. Sonia agreed, and decided at once that she would definitely be adopted by a Jewish family. And she

¹*Kharkov* (known in Ukrainian as *Kharkiv*) — a major Ukrainian industrial and cultural centre, situated near the junction of the Lohan and Udy Rivers (tributaries of the Severski Donets), in the north-east of the country. With a population of a million and a half, it is the second largest city in Ukraine after Kiev.

²*Sonia* — an ancient Russian name (literally meaning 'sleepy'), now often used as an affectionate form of the name *Sofia*, also appearing in variants such as *Sonechka* (pron. *SON-yetch-ka*).

always walks alone, thinking that if she walks with the group, her future parents might not notice her.”

Kharkov has a fine orphanage. There are orphanages, too, in other cities in Ukraine, Belarus and Russia. They are home to children. Yet no matter how cozy the rooms in these orphanages, all children dream of having parents and a family.

In her nondescript shoes, small and slender first-grader Sonia trod in a no-nonsense fashion across the asphalt courtyard, separately from her group of classmates. And Sonia, who lived in the orphanage, had a dream...

A day went by, then another, then months. Sonia wasn't aware that children's shelters had been around a long time in various countries, and that not all children ended up being adopted. Most of them, in fact, are doomed to spend their whole lives parentless. Sonia wasn't adopted either.

However, her life did not turn out in the usual way. At that time a group of Kharkov residents decided to build a community not far from the city. They managed to acquire a hundred and fifty hectares of land, and a hundred and twenty families decided to set up their own kin's domains, a hectare each in size.

One lot on the edge of the community remained unspoken for, so they decided to give it to somebody from the orphanage. It turned out that little Sonia was selected as the recipient. They brought the girl out to see her plot, accompanied by one of the housemothers. The housemother began to explain to Sonia:

“D’you see, Sonia, the stakes driven into the ground and the rope stretched between them? This rope marks off your land, a whole hectare. It is a gift to you from people who have also taken a hectare of land nearby to plant gardens and build houses on. When you grow up, you too will be able to build a house and plant a garden. Your land will be waiting for you.”

The little girl walked up to the rope, touched it, and asked the housemother:

“Does that mean that on the other side of this rope is my land and I can do whatever I want with it?”

“Yes, Sonechka, this is your land, and you alone are in charge of everything that will grow on it.”

“And what will grow on it?”

“Well, for the time being, as you can see, a lot of different kinds of grasses. But look over there, on your neighbours’ plots — they’ve already started planting apple trees and pear trees, and a whole bunch of other fruit trees, and they’ll soon have flourishing orchards. And when you grow up, you will decide what to plant on your land and where to put it, so that it will look beautiful, just like the others.”

Sonia bent over and crawled under the rope onto her hectare of land. She took several steps along the rope, carefully examining the ground and all the little creatures twittering and darting about on the grass. She walked as far as a little birch-tree growing on the plot and touched its slender trunk. She turned to the housemother, and in a somewhat excited voice asked:

“What about this little tree? The little birch tree? Is that mine too?”

“Yes, Sonechka, as of now the birch tree belongs only to you, since it’s growing on your land. When you get older, you’ll be able to plant other trees here... But now it’s time to go. It’ll soon be lunch-time and I have to get back to the group.”

The little girl turned to look at her plot and stood silently contemplating it.



People who have children know that when they play, children often build little rooms for themselves out of various things or, in the country, they set up little lean-tos for themselves to play in. For some reason, every child has a need to fence off a little world of their own from the big world outside, to create their own space. Children who live in orphanages have a common space, but this common space, even if it is very well appointed, can only have a negative effect on them.

Like other orphanage children, Sonia never had a corner to call her own, even a tiny one. And here she was standing on the other side of the rope, where everything belonged exclusively to her — including the grass, and the lively grasshoppers hopping across the ground, and the little birch tree. The slim little girl turned to her housemother and started to speak. Her voice combined tones of both pleading and decisiveness.

"I beg of you, very, very much, to please let me stay here. You go on ahead, and I'll come back on my own."

"How will you get back? It's thirty kilometres!"

"I'll make it," replied Sonia firmly. "I'll walk and I'll make it. Maybe I'll take the bus. Please let me have some time on my land all by myself."

The driver of the *Zhiguli*,³ who happened to be the proprietor of the plot next door to Sonia's, overheard the conversation and proposed:

"Let the girl stay here until this evening. I'll take you back now, and bring her home tonight."

After a moment's thought the housemother agreed. How could she refuse, after seeing the face of this little girl standing behind the rope, awaiting her decision.

³*Zhiguli* — a car produced at Toliatti on the Volga River (see footnote 1 in Book 4, Chapter 22: "Other worlds"), here referring to the car which had brought Sonia and the housemother out to see the plot.

"All right, Sonia, you may stay here until this evening. I'll send along lunch with the driver."

"What d'you need to do that for?" responded the *Zbiguli* driver. "We'll be happy to share our lunch with our neighbour," he added, with a respectful emphasis on the word *neighbour*.

"D'you hear that, Klava?"⁴ he called out to his wife, who was busy preparing lunch on the porch of their house. Their house was still under construction. "Make dinner for four — our neighbour will be joining us today."

"Fine," answered his wife. "There's enough for everyone." And she added: "Just give us a shout, Sonia, if there's anything you need."

"Thank you," answered Sonia, now extremely happy.

After the *Zbiguli* had departed, Sonia walked along the rope strung between the stakes. She walked slowly, sometimes pausing to sit down on the grass and touch something with her hands before continuing on. In this fashion she walked around the whole perimeter of her lot.

Then she stood in the middle of her hectare and surveyed all sides of the perimeter. And then all at once, she threw her hands in the air and began running, jumping and spinning around.

After lunch Klava noticed how tired the girl looked after trotting around her plot, and invited her to have a nap on a folding cot. But Sonia, tired as she was, replied:

"If possible, can you give me some old clothing I can spread out to lie down on. I'll take a nap on my own piece of land, by the birch tree."

Nikolai⁵ set up the cot with a mattress and blanket beside the birch tree on Sonia's plot. The girl lay down and

⁴*Klava* — an affectionate form of the feminine name *Klavdia* (corresponding to *Claudia* in English).

immediately fell into a deep sleep. This was her first time sleeping in her own kin's domain.

But now the orphanage was faced with what initially seemed an insoluble problem. Not a day passed but Sonia would ask the housemothers to allow her to go to her own hectare of land. Their explanations — that she was still too young to take the bus all by herself, and the housemothers couldn't take her since they couldn't leave the other children — fell on deaf ears.

Sonia began talking with the orphanage's director. She explained to him that she absolutely *had* to go see her land. She had to, because on the neighbouring plots people were already planting trees, and would soon have flourishing orchards, while her land would be left abandoned. Nothing would be flourishing on it.

Finally the orphanage's director came up with a solution that was acceptable to Sonia. He told her:

"Right now, Sonia, it's not possible to take you out to your plot, since apart from everything else, you still have a fortnight's study ahead of you. Two weeks from now the summer holidays will begin. I'll have a word with the neighbours next door to your plot, and if they agree to watch out for you, then during the holidays we'll send you off to your plot for a time — for a week, at least, or maybe longer.

"By the way, you could spend this coming fortnight getting yourself ready for your land. Here, take these two brochures and read up. One of them tells how to make planting beds, and the other is a guide to medicinal herbs. If you can be on

⁵*Nikolai* (pron. *ni-ka-LYE*, rhyming with 'by') — a masculine name of Greek origin, now commonly used in Russia (corresponding to *Nicholas* in English). The ancient Russian name *Kolya* is now used as an endearing form of *Nikolai*. In this case it is the name of the driver, Klava's husband.

your best behaviour these next two weeks, I'll also get ready for you a selection of seeds for the holidays."

Sonia was on her best behaviour. She did all her lessons conscientiously, and devoted all (absolutely all!) her spare time to reading the two brochures the director had given her. When she lay down to sleep, she dreamt about the beautiful plants that would grow on her plot. On one occasion, while all the other children were fast asleep, the night-nurse noticed Sonia drawing sketches of trees and flowers by the moonlight streaming through her window.

The neighbours did agree to watch out for the little girl, and when the summer holidays began, the director himself helped load a number of items into the baggage compartment of the *Zhiguli*, including box lunches for two weeks, a small shovel and rake, as well as a packet of seeds.

Nikolai didn't want to take the box lunches from the orphanage, but the director assured him that Sonia was an extremely independent girl and would never want to be a burden to anyone, so it would be better for her to see she had her own supply of food.

And they also gave her a new sleeping bag — in spite of the fact that Nikolai's family had already fixed up a little room for Sonia on the finished ground floor of their house, complete with sheets and pillows.

As Sonia was getting into the car, a whole lot of people came out to see her off — not just the orphanage staff on duty that day, but a crowd who had come especially to look upon the little girl's face, which was beaming with happiness.

For the first three nights Sonia slept in the room her neighbours had fixed up for her, spending all day long on her own hectare of land which was so dear to her heart.

The third day was Nikolai's birthday, and a lot of guests came. One young couple arrived with their tent. On the

following day, when the guests departed, the tent was left behind.

"That's a present for you," the young couple said to Nikolai.

Then Sonia asked Nikolai if she could sleep in the tent. Nikolai gave her his permission.

"Of course, go ahead, if you like. What is it — do you find your room stuffy?"

"The room's fine," replied the girl. "But everybody here spends the night on their own land, while my land is all alone at night. There are lights burning on many of the other plots at night-time, but mine's all dark."

"So, does that mean you'd like me to set up the tent on your plot?"

"I'd like that very, very much, Uncle Kolya — if you could set it up beside the birch tree. Only if you have time, and if it's not too inconvenient..."

Every night after that Sonia slept in the tent Nikolai set up on her plot beside the birch tree.

Upon awakening early in the morning, she would go at once to the bucket of water standing by the tent, and draw some water in a mug. After filling her mouth, she would let a thin stream of water splash onto the palms of her hands to wash her face.

Then she would take out a sketch-book in which she had made hand-drawings of the plan for her plot, and study them. After that, she would proceed to dig her flower and vegetable beds.

The small sapper's spade the director had given her had a sharp edge, but Sonia was unable to get the full blade into the ground; she could only get it in only half-way. But she still managed to make her vegetable beds.

Her neighbour Nikolai offered to plough up any designated areas with a rototiller, but Sonia categorically refused. She was fiercely jealous of any encroachment on her territory.

People sensed this and endeavoured not to cross over the line (marked out by stakes and rope) without her knowledge. Even Nikolai, upon awaking in the morning, when he went to call Sonia to breakfast, would go only as far as the property line and call out to Sonia from there.

Perhaps it was some kind of extraordinary streak of aspiration toward independence on this young girl's part, or else the fear of becoming a burden to someone, that prevented her from asking anybody any favours. Even when one of the community residents tried to offer her clothing, or candy, or some sort of equipment, she would politely thank them, but categorically decline the offer.

In the two weeks she spent on her land, Sonia managed to dig out and plant three vegetable beds, with a huge flower-bed in the middle.

On the morning of her last day of her fortnight's stay, Nikolai went to the perimeter of her plot as usual, to call her to breakfast. The girl was standing by her flower-bed (in which nothing had come up yet). As she stared at it, she replied to Nikolai without turning around:

"Uncle Kolya, you don't have to call me to eat this morning, I don't feel hungry."

Nikolai would say later that he could hear her voice cracking, he could tell she was barely holding back her tears. He wasn't about to try to find out what the matter was. He went back to his place and began observing Sonia through his field-glasses.

The girl was pacing back and forth across her plot, first touching a plant with her hands, or straightening out something in one of the beds. Then she went over to her birch tree and put her arms around it. Nikolai could see her shoulders trembling.

By lunch-time the orphanage's ageing mini-van arrived. The driver stopped at the entrance to Nikolai's territory and sounded his horn. Nikolai would recount the subsequent events as follows:

When I saw her through my field-glasses gather up her simple little things, like the shovel and rake, and head over our direction with such a sad expression on her face, when I looked at that face close-up, I couldn't hold out any longer. I grabbed my mobile phone and rang the orphanage. Fortunately I was able to get through to the director right away. I told him I was willing to sign any papers required, accepting responsibility for the child, saying I would take the summer off work to spend the whole time here on the plot, just so the little girl could stay on her piece of land until the end of the holidays.

At first the director started to explain that all the children from their orphanage were to go to summer camp at the sea-side for rest and therapy — that he and his colleagues had spent a long time securing this opportunity, and that now they would be going to the camp, thanks to the generosity of a group of sponsors.

I then spoke with the director frankly, man-to-man, but he wasn't offended, and gave me an equally frank response. Whereupon he asked to have a word with the driver, promising to come out himself tomorrow.

I ran out to the road and handed the telephone to the driver, adding from myself:

"Okay, there, friend. Get out of here pronto!"

The driver left. Then Sonia came up to me and said:

"Uncle Kolya, didn't the van-driver come for me? But why did he leave?"

For some reason my negotiations with the orphanage director had left me rather tense. I lit a cigarette, my hands were trembling, and I responded to her:

"What makes you think he was coming for you? He simply came to see if you needed any food supplies, or anything else, and I told him everything was okay."

She looked me straight in the eye. It seemed as though she understood what was going on. Then she said softly:

“Thank you, Uncle Kolya!” Then she began walking, and eventually running, back to her land.

The orphanage director came the following morning. I was already waiting for him. Only he didn’t head my way, but walked straight over in the direction of Sonia’s tent. I didn’t get a chance to warn him not to cross the line without an invitation. But, smart fellow that he is, he guessed as much himself. Again, in an apparent effort not to traumatise the child, this clever chap had the sense to say, as the little girl came to meet him:

“Good day, Sonia. I just stopped by to let you know we’re all going off to the sea-side. Would you like to stay here, or join us on our trip?”

“*Stay here!*” Sonia didn’t just say it, but screamed it.

“I thought as much,” responded the director. “So I brought you something by way of box lunches...”

“No need to trouble yourself, no need to waste your time. I don’t need anything.”

“No need? Then what would you have me do? The state provides us with funds for each child in our care. But you are here taking care of yourself, and feeding yourself. Tell me, how can I account for the state funds in a situation like this? No, please be so gracious as to accept these... Okay, Alexeich,⁶ you can go ahead and unload them.

“Will you allow us to come in, Sonia? Maybe you’ll show us your place here?”

⁶ *Alexeich* (pron. *a-lek-SAY-yitch*) — here a patronymic (see footnote 9 in Book 1, Chapter 1: “The ringing cedar”). Patronymics in Russian are occasionally used alone in certain situations, one of them being an employer addressing an employee he knows very well. The full form of *Alexeich* would be *Alexeevich*.

Sonia stared at the director for several moments, sizing up the whole situation. Then she noticed the driver of the mini-van unloading some heavy-looking bags, and once she finally realised that she would be staying put here on her land for the whole summer holidays, she joyfully exclaimed:

“Oh, what have I... Come in, come in. The gate’s over there where there’s no rope. Please be my guests. I’ll be happy to show you my place. You too, Uncle Kolya, come on in.”

She led us over to her tent and at once invited us to take a drink of water from the bucket standing alongside.

“Here, have some water. I get it from a spring. It’s good-tasting, better than tap water. Do please take a drink.”

“I shan’t say no to that,” replied the director, drawing a half a mugful of water from the bucket and downing it with gusto. “It’s jolly good!”

The driver and I both took a drink and complimented Sonia on her water, to her great delight. It was probably the first time in her life that Sonia had possessed anything of her own. Even if it was just water, it was still something that was hers, something of her own that she could offer to adults. Sonia began to feel like a real participant in the world.

After that, we sat there listening for maybe an hour and a half or two hours while Sonia regaled us with her report of what she had already planted and what she was going to plant. And she showed us her drawings of her future kin’s domain. Only there was no house in the plans she had drawn.

“It’s time for us to go,” the director told Sonia. “You can unpack your things on your own. I threw in a battery-operated flashlight. It’s an electric torch that can shine far into the distance, but if you switch it over to the daylight-lamp setting, you can use it to read by. And now you’ll

have something to read. I brought you some magazines on landscape design, and gardening books, and books on folk medicine.”

“Oh, I forgot something again,” spluttered Sonia. “Just a moment.” She pulled back one of the tent flaps, and we saw bunches of various herbs hanging on a tent wire stretched taut. She took out several bunches and offered them to the director.

“This is celandine.⁷ A special kind of herb... This is for Katya in our group, she needs to make a brew with it and drink it. She’s so often ill. I read up on celandine in the brochure you gave me. I’ve dried it already.

“Thank you...”

In sum, this director’s a pretty fine fellow, and he loves children. I had a talk with him later. He asked me how Sonia was behaving herself, and gave me some concrete advice.

Sonia spent the whole summer in her tent on her own piece of land. The bed at the centre of her garden blossomed with magnificent flowers, while the produce from the vegetable beds included onions and radishes.

In the evenings, when the days began to grow shorter, you could often see the light of the electric torch flickering in the tent. Every evening Sonia read books on folk medicine and made drawings of her future plans for her land in her sketch-book.

When the orphanage’s mini-van came to collect her at the end of the summer, I helped Sonia load up her things. And there was quite a bit to load! Just the bunches of herbs she had dried numbered around two hundred. Her yield also included a sack of potatoes and three pumpkins. The van had a full load. I asked Sonia:

⁷*celandine* — see footnote 4 in Book 3, Chapter 20: “Mediums”.

“What about next year? Shall I hold on to your tent for you?”

“I’ll definitely come again next summer. First day of the holidays, I’ll be here. You’re a good neighbour, Uncle Kolya. Thank you for being such a good neighbour!”

And she shook my hand just like an adult. And this time it was a much stronger handshake. Sonia had not only got herself a good tan, but she had got stronger and more self-confident as well.

When she came the next year she brought fruit-tree saplings along with her, as well as some kind of seedlings, and got down to business right off.

At a community meeting people from our settlement decided to build Sonia a little house.

But Zina,⁸ whose husband was an entrepreneur and had built the biggest mansion in the community, began to insist that Sonia’s house should be more than ‘little’.

“I’m ashamed to look visitors in the eye. The foundations of all the houses in the settlement are being set up as though they were palaces, and here’s one only child living in a tent. What can visitors think?”

Knowing the girl’s feelings, especially her resentment at any kind of offers of assistance, they entrusted me to negotiate with her.

I went to see her and said:

“Sonia, at a community meeting the residents decided to build you a little house to live in. All you have to do is show us where you would like it placed.”

In response, she asked me rather guardedly:

“Uncle Kolya, how much would a little house cost?”

Not suspecting anything, I replied:

⁸*Zina* — an endearing form of the name *Zinaida* (pron. *Zee-na-EE-da*).

“Oh, somewhere in the neighbourhood of two hundred thousand roubles. In other words, about two thousand per family.”

“Two thousand each? But that’s a lot of money. That means people would have to buy less of something for their own children — just to spend on me. Uncle Kolya, I beg of you: tell the people I don’t need a house right now. I haven’t even thought of a place to put it yet. I beg of you, Uncle Kolya, please explain to the people...”

She was greatly concerned, and I could understand why. Upon receiving her piece of land, Sonia felt independent for the first time in her life. Her plot of land substituted for her parents — it needed her and she needed it. By some kind of internal instinct the girl felt or imagined that her land didn’t want any outsiders laying their hands on it.

And God forbid anyone might criticise her after the house was completed, even tacitly. Her own sense of independence was far dearer to her than having her own house.

I tried to persuade the residents not to force any gifts on the girl. But then something completely unexpected happened. A group of kids on their way back from the lake ran past Sonia’s plot. Out in front, on a fine-looking bicycle was the entrepreneur’s son, Edik.⁹ He was always teasing Sonia, calling her *Malyavka*,¹⁰ even though he himself was only three years her senior.

⁹*Edik* — an endearing variant of *Edward*. A few foreign names have become popular among Russians at certain periods of history. But then Russian suffixes may well be added to satisfy the Russian penchant for diminutive (endearing) forms. By way of comparison, note the popularity among English speakers of certain endearing Russian names like *Tanya* and *Sasha*.

¹⁰*Malyavka* (pron. *mal-YAF-ka*) — a condescending nickname indicating someone younger or shorter than one’s self, something on the order of ‘Little One’ or ‘Shorty’.

"Hey, there, Malyavka!" Edik called out to Sonia. "You spend your whole time landscaping — aren't you bored with that already? Why don't you come with us to see the fireworks?"

"What 'fireworks'?" asked Sonia.

"My Papa's going to burn down the construction trailer his workers have been using. Come and you'll see. We've already got a fire-engine there on stand-by."

"Why burn it down?"

"Cause it's spoiling the view."

"But after it burns down, nothing will grow on that spot for a long time."

"Why not?"

"Cause all the helpful worms, all the bugs, they'll get burnt up too. I tried lighting a fire by my tent one time and see, nothing's ever grown on that spot since."

"Wow, Malyavka! You're really observant! So, come and save our worms. Take the old trailer away, otherwise Papa won't know how else to get rid of it."

"How am I going to take it away? Isn't it heavy?"

"What d'you mean, how? With a crane, of course! The crane's coming the day after tomorrow to set up our wind-mill. So, either you take it or we're going to have a big bon-fire."

"Okay, Edik. I'll agree to take your trailer."

"Then let's go."

A crowd of adult neighbours, along with a whole lot of children, had gathered at Edik's parents' estate. A fire crew was standing by at the ready. Edik approached his father, who was already on his way over to the construction trailer, carrying a can of gasoline. To the disappointment of the younger crowd and the glad astonishment of the adults, he told his father:

"Papa, you don't need to burn the trailer."

"What d'you mean, I don't need to? How come?"

"Cause I've given it away."

"To whom?"

"To the Malyavka."

"What Malyavka?"

"To Sonia, from the plot on the far side of the settlement."

"Well! Did she agree? Did she agree to accept it from you?"

"Hey, Papa, if you don't believe me, ask her yourself."

Sonia was standing in the crowd of youngsters. Edik took her by the hand and brought her over to his father.

"Tell him, Sonia, that you agree to take this shack off his hands. Tell him."

"I agree," Sonia answered quietly.

Oh, how the entrepreneur just bubbled over with pride at his son's accomplishment! Quite a coup! Here was this girl who never took anything from anyone, and now the capricious Sonia had decided to accept a gift from his Edik.

As soon as the children had left, the entrepreneur summoned the whole construction brigade that had been putting the finishing touches on his mansion, and said to the foreman:

"So, now, lads. Take any materials you need and start working around the clock — I'll pay you double time, if you can only refit the trailer's interior to modern European living standards in forty-eight hours. You can leave the exterior shabby, the way it is. But the interior..."

Forty-eight hours later, next to the birch tree where the tent had been standing on Sonia's plot, the construction trailer with its shabby exterior was set up on a brand new brick foundation. The exterior was indeed shabby, but the builders had primed it for painting, and left tins of Finnish¹¹ paint and brushes inside.

Sonia later painted the exterior herself. She now had, for the first time in her life, her very own little house, standing on her own dear piece of land. By the following year this house had been transformed into a little fairy-tale château, covered with ivy and wild grapevines and surrounded by flower-beds.



Ten years went by. Sonia finished school and had already spent a whole year living in her domain. Mansions could be seen throughout the community, which was already dripping in lush green vegetation and flourishing orchards. But the best and prettiest estate belonged to Sonia.

While her classmates were leaving the orphanage and going off to parts unknown, trying to get accepted into any kind of academic institution just to get a roof over their heads, or to find any kind of work so they could at least feed themselves, Sonia was already a wealthy woman. The residents of the community would give their surplus fruits and vegetables to a manager. Products grown on domains fetched a higher-than-average price. They were exported to countries in the European Union, where they were sold in stores specialising in eco-friendly produce. Sonia gave what she grew on her plot to the manager as well. Though most of what she produced was bought by visitors from the city who had heard about this extraordinary girl and her fabulous domain.

¹¹*European, Finnish* — to Russians or Ukrainians, this meant significantly higher quality than was standard in their own countries.

Sonia had also been gathering medicinal herbs and had helped save a great many people from disease.

One day Edik came back for a visit to his parents, who were now living full-time in their domain. For the past three years he had been studying at a prestigious university in America. He was about to undergo a serious medical operation. He was suffering from liver and kidney disorders, probably caused by the poor quality of food and water abroad. Before the operation, Edik decided to spend a week visiting his parents. His mother, Zinaida, made a suggestion:

"Maybe, son, we should pay a visit to our local healer? Just in case she can help."

"Now there, Mama, what century are we living in, eh? Medicine in the West has been highly developed for quite a while now. They just cut out and replace whatever they need to. Don't worry. I'm not going to see any witch-doctors. That's ancient!"

"I'm not suggesting you go to any witch-doctors. Let's go see... you remember that little girl from the orphanage on the far side of our settlement who surprised everyone by fixing up the piece of land they gave her, all on her own?"

"Oh, you mean that Malyavka? I vaguely remember her."

"Well, now she's no longer a Malyavka, son, but a very respected woman. Managers are willing to pay double the price for anything grown by her hand. And people come from faraway places for her blend of medicinal herbs. Even though she doesn't advertise it at all."

"How did our Malyavka get to be such an expert?"

"Well, she's been spending every summer since Grade One on her plot, and every day during the winter she's been reading books on gardening and folk medicine. The child's mind is sharp, and she picks up everything so quickly. She got a lot of it from books. Only people say her real understanding

came more from herself. They say, too, that the plants understand her. She talks with them."

"Well, that's our Malyavka for you! How much does she charge for treatment?"

"Sometimes she charges, but she's also been known to offer help for free. One day last autumn I happened to meet her by the pond. She looked me in the eye and told me:

"Auntie Zina, the whites of your eyes don't look too good. Here, take this herb, make a tea with it and drink it, and it'll get better.' And it did. And there was really something wrong with my eyes, since I had a liver complaint. Now that's gone too.

"Let's go, son. We'll go and see her. Maybe she can help your liver too."

"It's not just my liver, Mama. They've already made their diagnosis and they're going to remove one of my kidneys. And no tea's going to help that. Anyway, let's go pay her a visit — it'll be interesting to see Malyavka's domain. They say it's like a Paradise there."

"Yes, indeed! She's done a fantastic job!" exclaimed Edik, as he and his mother approached Sonia's domain. "Most people in the community seem to have put all their efforts into building mansions with stone fences, whereas she's created a real Paradise. Just look, Mama, the fence she's created from greenery!"

"You would have held some of that exclamation in reserve if you knew what her garden looked like," observed Zinaida. "Only very few people get to see it."

She opened the gate a little and called out loudly:

"Sonia! If you're home, come on out. Sonia, are you home?"

The door of the little house — the former construction trailer — opened wide, and out onto the porch stepped a young

woman. With a deft movement of her hand she tossed her tightly woven braid of chestnut-coloured hair over her shoulder. When she caught sight of Zinaida accompanied by her son, her cheeks flushed with a rosy glow. She fastened the top button on her cardigan which fit snugly over her supple breasts, and with a soft and light but still gracious step this young and beautiful girl made her way down the porch steps and along the path to the gate, where Zinaida and Edik were standing.

"Hello, Auntie Zina! Welcome back, Edward! If you'd like, come into my house or into my garden."

"Thank you for the invitation. We accept with pleasure," replied Zinaida.

But Edik didn't say a word and didn't even return Sonia's greeting.

"You know, Sonia," Zinaida went on as they headed for the garden, "my son has a problem. He's about to have an operation. Even though it'll take place in America, it's still pretty upsetting to me as a mother."

Sonia stopped, turned around and asked Edik:

"What's the trouble with you, Edward?"

"My heart," Edik replied, gasping in his throat.

"What d'you mean, your heart?" exclaimed Zinaida. "You told me it was your liver and your kidneys. Does that mean you were lying so I wouldn't get overly concerned?"

"I wasn't lying. But now, Mama, my heart is beating so fast — can't you feel it right here?!" He took his mother's hand and placed it against his chest. "Listen — it's going to rupture and explode if you don't convince this beautiful maiden to marry me at once!"

"You're such a jokester," laughed Zinaida. "You practically scared me to death!"

"I'm not joking, Mama."

"Well, if you aren't joking," Zinaida gaily continued, "you ought to know that half the community have already sent

matchmakers over on behalf of their sons. But to no avail — Sonia doesn't want to get married. You can ask her yourself why she doesn't want to, but don't set your poor mother up for a fall."

Edik went up to Sonia and quietly enquired:

"Sonia, why have you never married anyone?"

"Because," Sonia softly responded, "I've been waiting for you, Edik."

"Oh you teasers! What are you making fun of a mother like that for?"

"Bless us, Mama, right now. I'm not teasing," Edik declared firmly, and took Sonia by the hand.

"And I'm not teasing either, Auntie Zina," Sonia said in a serious tone.

"You aren't teasing? That means you too, Sonia?... You're not joking? Well, if you're not joking, then what are you still calling me 'Auntie' for, instead of 'Mama'?"

"Fine. I'll call you Mama," replied Sonia, her voice trembling. She took a step in Zinaida's direction, but then paused in hesitation.

Zinaida couldn't immediately catch on to what was happening — was this some kind of stalemate, a joke? She anxiously glanced back and forth between Sonia's face and her son's. Then there came the moment when she realised how serious the young couple's intentions really were, and at this point she rushed over to Sonia, embraced her and broke into tears:

"Sonia! Sonechka! Daughter! I know you're serious about each other."

Sonia's shoulders were trembling too. She hugged Zinaida and repeated:

"Yes, Mama, we're serious. Very serious indeed."

Whereupon the young couple, holding hands, slowly and without eyes for anyone but each other, walked down the

community street to the domain belonging to Edik's family. Zinaida walked out in front. She was laughing and crying at the same time, and chattered on incessantly, accosting each person they met:

"We've just come... And they — *bang!* — they've fallen in love with each other... And I — *bang!* — I blessed them. At first I thought they were joking. But they — *bang!* — they fell in love right off. And I told them... And they said they wanted 'to get married, Mama, today!' Good people, how is that possible? There's preparations to be made — it all has to be done officially. That's just not possible!"

Presently they saw Edik's father, the entrepreneur, coming out of the house to greet them. Upon hearing this same (more or less) disconnected account from his wife's lips, he looked at the young couple and said:

"Well, now, you're chattering on as usual, Zinaida. And what d'you mean, a wedding today is impossible? Just look at these young'uns. We have to hold the wedding not just today, but right now!"

Edik went up to his father and embraced him.

"Thank you, Papa."

"What are you thanking me for? Let's not waste time hugging each other! Everybody say *Gor'ko!*"¹²

"*Gor'ko! Gor'ko!*" all the people cried out that had gathered round.

Edik and Sonia kissed each other for the first time in front of the residents of the community. Everyone who happened to be home at the time assembled for the wedding. An improvised table was set up in the fresh air and they all helped set it together. The ceremony didn't just 'buzz' the way things did at traditional Russian parties — it 'sang' well into the night.

¹²*Gor'ko!* (lit. 'Bitter!') — a call for the bride and groom to kiss at a wedding reception (in the sense that the wine is bitter and needs a kiss to make it sweet).

Despite the parents' pleadings, the young couple decided to settle down not in Edik's parents' mansion, which was actually more like a palace, but in Sonia's little house.

"You see, Father," Edik explained, "this palace we've built here with all its different wings takes up practically half a hectare. But we don't have the beauty that Sonia's domain has, or even the air. We've got to take half the additions down."

The entrepreneur started drinking, and kept at it for a whole week. But after that, to everyone's surprise, he started taking down the wings he had added to his mansion. He explained:

"We were pretty silly, putting up all the additions. Our grandchildren won't want to move into catacombs like these!"

And Sonia and Edik went on living happily...

Stop! Now I've already started talking about the future. And most certainly, it will be marvellous! But what about the present? At the present time, there is indeed a fine orphanage in the city of Kharkov. And there is a little girl named Sonia there. Sonia's in Grade Three now, but she doesn't have a hectare of land of her own, neither do Tanya, Seryozha or Katya, or any of the thousands of children living in orphanages. The Ukrainian *Rada*¹³ has not even put the question on its agenda yet — the question of granting a hectare of land to every resident of the country, including orphans, for life-time use, on which to set up a family domain. Neither has the Belarus Duma or the Russian Duma considered it.

Will the children forgive them? Will today's parliamentary deputies be able to forgive themselves?

¹³*Rada* — the Ukrainian Parliament, corresponding to the *Duma* in Russia and Belarus.

CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX



A security zone of the future

For the past five evenings Nikolai Ivanovich¹ — the warden of a maximum-security correctional facility (in plain language, a *prison*) — had not been able to leave his office at the usual time. When his workday officially ended he turned his telephone ringer off and began pacing his office, deep in contemplation. Occasionally he would sit down at his desk, pick up the green folder lying on it and peruse its contents for the umpteenth time.

A convict serving time for an infraction of Article 93, Clause 1, of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation had put forward a petition to him on behalf of a group of inmates in Cell 26, with what at first glance looked like an unthinkable proposal.

The convict, whose name was Khodakov, proposed acquiring for the facility a hundred hectares of abandoned or unused arable land, to be surrounded by a barbed-wire fence with a watch-tower at each corner — in other words, taking all due precaution to prevent escapes. On this fenced-in hundred hectares ninety prisoners would be engaged in agricultural labour. The applications of those interested were kept in a file in this green folder.

In their applications these prisoners committed themselves to supply the whole facility with vegetables, to the tune of half

¹*Nikolai Ivanovich* (pron. *Nee-ka-LYE i-VAHN-yeh*) — first name plus patronymic (cf. footnote 9 in Book 1, Chapter 1: “The ringing cedar”). The name *Nikolai* also has an endearing form: *Kolya*.

of all the produce they grew on the land. The other half they asked to be sent to their families. So far, nothing impossible in their request. In various correctional facilities prisoners are engaged in manufacturing activity. In some cases this involves crafting simple objects in woodworking shops, in others — organised textile production, where prisoners sew simple items of clothing, such as quilted jackets or underpants, and receive a nominal wage for their work. The low wage is also due to the rather low level of productivity involved.

According to the proposal in the file, the prisoners wanted to take up agriculture. Well, no problem there either. A payment of half of their produce was entirely feasible. No need to bother with selling stuff, or shipping off products on consignment and then waiting months for the proceeds to come in. But that wasn't all...

Khodakov, on behalf of the other prisoners, asked that the hundred hectares be divided into one-hectare plots, each plot to be assigned to a specific prisoner. In addition, they asked that each prisoner be granted the right to build a one-room cell-hut on their plot. There was also a request that any prisoner who wished to, be allowed to stay on their land after serving their sentence, and then for the prison not to collect as a levy but to purchase surplus produce from them, as well as to allow them to enlarge their dwellings.

The file containing the proposal, or request, had been given to Nikolai Ivanovich as far back as six months ago. Along with the ninety applications and the text of the proposal, the file also included plans for the future plots, handsomely executed in coloured pencil. The drawings showed the watch-towers, the barbed wire and the controlled-entry point.

After his initial reading Nikolai Ivanovich tucked the green folder away in the bottom drawer of his desk. From time to time he would mentally go over its contents, but he had not given any answer to the prisoners.

A certain circumstance had come about, however, which caused the warden to spend every evening over the past five days in intensive contemplation of the prisoners' proposal. An order had come from the national administration to take steps, beginning the following year, to enlarge the facility and construct additional cells, with a view to being ready to accept a hundred and fifty new convicts by the year's end. The order was accompanied by plans for additional wards to be attached to the existing buildings, along with a financing schedule. It was proposed to use prisoner labour in the construction.

Nikolai Ivanovich mused as follows: *The financing will be delayed as usual, and there will be problems procuring low-cost materials. They put one set of prices for construction materials into the budget, but when it comes to the actual building, it's something else already. Prisoner labour is never very efficient. The order is patently impossible to carry out.*

But there was no question that it *had* to be carried out. Nikolai Ivanovich's retirement was only five years away. He had already attained the rank of colonel. He had been the warden of this facility for twenty years now, without a single black mark on his record. And now this order.

But these concerns were not uppermost in the colonel's deliberations. The green folder! In his memo Prisoner Khodakov stated that his proposal would fulfil the principal objective of incarcerating prisoners in such institutions — namely, rehabilitation.

The fact that modern correctional institutions seldom succeed in their rehabilitation efforts — indeed, quite the contrary, they end up producing more experienced criminals — was not lost on Nikolai Ivanovich. If this were not so, you wouldn't get them coming back to prison for the second or third time. Nikolai Ivanovich had given a great deal of time and energy to his calling, and was extremely disturbed by this situation.

His life was getting on now, his term of service was coming to an end, and what was there to show for it? A nursery for criminals, as it turned out.

The green folder! How infectious it was! If only he could confidently conclude that there was something unacceptable in the proposal the file contained! But no. Something inside him would not let him reject it out of hand. But neither could he bring himself to fully support it. It was an offbeat, unconventional proposal.

The next morning, the colonel's first order of the day was to have Prisoner Khodakov from Cell 26 brought to his office.

"You can take a seat, Mr Khodakov," said Nikolai Ivanovich to the man who had just come in, accompanied by an escort guard. The warden gestured to a chair.

"I've just been looking over the contents of your file. I have a specific question for you."

"Sir!" the prisoner hastened to reply, getting up from his chair.

"Sit!" the guard commanded.

"Yes, do sit down," the prison warden replied softly. "No need to jump to your feet the way they do in court." Turning to the escort guard, he added: "You can wait for us outside."

"So, Sergei Yurevich Khodakov, I must say you've submitted a rather strange proposal."

"It only seems strange on the surface. In fact, the proposal is extremely reasonable."

"Then tell me directly, flat out, what kind of cunning plan have you thought up here? Are you aiming to set up the conditions for a mass escape? The ninety candidates applying are all serving sentences of between five and nine years. Does this mean you want your freedom sooner?"

"If there's any cunning plan in this proposal, it has nothing to do with escape, sir." Again the prisoner rose and showed signs of concern. "You've got the wrong impression..."

"Just sit down and relax. And let's dispense with the 'sir'. I'm Nikolai Ivanovich. I know from your file that you are Sergei Yurevich. You used to be a psychologist. You defended your thesis, and then went into business. Your sentence was for major embezzlement — right?"

"Yes, I was sentenced — it was back at the beginning of *perestroika*, after all, Nikolai Ivanovich. You just get used to one set of laws, and suddenly new ones come out..."

"Okay, okay. That's not the issue here. Explain to me what you have in mind with this agricultural zone with a barbed-wire fence, or is there another name for it?"

"I'll try to explain, Nikolai Ivanovich. Only it's hard for me to do that, because of a particular circumstance."

"What circumstance?"

"You see, we've been reading this book — it's called *Anastasia*. Then along came another book, a sequel. Well, anyway, the book talks about Man's purpose in life. About how if everyone living on the Earth took a hectare of land and created a corner of Paradise on it, the whole Earth would be transformed into a Paradise. The book explains this very simply and convincingly."

"Sounds pretty simple to me! If everyone took... and created..., well, then, of course, the whole Earth would be transformed... But what's this got to do with your proposal?"

"I'm trying to tell you: it's all outlined very persuasively in these books. Now some people might just glance over them superficially, and not get everything. But *we* have the time — we've been reading and discussing them, and we understand them."

"So, what have you got out of it?"

"After reading these books, a whole lot of people have the desire to acquire their own land and create a Paradise oasis in their own kin's domain. They're free, they can do this. So we've decided: even if it's behind barbed wire, we can still each take a hectare of land, work on it, and make it into something

beautiful... By way of a penalty, we suggest handing over half or even more of our produce either to the facility or to the public at large. But we do have a special request — that our plot is not taken away from us when we've served our sentence — in other words, those who want to stay on there can remain."

"So, what does that mean — that you're going to live out the rest of your lives under the guards' rifle muzzles?"

"After we've all served our sentences, you can take away the barbed-wire fences and cart them off for use somewhere else, along with the towers. You can use them in another location for a new group of prisoners who want to fix up their own domains — while we stay put on ours."

"Aha! And then when their time is up, we switch the towers and barbed wire to a third location, while they go on living on their land. Is that it?"

"You've got it."

"Some sort of phantasmagoria! What is it — you want me, the warden of this facility, to create Paradise oases for my prisoners? And are you certain that this can really work?"

"I'm absolutely convinced it will be a success. As a psychologist I'm convinced. And it's something I feel in my heart. Judge for yourself, Nikolai Ivanovich: someone serves nine years behind bars, and then walks free. He hasn't any friends. His friends are back in the prison's security zone, or in their cells. His family doesn't want anything to do with him. Neither does society at large. Let's face it, who'll give an ex-con a decent job? Most job categories are up to their ears in unemployed professionals, and look how many highly qualified people are standing in queue at employment centres. Our society provides no positions for ex-convicts. There's only one road ahead for them — back to the old routine. And so they follow it, and they end up back here with you again."

"Yes, I know the scenario. What's the point in merely stating the obvious? But tell me, as a psychologist, why

did the cons who read these books suddenly change and go for the idea of getting a piece of land behind a barbed-wire fence?"

"Well, you see, they all got a glimpse of eternity on the horizon. Like, people believe you're still alive, even in a prison cell. Whereas in fact you're not. You're dead. Because there's nothing left for you on life's horizon."

"What were you saying about 'a glimpse of eternity'?"

"I told you, it's hard for me to explain it right off. It's all in the books..."

"Okay, I'll read these books, and try to figure out what's made you wax so lyrical over this. Then we'll talk again. Guard, take him away."

Prisoner Khodakov got up, put his hands behind his back, and asked:

"May I ask one more question?"

"Go ahead," the colonel agreed.

"When we were working out the plan for this security zone, we took all existing regulations for prisoner holding into account. The proposal does not allow for any violation of these regulations."

"I say, you've thought of everything! The regulations... No violation... I'll check it out." Then Nikolai Ivanovich ordered the guard:

"Take him away."

Subsequently the warden called in the prison's legal counsel. He handed him the file and said:

"Here, take this. Study it thoroughly and determine where there are any violations of prisoner-holding regulations. Report back to me in forty-eight hours."

Forty-eight hours later the legal counsel was sitting in the warden's office. He began his report with a few evasive phrases, atypical for his profession.

"The thing is, Nikolai Ivanovich, that from the point of view of the law and the regulations governing the holding of prisoners in so-called places of confinement, the proposal in question cannot be treated as an open-and-shut case."

"What kind of spin are you trying to give me here, Vasily,² like a lawyer in court? You and I have known each other for fifteen years..."

Nikolai Ivanovich got up from his desk. For some reason he appeared flustered. After pacing around the room for a while, he sat down again and continued:

"Tell me specifically, what have we here by way of regulation violations?"

"Specifically... Well, if you want it specifically, I'll have to take it one step at a time."

"Okay, then. One step at a time."

"We're talking about forming a new security zone here. The proposal allows for the isolation of this area from the outside world. This hundred-hectare zone will be fenced off with two rows of barbed wire. Watch-towers are also provided for. The zone is secured in full accordance with regulations.

"The document goes on to propose the dividing of the security zone into individual plots of one hectare each and assigning each plot to a particular prisoner. Well, what is there to say? The regulations state we should accustom the unconscientious citizens in our charge to hard work, create workshop units for basic production, as well as set up a subsidiary farm and work toward partial self-financing. After all, the law allows for the setting up of institutions such as ours with special

²*Vasily* (pron. *va-SEE-lee*) — a masculine name of Greek origin, now commonly used in Russia. Note that Nikolai and Vasily, because of their long friendship, often omit the patronymic in conversation with each other. In Russian they also call each other by the informal pronoun *ty* (similar to *tu* — instead of *vous* — *pin* French).

provisions for economic activity and multi-purpose use of forest reserves.* In our case this proposal envisages the setting up of a subsidiary farm which will provide those in our charge with a supply of fresh vegetables, with maybe some left over for sale. So far, we're entirely within the limits of the law."

"Don't draw things out. What's next? Where do we go beyond the limits?"

"Well, next it's proposed to construct a separate cell on each plot to provide living accommodations for the prisoner — the one the plot is assigned to as a work-space."

"That's right — each one will have his own individual cell on his piece of land. The thing is, we don't have enough funds to buy regular beds. And here they're asking for a separate cell with all the amenities and furnishings. A utopia!"

"I guess you didn't take a thorough look at all the details of the proposal, Nikolai."

"What d'you mean, not a 'thorough' look? I practically memorised the thing."

"I don't know about that. Don't know about that... But there's an attachment here giving plans and a description of the interior of this individual cell. Everything is strictly according to regulations — one bed, one toilet, one table, one chair, one bookshelf, one night-stand; a metal door with a peep-hole and an exterior lock, bars on the windows. As for financing, it's spelled out here specifically: each prisoner is responsible for funding the construction of his own individual cell."

"That wasn't in the document I saw."

"I don't know about that. Don't know about that... Take a look for yourself — it's there. And the sketch, and the working drawings for the builders, and the description."

* *Editor's footnote from the Russian edition:* Law of the Russian Federation of 21 July 1993, amended 9 March 2001: "On institutions and agencies administering criminal punishment in the form of confinement".

"What d'you mean, 'it's there'? It wasn't there when I handed you the file to go over. I distinctly remember that it wasn't. I've been over that file a dozen times from cover to cover. And here you... In two days?"

"Yes, I did it, Kolya. I was the one. Only not in two days. They gave me a similar file three whole months ago. I recently put in my own additions and corrections, to which they agreed."

"Why didn't you say anything to me about this earlier?"

"You yourself only asked for my opinion two days ago."

"Okay. Let's hear what you have to say about all this."

"Here's what I think, Nikolai. If this proposal comes to fruition, there'll be a significant decrease in the number of prisons and labour camps in the country, and the crime-rate will be cut in half. And you, Nikolai Ivanovich, will go down in history as a genius of a reformer."

"Never mind history. Let's look at the nitty-gritty. Will it fly from a legal standpoint?" Nikolai Ivanovich once again got up from his desk and began pacing the room.

The legal counsel turned to the warden, who was still pacing the room in serious contemplation, and enquired:

"What are you so concerned about, Nikolai?"

"Me, concerned? Now what have I got to be concerned about? Anyway... No, you're right, Vasily. I *am* concerned. I'm concerned because I can't decide what I should say about this proposal in my brief to the general."

"Aha, so that's it! So you've decided to support it after all? You've been thinking about taking it to the general?"

"I've been contemplating it. I was thinking you might shoot the proposal down and persuade me not to go see the general. That'd be a weight off my shoulders. So I guess you're in favour of it?"

"Yes, I am."

"That means I've got to go," Nikolai Ivanovich concluded, in a rather cheerful tone, as though he had actually been

afraid his friend might shoot the proposal down. The warden stepped over to a cupboard and took down a bottle of cognac, along with some lemon and two shot-glasses.

"Let's drink, Vasily, to our success! Tell me, when was it that you found yourself so favourably disposed toward this file?"

"It wasn't right away."

"Same here."

"My daughter's doing a law degree at an institute. She's in the middle of writing her graduating essay on "The influence of incarceration on the eradication of criminal acts". She gave me a draft to read. I read it, and just listen to what she says:

Ninety percent of those who serve their time in incarceration reoffend. The underlying cause behind these depressing crime statistics is the following:

- a person's upbringing, which has led him to the committing of a criminal act;
- the challenge of adapting to society following the period of incarceration;
- the formation of a criminal world-view during the period of incarceration in a criminal environment!

"Do you realise what her conclusions mean, Nikolai? It turns out that you and I, just by honestly trying to do our duty, are actually helping shape a criminal world-view?"

"We don't 'shape' anything. We act in accord with regulations, the law and the orders we're given. Although, you know, I too have a lurking sense of dissatisfaction here. I used to put it out of my thought. I've been trying to convince myself it's none of my business.

"But then this file appeared... I've been contemplating it for six months now. And I've finally decided to go see the general. Only even though I've sat down several times to rewrite a report, to make it sound more intelligible, it's still not coming."

"Let's try it together. I think the main thing is not to scare the general off by making it sound too original and outlandish. We've got to simplify it."

"I agree. It should be simpler. But how? Especially since they're asking to have the land turned over to each prisoner for lifetime use after they've finished serving their sentence."

"Yes, that aspect doesn't seem realistic for the time being. We don't have any federal law at the moment on the allocation of land for lifetime use. I've thought about this point. We'll have to be honest with them. When they've finished serving their time, the question will be taken up in the context of the land legislation in existence at that time. I think they'll understand. Everybody knows you can't go above the law. We don't make the laws. But we should also point out the direction we see things heading. Right now it all seems to be leading to a law permitting private ownership of land."

"God willing," affirmed Nikolai Ivanovich as he poured out a second round of cognac. "Let's just have another wee dram... To success!"

They clinked glasses. Then all at once Nikolai Ivanovich put his glass down on the table and once more began pacing the room.

"Don't tell me you're concerned again?" asked the legal counsel.

"You see, Vasily," Nikolai Ivanovich rattled on anxiously without pausing, "you and I here have been dreaming big dreams, like youngsters. We've got carried away with our dreams, forgetting that we're dealing here with criminals. There are some among them, of course, that simply took a wrong turn, and may be sincerely willing to get their lives back together within the limits of the law. But the majority of them are hard-core criminals, rounders through and through. They've got an entirely different agenda, and what kind of gimmick are they trying to pull here?"

"I've thought about that too, Nikolai. But let's do a test first, and afterward you can decide whether to report to the general or not."

"How are we going to test them?"

"Here's how. Tell me, when did they give you this file?"

"About six months ago."

"That means they've been discussing this project for *more* than six months now, working out the drawings and plans. Then they put it all beautifully into a folder and attached ninety application forms. So, let's you and I gather all the applicants together, suddenly and without warning, in the auditorium. We'll invite specialists — let's say, agronomists, specialists in vegetable growing, and have them examine the lot. The examiners can ask questions about things like what to plant in the soil and when, and we shall see how many would-be responders there are. You know, if they're really serious about this, and they've got hold of this idea without any ulterior motives, if it's a real dream with them, they wouldn't just sit on their fannies, would they now, and wait 'til their proposal's answered. They'd have to be studying agrotechnology."

"Now that's really something, Vasily! Can you imagine rounders spending half a year boning up on how to plant flowers and cucumbers? That's really steep! Maybe a chap raised in the country might know the answer. But for these..."

"That's why I'm telling you, let's test them before deciding whether to go see the general or not."

Upon entering the auditorium they found not ninety, but two hundred prisoners sitting there. By the time the warden had invited the specialists in agrotechnology — two instructors from the agricultural institute and one from the college, the number of would-be domain dwellers had reached two hundred prisoners.

The prisoners had taken their seats in the auditorium, not suspecting that they were to be given a test. They saw the three people sitting behind the table on stage, but had no idea who they were. Then the warden came out and announced:

"In connection with the proposal to organise a subsidiary farm, we needed to consult people acquainted with agriculture. Anyway, I am happy to present to you three instructors from specialised educational institutions. They will be asking you questions, and after that we shall decide who among you may be entrusted with a plot of land."

Nikolai Ivanovich introduced each of three instructors in turn and invited them to put questions to the gathering. The first to ask a question was an elderly instructor from the agricultural college, seated at the right of the stage:

"Who among you, sirs, can tell me what time of year tomatoes should be planted for the propagation of seedlings? When should the seedlings be transplanted in the ground? And if you're familiar with the term *singling out*, tell me then, please, what signs indicate the need to use it?"

He's got 'em on the run now! thought Nikolai Ivanovich. *A bunch of questions all together in one. I bet even my wife, who's a veteran dachnik, couldn't even handle those from memory. She always checks in the books before planting anything. And look how quiet everybody is — not a stir.*

The silence in the hall disturbed Nikolai Ivanovich. He secretly hoped that the project would actually come to fruition. The only reason he was being so picky about it was not that he wanted to reject it but because he wanted to eliminate any flaws or defects in advance. The silence in the hall indicated that the project was being treated as less than serious by the participants most involved, which augured poorly for its chances of success.

Come on, now! he agonised. *Not a single answer? Isn't there at least one country lad out there? Though, in the country, it's more often the women than the men who do the vegetable planting.*

To somehow compensate for the awkward pause, Nikolai Ivanovich stood up from the table and said in a severe tone:

"What's up, lads? Didn't you get the question?"

"We got it," replied a young prisoner seated in the front row.

"Well, if you got it, then answer the question."

"Who do you want to answer? You haven't called anyone to come to the chalkboard."

"What d'you mean *who*? What *chalkboard*? If anyone knows the answer, put up your hand."

Instantly all two hundred prisoners present raised their hands.

The examining instructors, who had been conversing amongst themselves, at once fell silent. Nikolai Ivanovich was overcome with mixed feelings. On the one hand he felt a sense of pride in his charges, as well as a renewed hope that the project might indeed come to fruition. On the other hand — a sense of alarm over whether any of the two hundred who had raised their hand could give a satisfactory response to the question.

"How about *you* answering?" He gestured to the talkative young prisoner sitting in the front row.

The young man got to his feet. Stroking his bald head with a tattooed hand, he began to talk quickly and volubly:

"The time for starting tomato seedlings will not be the same each year. It all depends on the onset of reliable frost-free weather, which, of course, varies from year to year. If we take into account the need to plant the seedlings in the ground before they bloom, along with the period of maturation, we can calculate the time the seeds should be planted for propagation under greenhouse conditions or on a window-sill."

"That will do, young man," said the college instructor, interrupting the young prisoner's discourse. "Put up your hand, whoever can continue."

Again two hundred hands were thrust in the air. The instructor gestured to an elderly prisoner, by all appearances an old-time criminal with a gold filling in his mouth. The old fellow quickly rose to his feet, and began speaking in sedate tones:

"They need good regular soil, not some kind of useless crap. You need to put in some worm-processed humus, or peat-moss. But you shouldn't plant seeds directly into *pure* peat moss like that. They quickly get used to the peat, then when they're put into the garden they'll be knocked for a loop — it'll be too different for them. So you need to take the peat and mix it with just a bit of sand, using soil from the garden to dilute it at least by half. And you have to warm up their little earth-nest for them — say, up to about 25 degrees³ — before sticking the seeds in the earth."

"That will do," the instructor interrupted. "Basically you explained everything correctly. Next one continue," and he pointed to a decent-looking, bespectacled prisoner in the third row. "So, your colleague left off saying: before planting tomato-seeds in the prepared soil, you have to... What do you have to do?"

The prisoner rose to his feet, straightened his spectacles and continued:

"Before planting the seeds in the soil you have prepared for them, you must put them in your mouth and hold them in the saliva under your tongue for at least nine minutes."⁴

The examiners seated at the table, as well as the warden, were shocked by this amazing declaration, and stared at the

³The Celsius (Centigrade) scale common throughout Russia, Europe and Canada, is used throughout the Ringing Cedars Series. 25° C = 77° F.

⁴See the section entitled "The seed as physician" in Book I, Chapter II: "Advice from Anastasia".

bespectacled prisoner. After a brief pause one of the institute instructors asked again:

“Do you mean to say that before planting in the soil it should be moistened in water?”

“Never in water, certainly not in chlorinated or boiled water, where all the vital bacteria are destroyed. It must be moistened in one’s own saliva, to infuse it with information about one’s self. After it has been in a Man’s mouth, after being in his saliva at a temperature of 36 degrees⁵ (i.e., normal body temperature) for nine minutes, the seed will awaken from its dormancy and know right off what it is to do, and for whom it is to bear fruit. If a Man is suffering from any ailments or abnormalities, the seed will try to bear fruit to remove such abnormalities.”

The three instructors held an impromptu discussion amongst themselves, then turned to Nikolai Ivanovich. The college instructor queried:

“Who taught your charges — what institution did you invite specialists from to teach them?”

Even days later the warden still couldn’t figure out how he could have tripped up on answering this question. He responded this way:

“I don’t really remember where they were from. I wasn’t involved with that aspect, but I know they came from Moscow. A high-profile professor came.”

The prisoners in the auditorium caught on to the warden’s fib at once. They realised he was trying to protect them, not letting the latest responder be made fun of by the examiners, and, silently and gratefully, they in turn extended their support. The young prisoner in the front row (who had been the first to respond to the question) added:

⁵36° C = 96.8° F.

"We thought he wasn't just a professor, but an academician.⁶ And he knows a lot about the Siberian taiga, about life in general."

"That's right," added the prisoner sitting beside him, "he's a real clever chap, a super scholar."

From various corners of the hall could be heard rumblings of approbation of the professor from Moscow, whom none of them had ever seen in the first place.

The second institute instructor, who had not spoken up to now, all at once began talking, trying to sound imposing:

"Yes, colleagues, I seem to remember seeing this theory somewhere myself, although I can't remember where it was. Science today is moving in this direction. I find something intriguing in this — 36 degrees, actual human saliva permeated with all different kinds of vital bacteria... There's definitely something to this."

"Yes, yes. I seem to recall it too," the college instructor echoed thoughtfully and in an equally grandiose manner, giving the impression that he too had heard something. "This is one of the new tendencies in vegetable-growing. Theoretically, of course, it is scientifically grounded, but we shall have to see how it works in practice."

The prisoners seated in the hall gave fluent responses to a whole series of questions on agrotechnology. Their answers were not always of the standard variety. But the invited examiners were no longer in a hurry to offer counter-arguments. Quite the contrary, they listened with great interest.

While the assistant warden went to see off the instructors, Nikolai Ivanovich sat silently at the table in front of the hushed auditorium. A deathly silence hung over the hall as he leafed through the contents of the green folder. Then the

⁶*academician* — a member of the Russian Academy of Sciences (a very high rank indeed).

warden raised his head, surveyed the whole auditorium and began to say:

"I can tell you this, lads. I still don't have a complete understanding of what you're proposing. No, not completely. So I've decided... In any case, I don't know what will come of it. I'm going to try to push it through with the central administration."

The hushed auditorium, as though on command, suddenly rose to its feet and erupted in spontaneous applause. Taken completely by surprise at the reaction, Nikolai Ivanovich rose to his feet as well. Overcome by an inexplicable embarrassment, he felt a pleasant and joyful sensation in his heart. But he managed to put on his best poker face befitting his status as a no-nonsense warden, and said:

"What's all this noise about? Take your seats!" But even as he spoke he could feel the inappropriateness of excessive severity in the given context, and added: "We'll still have to invite the professor from Moscow, all the same!"

Upon receiving Nikolai Ivanovich, the head of the Correctional Facilities Central Administration, General Pososhkov, got down to business right off:

"It's not just you. Others, too, have been advised to upgrade their facilities, some just by five or ten places, some by as much as a hundred and fifty. You should be ready to accept an additional contingent of prisoners within a year. They all say it's a challenge, unrealistic, and so our prisons are overcrowded. What would you have me do? Here I've got an order from the Justice Minister to make room for an additional six thousand prisoners. But you've given me cheer, Nikolai Ivanovich. I heard you say you'll be ready to receive your share and right on time."

"Yes, I'll be ready. Only there have to be some modifications to the project, as I outlined in my report."

"I know, I know. I read it. Only not everything's clear to me in your report. You want to get involved in agriculture. That's great! Assigning a separate plot to each prisoner — who's stopping you? What makes you think you need my approval on this? But the notion of building a separate cell on each plot, now that *does* sound rather strange — it's unreasonable. Go build one or two barracks. They can march to work each morning under guard. Less expensive. You'll get no additional financing for individual cells."

"But I'm not asking for any additional financing."

"What *are* you asking for, then?"

"I just need you to approve the overall plan for individual cells on each plot."

"And where's the money going to come from to build these units?"

"From sponsors' subsidies."

"You must have some pretty eccentric sponsors... Look, okay then, I don't have time to go into it. I'm going to write on your proposal: 'Review and complete' — but I'll ring them up myself and tell them they should review and complete it with due process — no delay. Is that it?"

"There's just one minor problem..."

"What problem?"

"I don't have any land I can use for a subsidiary farm."

"So, go see the governor. Ask him."

"I spoke with his deputy. They're considering, but that's all they're doing at the moment."

"Okay, I'll do what I can. I'll ring him up... That's it?"

"Yes, sir."

"So, you can proceed. All the best."



Nikolai Ivanovich's facility obtained the land — 200 hectares — by the autumn. The land was in an isolated area, far from the nearest population point. They managed to truck in the barbed wire and five-metre-tall posts required to construct the enclosure before the seasonal rains washed out the road. Nikolai Ivanovich realised that if the enclosure wasn't ready by the autumn, there was no way they could start cultivating the land on the plots the following spring. But how to get the posts into place, if even the back country road stopped two kilometres short of the allotted area? They wouldn't be able to get either the manpower or the equipment they needed for drilling the post-holes to the designated site.

When the prisoners learnt about the problem, they put forward a proposal to the warden: they would dig the post-holes by hand, and cross the two-kilometre stretch from the end of the road to the construction site on foot, under guard.

Every day, even under the cold autumn rain, a convoy of fifty prisoners marched out to the site, wearing homemade oilskins they had glued together from plastic sheeting. There had actually been even more volunteers, but because of a shortage of guards only fifty could be accommodated at a time. The future landholders gave their all to their work. By the first frost all the fence-posts had been set up and connected by barbed wire, and the watch-towers erected. Back at the cellblock they constructed a log cabin for the guard at the controlled-entry point and put it in place, too.

The order was also submitted that autumn for the construction of the huts — individual cells for the prisoners to live in, at a cost of 30,000 roubles each. But there was no money left to pay for these. The prisoners set about raising the money where they could. Some had savings stored up from before their incarceration, others were helped by relatives, but there

were a few who found it impossible to raise such a sum from any source.

They sent a memo to the warden letting him know of their willingness to live in tents. But this was against regulations, and they were turned down.

One hundred and eighty huts were transported to the new security zone over the winter road and set up on the piles driven in the autumn. And early in the spring one hundred and eighty prisoners were installed in these primitive huts with bars on the windows.

One fine spring day the warden stood in one of the watch-towers and surveyed the extraordinary scene before him. On the two hundred hectares of barbed-wire enclosure a hundred and eighty plots had been delineated, divided from each other by stakes and brushwood, with the occasional border marked by a length of stretched wire.

Those are the wealthy ones, decided the warden. *Their relatives must have sent them money not just to build their cell, but for their border markings too.*

Lanes and foot-paths ran between the plots, with a common space for meetings at the centre. In some of the low-lying areas the snow hadn't completely melted. But on the little hills the first green blades of grass were already showing. On almost every plot the warden could make out the dark outlines of isolated human figures — figures which appeared faceless and identical in their warm prison jackets, cloth caps with ear-flaps, and rough, artificial-leather boots.

What could these isolated, faceless figures possibly create on this empty ground? Why weren't they staying in their cells? The warden peered through his field-glasses and focused in on one of them. It turned out to be Prisoner Khodakov, thrusting his spade into ground, which was still partly frozen as he dug another hole. Shifting his field-glasses around, Nikolai

Ivanovich counted nineteen holes already dug in the half-frozen ground around the perimeter of Khodakov's plot.

All over the zone, figures in dark jackets were doing exactly the same thing — digging holes around the perimeter of their plots.

"Why so many holes?" Nikolai Ivanovich wondered aloud.

"They're for the saplings and bushes which will grow into a green hedge surrounding each plot," the guard explained.

"I see. Couldn't they wait a week or two until the ground is thawed and the digging will be easier?"

"I told them as much, but they don't want to wait. They're afraid they won't get it all in on time. Each one has four hundred metres of hedge to plant — that's no light undertaking. And once the ground thaws out, they'll have to start work on their vegetable beds."

The warden spent quite a while longer observing the zeal and dexterity each of his charges displayed as they worked, and he mused:

There must be some kind of cosmic link between the soul of a Man and the soul of the Earth. If that link is there, Man is in harmony with the planet. If it isn't, then there's no harmony. Corruption sets in, and crime goes up.

Of course, that book, Anastasia, must be quite exceptional. All the cons have read it, and something inexplicable has erupted in their hearts. It's happened with me too — I read it and now I've started looking at life differently. Of course this book is playing its part — prisoners all over the country are reading it. But the book's strength is really in how it brings out Man's relationship with the Earth. In other words, that relationship is primary, and one should never attempt to sever it. And all this talk about high morals and spirituality is nothing but idle chatter without this mysterious relationship which is not yet fully comprehended!



By autumn all the plots in the 'new zone', as the prisoners themselves called it, were framed by still only partly-grown saplings of apple trees, pear-trees, rowans, birches and all sorts of plantings, which with their leaves decked out in their multi-coloured autumnal hues, created a most pleasing picture to the eye. Approximately fifteen hundred to two thousand square metres of each hectare had been planted with forest saplings. Even by that very first autumn the view from the watch-towers over the two hundred hectares below gave a distinctly different and positive impression compared to the desert-like black earth that could be seen everywhere the preceding spring. It was abundantly clear that the whole enclosure was being transformed into an exceptional oasis of green.

All summer long the new zone provided the prison cafeteria with fresh greens, then cucumbers, tomatoes and beets.

In the fall each prisoner offered up — from the plot of land entrusted to him — five sacks of potatoes, along with several dozen jars of salted and canned cucumbers and tomatoes. The prison commissary was provided with a whole winter's supply of beets, carrots, horseradish and other vegetables.

An unusual scene took place in the autumn at the new zone's controlled-entry point. In contrast to all other prison facilities in the world, where foodstuffs and other treats would be passed to the prisoners from outside, in this new zone they were moving in the opposite direction.

The soldiers handed out jars of preserved vegetables to the prisoners' relatives. Many had come by car and left with a wealth of produce in their baggage compartments.

Prisoners who did not have any relatives living close by sold their part of the harvest, through the soldiers, to food wholesalers at a handsome profit.

Nobody came to see Prisoner Khodakov, however. He did not have any relatives. He had grown up in an orphanage, and asked to have his portion of the harvest sent to the nearest children's home.

Nikolai Ivanovich earned the administration's gratitude for a successful carrying out of their order. He was the only warden able to accept a new contingent of one hundred and eighty prisoners without a worsening of holding conditions for the remainder.

The past year had been the busiest one for Nikolai Ivanovich in all his twenty years of service. Apart from his usual duties, he was also responsible for 'prying' seeds or saplings for the new zone out of whatever source he could. But he felt a shiver of delight every time he saw the old prison *Zil'* pull up, loaded to the gills with young saplings.



⁷*Zil* (pron. ZEAL) — a standard lorry or truck produced by the major Russian (Soviet) automobile factory known as *Zavod imeni Likhacheva* (acronym: ZIL) in the city of Nizhny Novgorod on the Volga river, which has been operating under one name or another since 1916. From 1927 until his death in 1956, it was run by Ivan Alexeevich Likhachev, when it was renamed in his honour. The factory also produces passenger cars (marketed under the *Volga* brand) and luxury limousines (*Chaika*) which during the Soviet period were the motorcars of choice for higher-placed government officials.

Five more years went by. Then on one fine July day a helicopter appeared and began to circle over the new zone. Nikolai Ivanovich stood at the controlled-entry point and watched the helicopter fly over. He knew that on board were General Pososhkov and members of a committee despatched by the Ministry of Justice. Perhaps someone had sent in a complaint about the warden, or it might have been simply rumours, but in any case word had spread about a 'peculiar' prisoner-holding régime.

After the helicopter landed, the committee members, all highly-placed officials, stepped out onto the open space in front of the entry point. But Nikolai Ivanovich kept standing and thinking only about the zone's security perimeter:

Yes, it is clear that I shall be charged with a violation of regulations here. Why did I ever give permission for these climbing perennials to be planted around the security perimeter? They've already climbed up three metres, the full height of the barbed wire and formed a hedge, so that the wire can't even be seen behind all the different flowers.

The barbed wire, you see, they didn't find aesthetically pleasing. They even put in climbing plants and flowers around the watch-towers, which have wound their way right up to the guards' lookout. Now the whole thing doesn't even look like a security zone any more, more like some sort of a Paradise oasis amidst fields overgrown with tall grasses.

"Here, if you please, is the first violation, already quite evident," said the general representing the Ministry. "What kind of security perimeter have you got here? Anyone who wants to, can climb over a barrier like that, all wound around with vines," the general went on, turning to Pososhkov, the administration chief. "Any soldier will tell you that. Am I right?" The Ministry representative addressed the lieutenant on duty at the entry point.

"Permission to answer, General, sir!" the duty officer responded, standing to attention at his post.

"Answer when you're asked a question! Is there any violation of regulations here?"

"Negative, sir, General, sir! In this instance you are simply looking at a tactical improvement of the security perimeter of the prisoner-holding zone."

"Wha... what's that?" one of the Ministry committee members was taken aback. "What kind of tactical improvement are you talking about? What kind of drivel is that?"

All the committee members stopped beside the lieutenant standing at attention.

Oh, that joker, mused Nikolai Ivanovich, feeling ultimately let down — that Lieutenant Prokhorov again with his endless jokes. If only he could control himself in front of the committee! Now for certain they'll never pardon this ridicule. And he just stands there at attention without so much as a blush.

The lieutenant began talking, spitting out his words:

"Permission to answer the question on improvement, sir!"

"Answer, if you can," ordered the general from the Ministry. "By 'tactical improvement', do you mean your flowers?"

"Exactly, sir. If any criminal tries to escape by climbing over the barbed wire intertwined with flowers, he won't get very far."

"Why is that?" asked the general in astonishment.

"In the process of climbing over the perimeter fence intertwined with fragrant flowers, his whole body will be infused with their scent, which means that even an inexperienced dog will be able to easily track him down and bring him back."

"So, he'll be infused!" The general broke into a loud guffaw and all the committee members joined in. "And the dog will follow the scent of the flowers! Pretty nifty, Lieutenant. Imaginative. And how many escapees have your dogs brought back that way?" asked the general through his laughter.

"Not a single one," replied the lieutenant, and continued in all seriousness: "Since the criminals realise the futility of

any attempt at climbing the fence, there hasn't been a single escape attempt in the past five years."

The committee members felt even more exhilarated by the lieutenant's serious look and his declaration.

"D'you mean to say that there has not been a single attempted escape from this security zone in the past five years?" the committee head asked the administration chief.

"That's right, not a single one," replied Pososhkov.

The committee members, clearly pleased by the lieutenant's sharp-witted responses, put the following question to him:

"Tell us, Lieutenant, if no criminals even attempt to escape from this security zone, then why the armed soldiers in the watch-towers?"

"To protect the zone from the outside world," replied the lieutenant.

"What does that mean — 'to protect from the outside world'? Does anyone try to break *in* to the zone?"

"Affirmative, sir!" the lieutenant responded. "Many of the prisoners' wives have declared their wish to live with their husbands in their cells. Some of them have requested permission to spend the summer in the cells along with their children. But our strict warden's strict enforcement of regulations won't permit any such lawlessness. So a few unconscientious wives took it upon themselves to try either getting through the hedge or tunnelling underneath. But all such brazen attempts have been thwarted by the zone's excellent security force."

Uncertain as to whether the lieutenant was joking or speaking seriously, the committee chair enquired of Nikolai Ivanovich:

"Have there really been instances like this?"

"Affirmative," replied Nikolai Ivanovich. "Two such attempts have been thwarted. I received ninety-six applications

from prisoners' wives wishing to spend the summer with their children on their husbands' plots. But apart from the conjugal meetings provided for in the regulations, nothing like this can be permitted."

"I wonder what it is that attracts them to the security zone, especially with the children?" mused the committee chair aloud, adding: "In any case, colleagues, let us go in and take a look for ourselves."

"Open the gates!" Nikolai Ivanovich ordered the lieutenant.

The wooden gates, decorated with traditional Russian carvings, quickly opened up, and the committee members entered the security zone. They had hardly gone a few paces when they all at once spontaneously stopped.

Seen through the helicopter's viewports, the zone had had the appearance of a beautiful green oasis. But here on the ground it was not only the delightful foot-paths of mowed grass, not only the multicoloured living fences around the perimeter, that struck the committee members. Accustomed to the odours of their offices and city streets, they were now gracefully enveloped by the delicate fragrances of summer plants and flowers. The silence was broken only by the singing of birds and the humming of insects — sounds which by no means irritated, but soothed people's ears.

"We should visit one of the plots," said the committee chair, for some reason in a hushed tone, as though afraid of disturbing the general atmosphere.

The prominent officials walked up the pathway of the first plot they came to, heading for the cell-hut. The little hut was actually surrounded by a metal cage, though this was scarcely visible unless one examined it at close range. From a distance it looked like a little green hillock. Wound around with various vines and surrounded by flower-beds, it blended in most harmoniously with the surrounding space.

At the entrance to the hut stood a man in a white T-shirt, his back to the approaching visitors. The prisoner was oiling a metal lock bolt, energetically trying to slide it back and forth. This was something of a challenge, and the prisoner was so absorbed in the task that it was a while before he became aware of his visitors.

"Hello, Kharlamych!"⁸ Nikolai Ivanovich greeted him. "Make our guests feel at home, introduce yourself."

Kharlamych quickly turned about. After momentarily losing his bearings upon seeing visitors, he quickly regained his composure and introduced himself:

"Prisoner Kharlamych, sentenced according to Article 102 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation to twelve years. Served six years in the cellblock, five years now in the new zone."

"And what have you been doing here with your door?" asked the committee chair.

"I've been oiling the exterior bolt, Chairman, sir! It's started sticking quite a bit, the metal they produce today's not very good quality, it rusts quickly."

The committee chair went over to the door leading into the cell, closed it and tried shoving the bolt into position. It didn't budge on the first attempt, but he finally got it to work. Then he turned, and, with a meaningful glance to the administration chief Pososhkov, declared:

"So, you claim you're following all the regulations for prisoner-holding to the letter. Does that mean that after completion of their workday they're all locked up in their cells?"

⁸*Kharlamych* (pron. *har-LA-mitch*) — a patronymic derived from the prisoner's father's name *Kharlam*. The use of the patronymic alone here indicates the highly informal relationship that has developed between the warden and his charges.

The administration chief was silent. Everyone realised that the metal bolt had rusted and was hard to budge for the simple reason that it had not been used for a long time.

Prisoner Kharlamych realised that he had let his superiors down. And thoughts began running through his head:

I should have fixed this damn bolt a long time ago. How can I explain to these people that this lock is completely unnecessary? Nobody here would even think of leaving the zone, of running away from his land. To what purpose? Where would they go?

As for Kharlamych, here was his native space, here was his Motherland. It was here that he was greeted every morning by the singing of the birds and the waving of the branches of trees he himself had planted. He had even been raising a little goat, which he had named Nikita, along with a dozen laying hens, and had a couple of beehives. Others had their own homesteads, setting them up just a little differently, but for each one it was his own homestead, on his own piece of land. And here he had gone and let down his warden with this damn bolt!

Kharlamych was really upset. He began talking quickly and excitedly.

"I'm the world's worst son-of-a-bitch when it comes to this bolt, Chairman, sir! And I have no excuse if it should reflect badly on my buddies. Only I want you understand — let me have one last word here. Let me... Let me tell you: my whole life has changed. Not even 'changed' — in fact, my life has just begun in this place. I'm free here. Out there, outside the gates — there's no freedom there — indeed, that's where all hell breaks loose. The soldiers up there in the watch-towers — they're like angels to us. We pray that they don't let any scum in here..."

The prisoner's voice with its heart-wrenching emotion and the content of what he had to say worked its own unique effect on the people standing by. All at once one of the committee

members, a woman deputy from the State Duma, suddenly burst out:

"What's all the fuss over this measly bolt? Don't you see it rained last night? The bolt's started shrivelling."

The committee chair glanced at the metal bolt, then at the woman, and burst out laughing.

"Shrivelling, you say? Why didn't I think of that before? It did rain, after all, and the bolt began to shrivel, and it rusted... And up in the towers — those are angels, you say?"

"Angels," Kharlamych echoed.

"Tell me, when is your time up?"

"In eleven months and seven days."

"How do you propose to live after that?"

"I've applied to have my sentence extended..."

"What? How could it be extended? Why?"

"Cause out there there's no freedom. There's no order in that kind of freedom. There's no freedom without land."

"And who's stopping you from going free, getting a piece of land and creating the same kind of homestead that you have here, only as a free man? You could get yourself a family!"

"You know, Chairman, sir, that's something I'll never understand. Who's stopping us here in Russia from giving each Russian a hectare of land? I'll never understand. Does Russian land belong to Russians or not?"

"Right now, according to the law adopted by the State Duma, everyone has the right to buy land," observed the woman deputy.

"And what if I don't have the money even to buy a single hectare of land? Does that mean I have no Motherland? That's the way it looks — I don't have it and never will have. But if Russia is my Motherland, just who am I supposed to buy it from? It turns out somebody's seized my Motherland for themselves — the whole country, down to a single hectare — and is now demanding a ransom from every last Russian!

There's some monkey business going on here. Beyond the law and beyond our understanding.

"You, Chairman, sir," Kharlamych addressed the committee chair, "I see by your stripes that you're a general. So, liberate our Motherland from whoever seized it and is demanding a ransom. Or are you too going to be paying a ransom for your own little piece of the Motherland?"

"Prisoner Kharlamych, cease and desist!" Nikolai Ivanovich intervened. He could see the scar on the war-wounded general's cheek turning purple, and his fists clenching. The general stepped up to the prisoner. They stood staring each other in the eye, without a word between them. Then the general quietly said:

"Show me around your homestead, Russian citizen," and added even more quietly, almost to himself: "your piece of the Motherland behind barbed wire."

Kharlamych showed the committee members around his young garden, with its budding fruit on the branches. He treated them to currants and raspberries. He showed them the tomato beds, along with the more than 200 square metres he had planted with cucumbers. He showed them the pond he had dug himself with a spade. Standing beside the pond was a neatly arranged row of barrels.

"Kharlamych has a particular know-how here," Nikolai Ivanovich explained to the committee members, pointing to the barrels. "He salts away a hundred fifty-litre barrels of cucumbers every year. He's developed a superior, first-rate pickling method. And he's invented an original preservation system. First he fills each barrel with cucumbers and brine, then he caulks them and stores them in the pond, underwater. They'll keep that way until the spring. As soon as the restaurant wholesalers arrive from Moscow, Kharlamych chops a hole in the ice and drags a barrel over to the entry point. We sell them at five hundred roubles a barrel. Kharlamych gets 250, and the rest goes to the prison coffers."

"And how much does each enterprise make annually for your facility?" enquired one of the committee members.

"On average, around a hundred thousand roubles a year," responded Nikolai Ivanovich. "Though, according to contract, half of it goes to the workers on the plots."

"A hundred thousand?" the committee member was astonished. "And you've got here a hundred and eighty hectares all told. That means you have a net profit of ninety million a year from them?"

"Yes, that's right."

"And the prisoners each make fifty thousand a year?"

"Yes, that's how it works out."

"In the whole country we've got over a million citizens being held in incarceration. What if we switched them all over to such a system? What a tremendous source of income for the country! Plus the number of criminals, judging from what we can see, would significantly decrease."

"Switch over... all of them?" another committee member broke into the conversation. "But we're facing quite a different question here: this zone may even be closed down. Why were we brought here anyway? To find out what's really happening. There's something funny going on here — prisoners living in better conditions than people at liberty. And these prisoners, no matter how you put it, are criminals. Anyway, what are you going to do, Nikolai Ivanovich, when these people's terms are up?"

The warden answered without hesitation:

"If I had my way, I would let every last one of them look after their own plot. I'd take down the barbed wire and move it somewhere else — start setting up a new zone."

In their report to the Ministry of Justice the committee members reported that they found no violations of regulations on prisoner-holding.

“What about these rumours that the prisoners are living in better conditions than many free citizens?” asked the Minister.

“Then it is the lives of our free citizens that have to be improved,” the committee chair observed. “We need to give people land. Not lip-service, but in actual fact.”

“But that’s not within our jurisdiction,” said the Minister, dismissing the proposal. “Let’s get right to the essentials.”

“In terms of essentials, it comes down to this: we need to replicate this experience in all the facilities under our jurisdiction,” the committee chair stated firmly.

“I second that,” affirmed the woman deputy, adding: “and I fully intend to introduce a bill in the Duma to grant every Russian family a hectare of land for lifetime use, whereon to establish their own kin’s domain.”



The Duma passed the law. At one swoop millions of Russian families began planting gardens and little forests on their own family lands. And Russia flourished...

In what year did this happen?... What — it hasn’t happened yet? Why not? Who’s stopping us? Who is preventing Russia from flourishing?

CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN



A law for deputies elected by the people

I realised that Anastasia's grandfather possessed not only extraordinary psychoanalytic abilities but also information about the societal structure of various nations. But I wondered how specific his knowledge was about state institutions. After all, here he was living out in the taiga, without access to radio, telephone or television. So how would he get information, let's say, about our national government agencies? There was no way. Which meant he did not have any specific information. Still, I decided to ask him:

"You know that in our Russian state there is a body known as the State Duma?"

"I know," came the reply.

"And d'you know who works there, and how it functions?"

"I know that too."

"And do you have information on each deputy?"

"Yes, on every single one."

"And the laws they pass — is that something you know about too?"

"Not only about the laws they pass, but about the laws they *will* pass in the future. I know about them in advance. But, again, why are you so surprised, Vladimir? For a priest that is the simplest of tasks — it's not all that interesting."

"Yes, I *am* surprised, because I don't understand how you can possibly know about every single deputy, let alone what laws the Duma is going to pass in the near future. It's some sort of inexplicable mysticism."

"There's no mysticism here, only the most primitive of tasks."

"Well, could you explain this phenomenon to me? The depth of information you have, I mean."

"I can, of course. It's really all very simple. You see, back five thousand years ago the pharaohs had their Council. In the Roman Empire there was the Senate. The tsars had their Boyars' Duma.¹ Now what can I say more? The names may be different, but the essence is always the same. After all, the law doesn't depend on how a legislative body is named, but on what influences parliamentary delegates are subjected to — on the living conditions surrounding them and the perspectives for the future to which they are bound. But all the conditions were pre-programmed for them a long time ago. If one knows the programme, one knows what's ahead as well — including what decisions the legislators are capable of reaching."

"What do the law and the deputies' living conditions have to do with it? How are they connected with a broader programme? Anyway, what can you yourself possibly know about how a modern Duma deputy lives?"

"It's very simple. Of course, I'm not talking about how any particular deputy sleeps, what they eat or how they dress. That's not something I care to know, nor do I find it of interest. I'm talking about what's significant."

"I'm sure it's the same now as in earlier times: people are elected as deputies only after going through a whole lot of wheeling and dealing. That's fact number one. In their

¹*Boyars' Duma* — an advisory council comprised of the *boyars* (in Russian, stress on second syllable), a hereditary caste of nobility which prevailed in Russia from the ninth to the seventeenth centuries. The Boyars' Duma, instituted in the 15th century, was involved in various aspects of affairs of state, including legislation, financing and military support.

striving for power, many of them fall into the hands of those who are in control of the material world. But after going through all their trials and tribulations, they find themselves in a tight spot. The programme is always attempting to cut them off from significant information, and generally succeeds in doing this.

"What perks does the deputy receive? I think — I'm sure — that today, just as before, he gets an individual office, a new place to live, along with (nowadays, at least) a car. Not to mention two or three assistants, some get more than that."

"Yes, that's more or less it," I confirmed. "Are you trying to say that all this fits in with a programme worked out millennia ago?"

"Of course it does. But wait, let me finish. Tell me if I'm mistaken about what happens today. Apart from that, I believe that just like a whole lot of people, deputies have to go to work each day. They have to be present at Duma sittings, and make laws."

"Yes, you're right."

"And each one serves for a set term — four or five years..."

"It's four at the moment."

"Okay, four. When their term is up, they have to be re-elected. But even before the next election they're all thinking about it."

"Quite right."

"Hold on, there — how do you know that? Think how surprised you were when I told you I know what laws are going to be passed. And now you claim you know how deputies think about their future. What, have you suddenly become a clairvoyant? Or a celebrated prophet?"

"Nothing of the sort. Any fool would know this. If election time is coming up, than anyone wanting to be re-elected will be thinking about it and taking appropriate action."

“Slow down, there. Note what you just said: ‘thinking about re-election’.”

“Yes, that’s what I said.”

“But surely deputies should be thinking about new laws.”

“Of course. They’re thinking about them at the same time.”

“When? At what time of the day? In short, believe me, the programme doesn’t leave them any time for thinking. For ages now, as you too well know, the people have been choosing parliamentary delegates on the expectation that they will then pass wise laws. What the people don’t understand is that their basic programme does not allow them to think.

“Think about this yourself some time.”



I did subsequently think about this situation — over and over again, in fact. And truly, our traditional laws on the election and duties of Duma deputies began to seem more and more absurd.

Let’s take a more detailed look at the practice as it has evolved up until now. Let’s say a relatively smart fellow — above-average, that is — has decided to stand for office. He wants to participate in passing wise legislation that will help people lead a good life.

In running the gauntlet of an election campaign, he is very likely to find himself dependent on funding (some become more dependent than others). This in no way means that someone from the world of the wealthy offers financial assistance to every single candidate in return for future considerations.

It is enough to point out the various levers that can be moved with the help of money. We are shown this in the press and on TV through stories about so-called 'dirty technology'. But we watch it all through the eyes of an outside observer.

On the other hand, the actual participants in election campaigns are far from being outside observers. They know what it's like to be the target of smear tactics. Even if you haven't experienced it yourself, you can, of course, well imagine what kind of weapons can be used against you when big money's involved. A defensive reaction is only natural — you have to cover your behind at all costs. And *behind* you, in this case, is some pretty big money. So you have to tie yourself, for safety's sake, to some kind of solid financial shore. Or, as people say today, to the oligarchs.

An alternative is to throw your fortunes in with some political party. It doesn't really matter which one — you're still going to have to pay off your debt to them later.

And what about wise laws? Ah, yes. It is simply a question of no appropriate conditions having ever been created to facilitate them.

Of course, deputies do enjoy a host of perks — including parliamentary immunity with law-enforcement agencies. But the question still remains: if you put the deputies' perks on one side of the scale and the intensity, scheming and stress associated with their work on the other, it's anybody's guess as to which will win out.

There is another paradoxical circumstance. The history of mankind has never known a single individual, a single super-wiseman, capable of making only and exclusively wise decisions hour after hour, day in and day out. It is no secret that even prominent rulers and regimental commanders occasionally make mistakes.

The deputies' work schedules are arranged in such a way that they have sittings every single day. Not only that, but

daily sittings for several hours a day. At each sitting they are supposed to pass a number of legislative bills relating to different spheres of human life.

History has shown that the adoption of wise legislation is impossible under such an overloaded work schedule — on either a theoretical or a practical plane. It is impossible because of the lack of time for contemplation. Nevertheless, this absurd order of things is what prevails in most countries on the various continents of the globe.

Who instituted it? Well, it must have instituted itself, many might think. But there's no way that could have happened. It's too carefully thought through and goal-specific. Besides, for some reason, it is not being discussed in any meaningful way.

You can argue as cogently as you like for its destructive nature. You can prove its destructive nature scientifically, with the help of psychoanalysts. That, of course, is important, but it's not the main thing. The main thing is: what's the alternative? But there is nothing in the way of an alternative on the horizon. Indeed, who would even have one come to mind when such a phenomenon has practically become the norm in almost all countries?

But since Anastasia's grandfather was the first to raise this question, and since he was familiar with the work of bodies similar to our current legislative assembly over the course of thousands of years, it was possible he might be able to suggest an alternative. And so I enquired:

"Well, could you suggest your own ideal version of how elections should be run and how legislators should subsequently proceed in organising their work?"

And this is what I heard in reply:

"There's no point in talking about the elections themselves until the deputies' working and living conditions are changed."

“And what kind of working and living conditions, in your opinion, should there be?”

“First of all, the deputies need to be taken away, at least for part of the time, from their artificial information field.² They need to be supplied with nourishment capable of sustaining the complete functioning of the brain. An image needs to be created which attracts the respect of society and which any deputy cannot fail to follow.”

“What does it mean to ‘create an image’?”

“Judging by what you told me about today’s deputies, their outward trappings suggest that the public has formed a negative image of government officials in general and elected deputies in particular.”

“Yes, generally speaking, the public does have a pretty negative image of them.”

“That’s very bad. People build up negative thought-forms regarding their deputies, and so what happens is that they themselves make them negative. An image is the most powerful, concentrated energy of a large number of people.”³

“And how are people to think of them positively if their own life doesn’t improve?”

“You see, we’ve got what amounts to a closed circle here. Each time, you elect those who seem to be the best people for the job, but then, no sooner are they elected than you start calling them the worst people.”

“But just how do we get out of this vicious circle?”

“For the past five thousand years there has been no better way than the one proposed by Anastasia, and there won’t be in the foreseeable future.”

“What d’you have in mind here?”

²*artificial information field* — see Book 6, Chapter 9: “A need to think”.

³On the science of ‘imagery’, see Book 4, Chapter 19: “A secret science”.

“Land.”

“She said we need to give each willing family at least a hectare of land — for lifetime use, whereon to establish one’s own kin’s domain. But she didn’t say anything about parliamentary deputies.”

“In actual fact, she specified ‘every willing family’. Don’t deputies have families?”

“Indeed they do.”

“So, why not start with them?”

“The public would say that’s going too far — they’ve got enough perks as it is.”

“You need to explain to the public on whose behalf this step is being taken. They need to know what the most favourable conditions are for passing the legislation the public expects.”

“But on what basis should the deputies be granted land — on special terms or the same as for everyone else?”

“The same as for everyone else, though not exactly. Every deputy should be allotted at least a hundred and fifty hectares of land on which a new type of community will be established, according to the principles Anastasia talks about. Of the hundred and fifty hectares granted for lifetime use, the deputy may keep one for himself, as long as his family is small and no additions are in the offing. In cases where the deputy has children who are already forming their own families and they want to set up domains of their own, a hectare should be set aside for each of his children’s families. Thus the deputy himself will end up with one, or three, or five hectares of land, depending on the size of his family.”

“And what about the remaining hectares? You mentioned a hundred and fifty, all told.”

“Thirty percent of the remainder he can give away to whomever he likes. But after that the plots should be offered to people from different social strata — soldiers, academics, artists, entrepreneurs and so forth. In each community one

or two hectares should be definitely set aside for refugees and children from orphanages. But two deputies should not be given land in the same community."

"So, what then? If each deputy has his own family domain, does that mean that the laws will get better right away?"

"Of course they will. Our country will have the wisest laws in the world!"

"How so?"

"At the moment, deputies spend long periods of time in their offices and at parliamentary meetings, cut off from the public. At the moment, they do not receive any gratitude for good laws or censure for bad ones. At the moment, following their natural inclinations, they try to provide for the material well-being of their families. After their term of office is up, they may change their place of residence and even move to another city or another country, where nobody will reproach them or hound them for any violation of expected norms. A change of residence or country will not affect their financial status. As long as they have money, they can go wherever they like and find shelter, food and clothing. But money won't be able to buy them a kin's domain of their own, a piece of their Motherland.

"Today the concept of *Motherland* is terribly distorted. 'Motherland' is nothing but a territory someone has defined by borders. But, when you stop to think of it, one's Motherland always begins with one's family land and extends to encompass all the people who are of a kindred spirit to you. Those who begin to establish their own domains will obtain their Motherland in perpetuity. The loss of one's family domain is the loss of one's Motherland in perpetuity. This is the greatest tragedy for one's family.

"It is not their laws or their morality that will prevent deputies from making wrong decisions, but their kin's domains. And for people who have their Motherland, money will lose

its primary importance. Only in his kin's domain can Man obtain the complete range of nutrition he needs, including nourishment for the proper functioning of the brain. But this is extremely important for people who have a lot of thinking to do.

"The sittings of the State Duma should run no more than three days a week. The rest of the time the deputies should spend in their kin's domains — a place they can really think things through, and lay the real groundwork for the making of laws.

"The deputies' wives should not be employed in any position that is not connected with their husband's work. The family domains will shield deputies, at least for a time, from the influence of artificial information coming from the artificial world. It will facilitate the thinking process. In the case of the great philosophers, great thoughts were always born in conditions of solitude, and not during public speeches."

"And what if some of the deputies are unwilling to accept land and refuse to set up their own family domains?"

"This is where we come to the election of public representatives. If any deputy refuses to set up a family domain, the public should not re-elect him for a subsequent term. Even though he holds citizenship in the country where he was elected, in reality he is a foreigner. He doesn't need this Motherland. And no matter what good things are said about him, his actions, in fact, will bring no good to the people."

"But once they know that voters will give preference to candidates who have a family domain, some deputies may just take the land and erect their own palace-like mansions on it, along with tennis courts and brick walls, and won't plant any trees or garden or living fence as Anastasia recommended. What then?"

"Then they'll show what they're really made of. But here too people will be able to make the right choice. Why do you

think every Man in Rus' was endowed with a patronymic?⁴ Back in the early days of Rus' a Man would introduce himself by saying: *I am Ivan from Nikita's domain*, citing the name of his father or grandfather who had established his kin's domain. In other words, the domain was something to be proud of. In referring to it, a Man would describe himself, as well as his character and abilities, in the fullest possible manner. Anyone who could not point with pride to his domain was considered an outcast."

The more Anastasia's grandfather went on about the kin's domains, the more distinctly the joyful picture of our country's future became etched in my consciousness. Can you just imagine?! Imagine! Three hundred and sixty deputies of our State Duma each taking a hundred and fifty hectares of land and organising three hundred and sixty marvellous new-style communities! Each deputy will then be showing not just in his words, but in his actions, what he is capable of achieving.

And Russia will bear witness to the first three hundred and sixty oases in which Russian Federation citizens will begin to live in actual human conditions. Then these deputies will pass legislation. And, naturally, there will be not a single law harmful to the environment.

They will pass laws guaranteeing the right of each citizen to obtain his own small piece of the Motherland. They will stand up for this right, because each of them will have their Motherland.

⁴*patronymic* (Russian: *otchestvo*, derived from the Russian word for 'father' — *otets* — and related to the word for 'Fatherland' — *otechestvo*) — the middle name of every Russian citizen, derived from one's father's first name. Cf. footnote 9 in Book 1, Chapter 1: "The ringing cedar".

CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHT



To the readers of the Ringing Cedars Series

My dear readers!

I thank you heartily for your understanding and moral support. I thank all who have openly expressed their thoughts in Internet communications and the *almanac*,¹ who have tried to organise discussions of the ideas outlined in the Ringing Cedars Series through letters to the press.

My thanks to you, scholars of Russia — first and foremost, to Boris Minin,² who openly appeared on the stage of the Podmoskov'e Concert Hall with his evaluation of Anastasia's ideas.

A special note of gratitude is due the fine actor, Distinguished Artist of Russia Alexander Mikhailov,³ who took part in the conference.

¹*the almanac* — a quarterly periodical that was published by Anastasia Foundation (in conjunction with the Russian publisher of the Series) between 2001 and 2004. The *almanac* contained readers' art-work, poetry and letters, articles on ecological building-design, permaculture and other topics relevant to the creation of kin's domains, as well as news on the newly formed eco-villages, readers' clubs and forthcoming events. The functions of the *almanac* are now largely fulfilled by a range of on-line resources and periodicals.

²*Boris Alexeevich Minin* (1936–) — professor of economics; president of the International Academy of Social Development; director of Russia's Federal Certification Centre for eco-friendly products; member of Russia's parliamentary committee on questions of social tolerance.

³*Alexander Yakovlevich Mikhailov* (1944–) — a popular Russian film and theatre actor, who has appeared in several dozen films and received a number of awards, including Actor of the Year (1982 and 1985), as well as the title of Distinguished Actor of Russia (1992).

My thanks also to the economist Dr Viktor Medikov,⁴ who has written a number of papers on his research of the ideas expressed in the books.

And to Anatoly Eriomenko, Active Member of the Academy of Pedagogical Sciences, for his marvellous poetry:

TO A DEITY

Age and health and sloth all notwithstanding,
Here I am before you on knee bending,
Simply 'cause I've seen in you from far
Life's renown. A Deity you are.

Instantly you scattered all illusions
Rising from dark forces' sly intrusions.
Your depiction of a future bright
Helped me banish sorrow's fearsome night.

In you I see Man's true being ascending,
Possibly, another age's ending,
Where my granddaughters, just like a Muse
Will embody you and your bright views.

Though at heart I quietly resist
Every time you need say "I exist!",
'Tis no sin to talk of your appearing
In a place where others might be hearing.

⁴*Viktor Yakovlevich Medikov* (1950–) — professor of economics; member of the Russian State Duma (Parliament) for two consecutive terms (1993–1999). Author of several books on Russia's new national idea of kin's domains, he has founded a Kin's Domain Academy to collect and disseminate information on the establishment of family domains. He was one of the first political figures in Russia to lead by example and set up his own kin's domain in an eco-settlement some 240 km (150 miles) east of Moscow.

Therefore send I from my heart a gleam
Rays of warmth to you, my living dream.
And, in night-time vision or tomorrow,
In the taiga I shall see your shadow.

TO THE ELDERS OF RUSSIA

Oh, you wise-hearted elders of Russia,
Have you nothing to lone hearts to say?
For the blue eyes that grow ever lusher
Will still shine o'er the world with their ray.

They will waken dull tribes and refresh them
With humanity's flourishing wave.
If there's no other means of expression,
A tall cedar to chips she will shave.

And in secret will give them like manna
To all people eternity-bound,
And will call us with this unknown manna
To the place where our future is found.

With our knees now already unbended,
And our backs straightened tall and so proud,
All our worries and idle contentment
We forsake not tomorrow, but *now*.

Let us still hear the voice of the ages,
That has whispered to us as a friend:
"You are singular children of Nature,
Death and treason do not spell your end.

“Nor do mud-slingsings, fury unleashing,
Nor do stone walls or home-destroying hail,
But for those who accept the true Teaching
Their connection with Nature won’t fail.

“We are given a power immortal
From the Earth-gods and God high above,
By a heavenly hand incorporeal,
That our hearts may awaken to love.

“Let us all, then, as singular brothers,
With our heart-strings stretched taut in a bow,
Now extend our embrace to all others,
Send our ray out wherever we go.

“Then in spring over all the Earth’s nations
All the cherry-tree gardens will bloom.
For humanity’s new generations
There will be no more danger or doom.”

Oh, you wise elders, sons of *Rossiya*,
Do not slacken, but say the word true.
May the joy of dear Anastasia⁵
Now shine forth in its heavenly blue.

I thank Viktor Pavlovich Garkavets, the Superintendent of Education for the City of Kharkov, as well as the instructors, workers and administration of the tractor factory in this Ukrainian city, for organising a fantastic meeting with my readers.

⁵*Rossiya, Anastasia* — a reminder: both these words rhyme with *Maria* (pron. *ras-SEE-ya, a-na-sta-SEE-ya*). The phrase *On a star see ya* (= *See ya on a star*) might be a helpful hint in remembering the pronunciation of Anastasia’s name.

My thanks, too, to all the organisers of readers' conferences in other cities.

Thank you, Russian emigrants in Germany and Canada.

Thanks to the bards who have written more than five hundred songs now, and the artists who sent in their pictures. They are already posted on the site www.Anastasia.ru, and the best of them have been published in the almanac *Zveniasbchie kedry Rossii* (Ringing Cedars of Russia). One of their works may be seen on the cover of [the Russian original of] the present volume.

My thanks go out to the tens of thousands of people who have expressed their appreciation for my books in their sincere and inspired letters.

I thank you all for your open support. Without it, it would be a lot harder for me to write!

However, I would like to share with you — especially with those public figures who are only just contemplating coming out with their support of Anastasia's ideas — the following points.

You should understand that there is considerable opposition to these ideas — a planned and organised opposition. It is still not completely clear specifically who is spreading the false rumours and what levers of power they are using.

You should be aware of this so that you can determine for yourself whether it is worth it to you to openly support the ideas outlined in these books.

I know first-hand how unpleasant all the slander and provocations have been, but it is many times harder for me when they are directed against you, my readers. All the more so when they are personalised and intensive — as, for example, the attacks against the children and teachers of Academician Shchetinin's school.⁶

I wouldn't want any others to be subjected to similar attacks.

I am not merely convinced — I now know for absolute certain that the ideas outlined by Anastasia are irreproachable. Their materialisation can, of course, be temporarily held back, but they will still be revived in human beings with ever-increasing force.

From where I stand, the most vital and important steps required today are the following:

First. Organisation of schools, courses and seminars at the local level. It is vital to adapt general designs of family domains and communities to specific locales.

You need to study the healing properties of herbs and plants growing in your area in particular. You need to know exactly which vegetables and fruits will grow under natural conditions in your climate.

You need to prepare working designs — specified down to the minutest detail — for your family domains and communities.

Second. You need to bring in specialists who have a good understanding of what is happening and plug them in to work on creating a programme of development for the Russian Federation. This should be a universal programme, capable of solving all the problems of orphans, refugees and low-income families through the idea of establishing kin's domains. The security and well-being of each family will ensure the security and well-being of the nation as a whole.

It is vital to flesh out the details of your dream, then it will most certainly come true.

Let every person do as much as they can along this line, starting from their own resources.

⁶*Academician Shchetinin's school* — See description in Book 3, Chapter 17: "Put your vision of happiness into practice" and Chapter 18: "Academician Shchetinin".

We should see the birth of dozens, hundreds of designs for kin's domains and communities — designs for the economic, ecological and spiritual development of individual regions and the whole nation.

You know, when I first saw Anastasia, she was standing on the shore of the Siberian River Ob.⁷ She was wearing an old long skirt and a quilted jacket, with a kerchief on her head and rubber galoshes over her bare feet. This taiga recluse looked like an unassuming and lonely woman.

But today I have the impression that it was our *Rossiya* that was standing there in the Siberian wilds with rubber galoshes over her bare feet. It was our dream of the future that was standing there so lonely on the deserted Siberian riverbank. But now, *it is within us!*

And the time will most certainly come when our dream will stride openly and free in a beautiful ball-gown across all of Russia — and not just across Russia.

The greatest energy in this dream is *the energy of life!*

To be continued...

⁷See Book 1, Chapter 2: "Encounter".

FOR NOTES & POETRY

THE RINGING CEDARS SERIES AT A GLANCE

Anastasia, the first book of the Ringing Cedars Series, tells the story of entrepreneur Vladimir Megré's trade trip to the Siberian taiga in 1995, where he witnessed incredible spiritual phenomena connected with sacred 'ringing cedar' trees. He spent three days with a woman named Anastasia who shared with him her unique outlook on subjects as diverse as gardening, child-rearing, healing, Nature, sexuality, religion and more. This wilderness experience transformed Vladimir so deeply that he abandoned his commercial plans and, penniless, went to Moscow to fulfil Anastasia's request and write a book about the spiritual insights she so generously shared with him. True to her promise this life-changing book, once written, has become an international bestseller and has touched hearts of millions of people world-wide.

The Ringing Cedars of Russia, the second book of the Series, in addition to providing a fascinating behind-the-scenes look at the story of how *Anastasia* came to be published, offers a deeper exploration of the universal concepts so dramatically revealed in Book 1. It takes the reader on an adventure through the vast expanses of space, time and spirit — from the Paradise-like glade in the Siberian taiga to the rough urban depths of Russia's capital city, from the ancient mysteries of our forebears to a vision of humanity's radiant future.

The Space of Love, the third book of the Series, describes author's second visit to Anastasia. Rich with new revelations on natural child-rearing and alternative education, on the spiritual significance of breast-feeding and the meaning of ancient megaliths, it shows how each person's thoughts can influence the destiny of the entire Earth and describes practical ways of putting Anastasia's vision of happiness into practice. Megré shares his new outlook on education and children's real creative potential after a visit to a school where pupils build their own campus and cover the ten-year Russian school programme in just two years. Complete with an account of an armed intrusion into Anastasia's habitat, the book highlights the limitless power of Love and non-violence.

Co-creation, the fourth book and centrepiece of the Series, paints a dramatic living image of the creation of the Universe and humanity's place in this creation, making this primordial mystery relevant to our everyday living today. Deeply metaphysical yet at the same time down-to-Earth practical, this poetic heart-felt volume helps us uncover answers to the most significant questions about the essence and meaning of the Universe and the nature and purpose of our existence. It also shows how and why the knowledge of these answers, innate in every human being, has become obscured and forgotten, and points the way toward reclaiming this wisdom and — in partnership with Nature — manifesting the energy of Love through our lives.

Who are we? — Book Five of the Series — describes the author's search for real-life 'proofs' of Anastasia's vision presented in the previous volumes. Finding these proofs and taking stock of ongoing global environmental destruction, Vladimir Megré describes further practical steps for putting Anastasia's vision into practice. Full of beautiful realistic images of a new way of living in co-operation with the Earth and each other, this book also highlights the role of children in making us aware of the precariousness of the present situation and in leading the global transition toward a happy, violence-free society.

The book of kin, the sixth book of the Series, describes another visit by the author to Anastasia's glade in the Siberian taiga and his conversations with his growing son, which cause him to take a new look at education, science, history, family and Nature. Through parables and revelatory dialogues and stories Anastasia then leads Vladimir Megré and the reader on a shocking re-discovery of the pages of humanity's history that have been distorted or kept secret for thousands of years. This knowledge sheds light on the causes of war, oppression and violence in the modern world and guides us in preserving the wisdom of our ancestors and passing it over to future generations.

The energy of life, Book Seven of the Series, re-asserts the power of human thought and the influence of our thinking on our lives

and the destiny of the entire planet and the Universe. It also brings forth a practical understanding of ways to consciously control and build up the power of our creative thought. The book sheds still further light on the forgotten pages of humanity's history, on religion, on the roots of inter-racial and inter-religious conflict, on ideal nutrition, and shows how a new way of thinking and a lifestyle in true harmony with Nature can lead to happiness and solve the personal and societal problems of crime, corruption, misery, conflict, war and violence.

The new civilisation, the eighth book of the Series, is not yet complete. The first part of the book, already published as a separate volume, describes yet another visit by Vladimir Megré to Anastasia and their son, and offers new insights into practical co-operation with Nature, showing in ever greater detail how Anastasia's lifestyle applies to our lives. Describing how the visions presented in previous volumes have already taken beautiful form in real life and produced massive changes in Russia and beyond, the author discerns the birth of a new civilisation. The book also paints a vivid image of America's radiant future, in which the conflict between the powerful and the helpless, the rich and the poor, the city and the country, can be transcended and thereby lead to transformations in both the individual and society.

Rites of Love — Book 8, Part 2 (published as a separate volume) — contrasts today's mainstream attitudes to sex, family, childbirth and education with our forebears' lifestyle, which reflected their deep spiritual understanding of the significance of conception, pregnancy, homebirth and upbringing of the young in an atmosphere of love. In powerful poetic prose Megré describes their ancient way of life, grounded in love and non-violence, and shows the practicability of this same approach today. Through the life-story of one family, he portrays the radiant world of the ancient Russian Vedic civilisation, the drama of its destruction and its re-birth millennia later — in our present time.

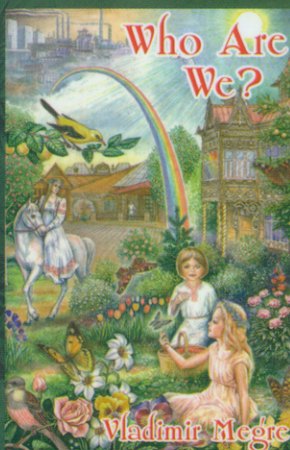
To be continued...

The Energy of Life by V. Megre

Book 7 of The Ringing Cedars Series

Spirituality /
Nature

Re-asserting the power of human thought and its influence on our lives and the destiny of the entire planet, this book brings forth a practical understanding of ways to consciously control and build up the power of our creative thought. It sheds further light on the forgotten pages of humanity's history, on religion, on the roots of inter-racial and inter-religious conflict, on ideal nutrition, and shows how a new way of thinking and a lifestyle in true harmony with Nature can lead to happiness and resolve personal and societal problems.



RINGING CEDARS PRESS

www.RingingCedars.com

1-888-DOLMENS

US\$14.95 CAN\$19.95 AU\$24.95

ISBN 978-0-9763333-7-1

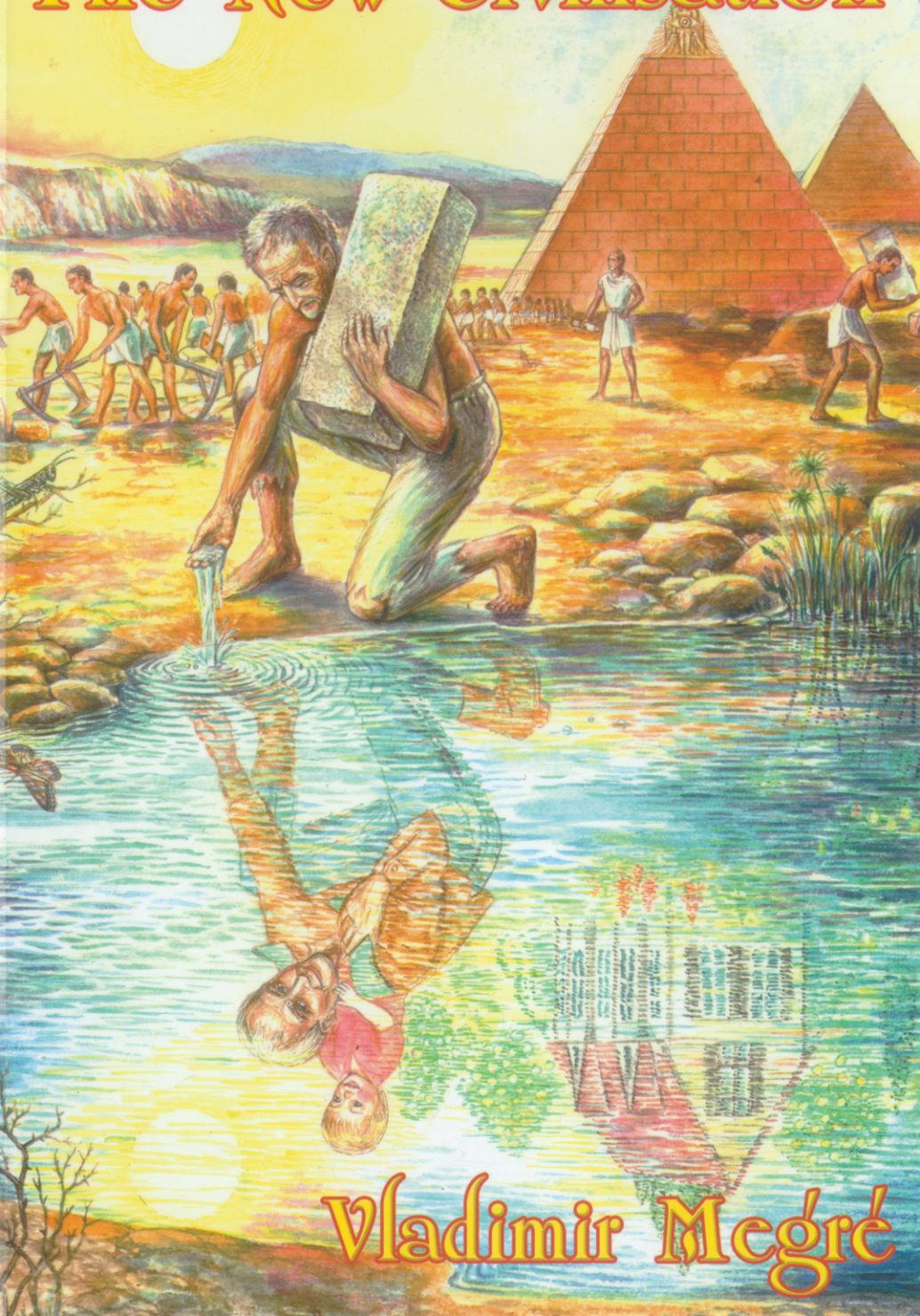


9 780976 333371

5 1495



The New Civilisation



Vladimir Mayakovsky

Vladimir Megré

THE NEW
CIVILISATION

The Ringing Cedars Series
Book 8, part 1

Translated from the Russian by
John Woodsworth

Edited by
Leonid Sharashkin



Ringing Cedars Press
Paia, Hawaii, USA

The New Civilisation by
Vladimir Megré

Translation and footnotes by
John Woodsworth

Editing, footnotes, design and layout by
Leonid Sharashkin

Cover art by
Alexander Razboinikov

Copyright © 2005 Vladimir Megré
Copyright © 2007 Leonid Sharashkin, translation
Copyright © 2007 Leonid Sharashkin, cover art
Copyright © 2007 Leonid Sharashkin, design and layout
Copyright © 2007 Leonid Sharashkin, footnotes

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, except for the inclusion of brief quotations in a review, without permission in writing from the publisher.

Library of Congress Control Number: 2007934389

ISBN: 978-0-9763333-8-8

Published by
Ringling Cedars Press

www.RinglingCedars.com



Contents

1. Pre-dawn feelings.....	1
2. Dominion over radiation.....	6
3. “Goosey, goosey, ga-ga-ga” or The superknowledge we are losing.....	19
<i>A big problem</i>	26
<i>There is a solution</i>	37
4. Rejuvenation.....	39
<i>First ordeal</i>	39
<i>Second ordeal</i>	40
<i>Third ordeal</i>	41
<i>A mysterious procedure</i>	44
<i>A vision</i>	50
5. Divine nutrition.....	55
6. Demon Cratius.....	69
7. The billionaire.....	78
8. I am giving birth to you, my angel!.....	116
9. A fine state of affairs!.....	137
<i>Talking with presidents</i>	138
<i>To the President and Government of Russia</i>	144
<i>The science of imagery, and who governs the country's ideology</i>	146

	<i>Russia's Orthodox Church — but is it Russia's?</i>	157
	<i>Occupiers in action</i>	159
10.	<i>The Book of Kin and A Family Chronicle</i>	161
	<i>The Jewish question</i>	165
	<i>Let's create</i>	170
	<i>Letter to the Russian President from Germany</i>	191
11.	<i>One hectare — a piece of Planet Earth</i>	198
12.	<i>People power</i>	206
	<i>A law of Russia on Family Communities created by</i> <i>Russian People's Deputies on all levels (draft)</i>	208
13.	<i>A new civilisation</i>	219
	<i>Immortality</i>	223
	<i>Love creating worlds</i>	225

CHAPTER ONE



Pre-dawn feelings

Anastasia was still asleep. And over the endless Siberian taiga the first glow of light was breaking across the pre-dawn sky. This time I was the first to waken, but stayed quietly lying beside her on my sleeping bag, admiring her serene and beautiful face and the flowing contours of her figure, as the soft, heavenly light of the advancing morning made them ever more distinct. It was good that this time she had arranged for us to spend the night under the open sky. She had no doubt been able to sense the warmth and gentle stillness of the approaching night, and so had made our bed not in her cozy dug-out cave but outdoors, at its entrance. She had spread out my sleeping bag, which I had brought during a previous visit to the taiga, while she fixed up beside me a beautiful place to sleep for herself, comprised of flowers and dried grasses.

She looked picture-perfect lying there on that taiga bed, wearing a thin flaxen knee-length dress, which I had brought her as a gift from my readers. Perhaps she put it on only when I was around; she was quite capable of sleeping in the nude. The colder it was in the forest, the more dried grasses were applied; after all, a haystack can keep out the cold in the winter too. Even a simple soul without Anastasia's level of hardiness could sleep comfortably in hay without extra clothing. I tried it myself. But this time I was lying there on my sleeping bag, looking at Anastasia resting beside me, and I kept imagining how this whole scene might look in a wide-screen feature film.

A sylvan glade in the depths of the endless Siberian taiga. The pre-dawn stillness is only rarely broken by a scarcely audible rustling of branches in the crowns of the majestic cedars. And here is this beautiful woman so serenely asleep on her bed of grasses and flowers. Her breathing is perfectly even and barely audible. The only thing noticeable is the slight swaying to and fro of a blade of grass clinging to her upper lip as she inhales and exhales the health-giving air of the Siberian taiga.

Never before had I managed to see Anastasia asleep here — she was always the first to awake. But this time...

I took great delight in watching her. Carefully raising my upper body and resting on my elbow, I studied her face, immersed myself in thought and began talking to myself.

You are still altogether beautiful, Anastasia. It will soon be ten years that we have known each other. Of course I've got older during this time, while you've hardly changed at all. No wrinkles on your face. Only your golden hair is now showing one strand of silver grey. Apparently something extraordinary's happened to you. Judging by the massive campaign that's been unleashed against you and your ideas, judging by what is being said in the press and bureaucrats' offices, something is going on in the dark forces' camp. They keep trying to get on my nerves, and I know how they'd love to get their hands on you. But their arms are evidently not long enough...

And still, you've got that grey strand of hair showing. But it can't spoil your extraordinary beauty. You know, tinting individual strands a variety of colours is an 'in' thing right now. Among our young people today highlighting strands is a hip fashion statement. And you don't even need to go to a hairdresser's — it's just happened all on its own. And the scar where that bullet grazed you,¹ it's practically gone.

¹See Book 3, Chapter 7: "Assault!".

The pre-dawn sky continued to brighten, and the scar was barely noticeable, even up close. Soon it would disappear completely.

Look at you sleeping so peacefully here in the fresh air, in your own taiga world, while out there, in our world, extremely significant events are taking place. Researchers are talking about an 'information revolution'. Perhaps it is thanks to you, or perhaps they are simply following the dictates of their own hearts, but people in our technocratic world are beginning to create their own family domains, enriching the land. They have adopted your image wholeheartedly, Anastasia — the marvellous image of the future for their family, the country and possibly the whole order of the Universe. They have understood all you have said and are building this marvellous future for themselves.

And I am trying to comprehend, too. I'm trying my best. I still don't completely understand what you mean to me. You taught me to write books, you bore me a son, you made me famous, you brought back my daughter's respect for me — you've done a lot! But that's not the main point. It's in something else, the main point. Perhaps it's lying hidden somewhere within.

You know, Anastasia, I have never spoken of my feelings for you, neither to you nor even to myself. In fact, I've never told any woman in my whole life that I love her.

I've never said that, not because I'm completely without feelings, but because these words have always seemed strange to me, even nonsensical. After all, if a person loves another, this love should be reflected in one's actions toward one's beloved. If words need to be spoken, that means there are no genuine, tangible actions. It's the actions, after all — not words — that are most important.

Anastasia stirred ever so slightly, took a deep breath, but did not waken. And I continued to talk with her, still speaking within myself.

Not once have I ever spoken to you about love, Anastasia. But if you asked me to fetch you a star from the sky, I would climb up to the top of the tallest tree, and pushing off from the uppermost branch, I'd

take a leap in the direction of that star. If I happened to fall, I would catch myself on its branches, and climb up once more to the top, and again leap toward the star.

You've never asked me to fetch you a star from the sky. You only asked me to write books, and I am writing them. But my writing doesn't always come out too well. Sometimes I fall. But I'm not done with them yet, after all. I still haven't written my final book. I'll try to write it so you'll like it.

Anastasia's eyelashes fluttered, a gentle glow flushed across her cheeks, and she opened her eyes. I caught the tender gaze of her greyish-blue eyes... Oh, Lord, what a warmth those eyes always give off, especially when they're so close to me. Anastasia watched me without a word, but her eyes sparkled as though full of moisture.

"Good morning, Anastasia!" I said. "You probably haven't had a good long sleep like that before — you've always woken up before me."

"And a good morning to you, and a marvellous day, Vladimir," Anastasia responded quietly, almost in a whisper. "I should like to have just a wee bit more sleep."

"So you haven't had enough sleep yet?"

"I have, and a very good sleep at that. But my dream... I was having such a pleasant pre-dawn dream."

"What kind of dream? What was it about?"

"I dreamt you were talking with me. About a tall tree and a star, about falling down and climbing up again. The words were about the tree and the star, but it struck me as though they were really about love."

"Things can often seem pretty fuzzy in dreams. What connection could a tree possibly have with love?"

"Everything can have a connection, and great meaning too. It is the feelings that matter here, not the words. This day's dawn has brought me an extraordinary feeling. I shall go out to greet and embrace —"

“Who?”

“This marvellous day, which has offered me such an extraordinary gift.”

Anastasia slowly rose to her feet, stepped a few paces away from the cave entrance and then... She did something she always did in the mornings — her unique exercise routine. There she was, flinging her arms out to the sides and a little bit upward. She gave a momentary glance up at the sky and then all at once spun round. Then she ran off and did an incredible somersault before spinning round again.

Lying on my sleeping bag by the cave entrance, I admired Anastasia’s darts and lunges and thought: *Wow! A mature woman already, and look how quickly, beautifully and energetically she moves, just like a young gymnast! Fascinating, how she felt what I had in mind as I was talking to myself while she was sleeping! Maybe I really should own up to her?*

And I cried out:

“Anastasia, it wasn’t simply a dream you were having.”

She stopped her exercise routine at once and stood there in the middle of the glade. Then she deftly turned a couple of cartwheels in my direction and landed right beside me. She quickly sat down on the ground and joyfully enquired:

“Not simply a dream? And just how is it not ‘simple’? Out with it! Tell me all the details!”

“Well, you see, *I* was thinking about that same tree. I was talking to myself about a star.”

“And where, tell me, where did you get these words from? What produced them — these words?”

“Maybe feelings?”

Our conversation was interrupted by a cry from Anastasia’s grandfather.

“Anastasia! Anastasia, listen to me right away! Do you read me?”

Anastasia jumped up, and I got up quickly, too.

CHAPTER TWO



Dominion over radiation

“Has Volodya been up to something unusual again?” Anastasia enquired of her grandfather, who had rushed over to us. And Grandfather, with a passing glance at me and a brief “Hello, Vladimir!”, explained:

“He is down by the lakeshore. He dived down and brought up a stone from the bottom. Now he is standing there, clutching it in his hand. It is safe to assume that the stone is burning his hand, but he will not let it go. And I do not know what advice to give him.”

Then Grandfather turned to me and barked:

“Your son’s down there. You’re his father. What are you standing here for?”

Not fully aware of what was going on, I ran down to the lake. Grandfather ran alongside me and explained:

“This stone is radioactive. It isn’t big, but contains a good deal of energy — an energy similar to radiation.”

“How did it happen to turn up at the bottom of the lake?”

“It’s been lying there a long time. My father, even, knew about that stone. But nobody’s been able to dive down to it.”

“How did Volodya manage it? How did he know about it?”

“I trained him to do deep-water dives.”

“What for?”

“He kept pestering me to show him, asking me again and again. You two don’t seem to have the time to look after your own child’s upbringing — you’ve been shoving the whole burden onto the shoulders of your elders.”

"And who told him about the stone?"

"Now who would have told him, eh, apart from me? I told him."

"What for?"

"He wanted to know what stopped the lake from freezing over in winter."

As we approached the lake, I saw my son standing on the shore. His hair and shirt were all wet, but the water had already dripped off them, which told me he had been standing like that for some time.

Volodya stood with his arm stretched out in front of him, his fingers clenched into a fist, which he kept his eyes fixed on like a hawk. It was clear his hand was clutching that same sinister stone from the bottom of the lake. I took two steps in his direction. He quickly turned his head toward me and said:

"Don't come any closer, Papa."

And when I stopped, he added:

"Good health to your thoughts, Papa! But keep back just a little further. Maybe it would be better if you and Grandfather lay down on the ground. I shall be able to better concentrate that way."

Grandfather at once lay down on the ground, and without really knowing why, I followed suit. For some time we didn't say a word, just watching Volodya standing on the shore. Then a rather simple thought struck me, and I said:

"Volodya, couldn't you just toss it a little ways away?"

"Where away?" my son asked, not turning his head.

"Into the grass."

"I must not throw it into the grass. It could cause a lot of destruction. I feel I must not throw it away yet."

"So, does that mean you're going to keep standing there all day, or two days? What next? You're going to stand there a whole week? Or a month, even?"

"I am thinking about what to do, Papa. Let us keep quiet and give thought a chance to find the solution without being distracted."

Grandfather and I lay silently on the grass and looked at Volodya. And all at once I became aware of Anastasia approaching slowly — *too* slowly, under the circumstances — from the other end of the shore. When she got about five metres from Volodya's position, she sat down at the water's edge, as if nothing unusual were going on. She let her feet dangle in the water and stayed there that way for some time. Eventually she turned to our son and very calmly enquired:

"Is it burning your hand, son?"

"Yes, Mama," Volodya replied.

"What were you thinking about when you fetched the stone? And what are you thinking about right now?"

"The stone is giving off energy, similar to radiation. Grandfather was telling me about it. But Man¹ also gives off energy. I know that. And human energy is always stronger than any other — it cannot be dominated by any other. I brought up the stone and I am holding it. I am trying with all my might to repress its energy — to send it back inside the stone. I want to demonstrate that Man has dominion over any radiation."

"And are you succeeding in demonstrating the superiority of the energy coming from yourself?"

"Yes, Mama, I am succeeding. Only it is becoming increasingly hotter. It is burning my fingers and palm just a little."

"Why do you not throw it away?"

"I feel that I must not do that."

"Why?"

¹*Man* — Throughout the Ringing Cedars Series, the word *Man* with a capital *M* is used to refer to a human being of either gender. For details on the word's usage and the important distinction between *Man* and *human being*, please see the Translator's Preface to Book 1.

"I feel it."

"Why?"

"It... It will explode, Mama. It will explode just as soon as I open my hand. There will be a big explosion."

"You are correct, it will explode. The stone is giving off the energy accumulated inside it. You used your own energy to repress its flow and direct it back inside. You used your thought to shape the nucleus within the stone, and *your* energy is now building up inside it, along with its own. It cannot go on accumulating indefinitely. It is already raging within the nucleus you formed with your own thoughts — it is getting hotter and the stone is burning your hand."

"I realise that, and that is why I am not letting go of my hold."

Outwardly Anastasia was the picture of calm. Her movements were slow and smooth, her speech was measured and with pauses. I could still feel, however, the extremely intense concentration of her thought — it must have been working faster than ever. She rose to her feet, gave what appeared to be a lethargic stretch, and said quietly:

"That means you realise, Volodya, that if you open your hand suddenly, there could be an explosion?"

"Yes, Mama."

"That means you have to release it gradually."

"How?"

"Just a tiny bit at first. First, ease up on your thumb and index finger to expose just a fraction of the stone. Picture in your mind right off how the energy you directed into the stone is emanating straight upward like a ray. And its own energy will begin to follow suit. Be careful: the ray must be directed only straight up."

Concentrating all his attention on his tightly clenched fist, Volodya gradually eased the pressure on his thumb and index finger. It was a sunny morning, but even in broad daylight one could see the ray emanating from the stone. A bird flying way

up high fell into the ray and was immediately transformed into a puff of smoke. It looked as though a small cloud exploded in vapour when the ray passed through it. A few minutes later and the ray was scarcely noticeable.

"Oh, I have been sitting here with you too long!" said Anastasia. "I think I may go and make us some breakfast while you amuse yourselves here."

She took her time leaving. After going only a few steps, she staggered a bit, and then headed down to the water and washed her face. No doubt her outward calm had concealed an incredible inner tension. She had hid it so as not to frighten her son and interfere with his actions.

"How did you know exactly what I should do?" Volodya called out after the receding figure of Anastasia.

"How, indeed?" Grandfather echoed, mockingly. He had already got up from the ground and was feeling in much better spirits. "What do you mean, *how*? At school your Mama was a top-notch pupil in physics!" And he burst out in a loud guffaw.

Anastasia turned toward us and broke into laughter herself, explaining:

"I had not known about that before, son. But whatever happens, you always need to look for and find a solution. And not to let your thought be fettered by fear."

When the ray could no longer be seen at all, Volodya opened his hand completely. A small oblong stone was lying quietly on his palm. He stared at it for some time, muttering under his breath as he addressed the stone: "What is inside you is no match for Man!"

Then he once again closed his hand into a fist and dived straight into the water without taking off his shirt. It was a good three minutes before he resurfaced and headed back toward the shore.

"I was the one who taught him how to hold his breath that long," Grandfather commented.

After Volodya came out of the water, he jumped up and down to dry himself off, then headed over our way. I couldn't wait, but burst out:

"D'you have any idea what radiation is, son? I guess you don't. If you did, you wouldn't have gone and fetched that wretched stone. Can't you find yourself some other business to poke your nose into?"

"I know all about radiation, Papa. Grandfather told me about the disasters that have happened at your nuclear power plants, about your atomic weapons and the dangers now posed by the storage of nuclear waste."

"So, what's all the interest in this stone lying at the bottom of the lake? What about it?"

"Yes, indeed, what about it?" Grandfather joined the conversation. "*You* preach at him, Vladimir. I'm going to go have a little rest. It seems that lately your son's been making quite a few demands on me."

Grandfather started heading off, leaving me alone with my son.

And here he was, standing in front of me in his shirt, all dripping wet. He was evidently quite upset about the worry he had caused us all. I didn't feel like nagging him any further. I simply stood there without saying a word, not knowing how to begin. Volodya was the first to speak.

"You see, Papa, Grandfather told me that these nuclear waste facilities are extremely dangerous. According to probability theory, they can do irreparable harm to many countries and the people living in them. And to our whole planet, besides."

"They can, of course, but what's this got to do with you?"

"What this means is, if people think the problem is solved, but the danger still remains, it means they have not come up with the correct solution."

"So, what if it *is* incorrect — what does it matter?"

“Grandfather said that it is up to me to find the correct solution.”

“So... have you found it?”

“I have now, Papa.”

There he was, standing before me, my nine-year-old son, soaking wet and with an injured hand, but entirely confident in himself. And speaking in a calm and confident tone of voice about how to solve the problem of storing nuclear waste. An altogether peculiar situation! After all, he is no scientist, no nuclear physicist and doesn't even study in a regular school. Most peculiar! Here is this boy standing in his wet clothing on the shore of a taiga lake and discussing the safe storage of nuclear waste. Not counting on any kind of effective solution on his part, I asked, simply in the interests of keeping the conversation going:

“Well, what specific conclusions have you come to regarding this insoluble problem?”

“Out of all the possible variants, I think the most effective is deconcentration.”

“I'm not sure what you mean — deconcentration of what?”

“Of nuclear waste, Papa.”

“How so?”

“I came to the realisation, Papa, that radiation in small doses is not at all dangerous. It is present in small quantities everywhere — in us, in plants, in the water and the clouds. But the real danger comes when too much is concentrated in one place. In the nuclear facilities Grandfather was telling me about, a whole lot of radioactive objects are concentrated together in one place.”

“Well, everybody knows that. Radioactive waste is hauled to specially constructed storage facilities, which are carefully protected from terrorists. They've got specially trained personnel who ensure there are no violations of proper storage technology.”

"Quite right, Papa. But the danger still exists. And a catastrophe is inevitable, caused by someone's specific thought imposing a wrong decision on people."

"You know, this problem, son, is being investigated in scientific institutes by highly qualified specialists. You're not a scholar, you haven't studied science, and so you're not capable of solving such an important question. It's modern science that ought to come up with an answer."

"But what has been the result, Papa? After all, it is precisely the inventions of modern science that have caused people to be subjected to great danger. Of course I do not study in school, and I do not know the science you are talking about, but..."

He fell silent and lowered his head.

"What does that 'but' of yours mean? Why did you stop, Volodya?"

"I have no desire, Papa, to be a pupil in that school or to study the science you have in mind."

"Why not?"

"Because, Papa, that kind of science is what leads to disasters."

"But there's no other kind of science."

"There is. 'Reality should be determined only through one's own self,' says Mama Anastasia. I understand what that means, and I am studying, or 'determining'. At the moment I do not know how to put it more specifically."

Wow! How sure he is of his convictions! I thought. Then I asked:

"And what is the probability of disaster, as you see it?"

"A hundred percent."

"You're certain of that?"

"According to probability theory and the absence of any counteraction to destructive thought, a disaster is inevitable. The construction of large nuclear storage facilities can be compared to the construction of huge bombs."

"And am I to guess that your thought has begun counter-acting this destructive element?"

"Yes, I have launched my thought into space. And it will triumph."

"Specifically, what solution has your thought come up with regarding the problem of the safe storage of nuclear waste?"

"All nuclear waste concentrated in large facilities needs to be deconcentrated — that is my thought."

"Deconcentration — does that mean dividing it into fragments a hundred thousandth or a multi-millionth in size?"

"That is right, Papa."

"A simple solution. But the big question remains: where to store these tiny fragments?"

"On kin's domains, Papa."

For a moment the shock of this incredible statement completely overwhelmed me — I didn't know what to say. Then I practically shouted:

"Nonsense! That's utter nonsense you've thought up, Volodya."

After I'd thought about it a little more, I said in a calmer voice:

"Of course, if nuclear fragments are deconcentrated and spread among various places, a global catastrophe can be averted. But this will also put millions of families who have decided to live on these domains in danger. After all, everybody wants to live in a place that's environmentally clean."

"Yes, Papa, everybody wants to live in an environmentally clean place. But there are hardly any such places remaining on the Earth today."

"And here in the taiga, isn't this environmentally clean either?"

"The environment here is relatively clean. But it is not ideal, not pristine. There are no ideal spots left, anywhere. Clouds can bring their acid rain here too, from a variety of places. The

grass and trees and bushes are coping with it for the time being, but the filthy places are becoming only filthier with each passing day. And the number of such places keeps growing with each passing day. That is why it is essential right now not to walk away from this filthiness, but attack it. 'We need to create clean places ourselves' — that is what Mama says.

"From all the possible variants my thought selected just one. It could not come up with any other. My thought tells me it is safer to deconcentrate and tame the waste one fragment at a time, and derive a benefit for life on our planet by storing a tiny fragment on one's domain."

"But where on the domain? In a larder? In a safe? Store this radioactive capsule in an underground cellar? Has your thought given you any hint of this yet?"

"The capsule should be buried underground no less than nine metres deep."

I spent some time thinking about my son's proposal, which had indeed seemed incredible at first, but the more I thought about it, the more inclined I became to accept that there was some grain of reason in what he said. At the very least, his proposal for nuclear waste storage would be entirely sufficient to avert a large-scale catastrophe. As to pollution on the given domain, that was something that could indeed be avoided, and there might even be a plus side. Perhaps scientists could come up with something like a mini-reactor — or something similar.

And then, all at once a thought dawned on me. Wow! Here was another reason for the need to deconcentrate the storage of radioactive waste. *Money!*

Huge sums are being doled out by foreign governments for the storage of such waste. It is these funds that pay for constructing the facilities, maintaining service personnel and whole security control systems. And a part of this money inevitably disappears into the unknown. Why not pay it,

instead, to every domain where radioactive waste capsules are stored? Fantastic! Not only would 'safe contamination' be guaranteed, but people would earn money besides.

At the present time nobody can guarantee security from contamination even for those living far away from the storage facilities. Think what happened at Chernobyl² — the contamination affected not just parts of Ukrainian territory, but of Russia and Belarus as well. Clouds can carry the pollution for hundreds and even thousands of kilometres.

So, even though it is still at the conceptual stage and the details need fleshing out, my son's proposal deserves serious consideration — not just on the part of the academic world, but from governments, and especially the public.

I was walking along the lakeshore, immersed in my thoughts, and had quite forgot about my son. He was still standing at the same spot, silently watching me. His upbringing forbade him from being the first to reinitiate our conversation. To interrupt the thought of a Man in contemplation was unthinkable.

I decided to change the subject.

"So, you spend your time thinking about different problems, Volodya. Don't you have any duties to carry out? Have you been assigned any work to perform?"

"Work?... Assigned?... I always do what I feel like doing. Work? What do you mean by the word *work*, Papa?"

"Well, work is when you carry out some kind of task, and people pay you money for it. Or when you do something that's going to benefit your whole family. Take me, for

²*Chernobyl* — a town in northern Ukraine with a nuclear-power generating station. In April 1986 an accident at Reactor N° 4 caused one of Europe's worst environmental disasters, spreading dangerous radiation over a huge land area. As a result of the accident, the population of Chernobyl (13,000 people) and nearby Pripjat' (49,000) was evacuated, and these towns, as well as the larger surrounding area, are now uninhabited.

example — when I was your age, my parents assigned me to look after our bunny-rabbits. And that's what I did. I would collect grass for them, feed them, clean their cages... And the rabbits brought our family a bit of income."

After hearing me out, Volodya suddenly said with some excitement:

"Papa, I shall tell you about one particular duty which I assigned to myself — a very enjoyable duty. Only you'll have to judge whether it can be called *work* or not."

"Tell me about it."

"Then let's go. I have a specific place I want to show you."

CHAPTER THREE



“Goosey, goosey, ga-ga-ga”¹ *or* The superknowledge we are losing

We started heading off from the lake, Volodya leading the way. He had changed somehow. His analytical and concentrated mood had given way to one of joyfulness and excitement. Sometimes he would do a pirouette as he walked along, or a little leap into the air, as he explained to me:

“I never looked after bunny-rabbits, Papa. I did something else. I am not sure what to call it — *gave birth*? That will not do. *Created*? Not really... Ah, now I remember. I think in your civilisation it is called *sitting on eggs*. So, I sat on some eggs.”

“What d’you mean, you sat on some eggs? That’s a mother hen’s job, or some other kind of bird’s.”

“Yes, I know. But in my case I had to sit on them myself.”

“What for? Tell me everything, in the proper order.”

“All right, in the proper order. Well, it happened in this order:

“I asked Grandfather to find me some eggs laid by wild ducks and wild geese. At first Grandfather grumbled a bit, but three days later he brought me four large goose eggs, along with five duck eggs, which were smaller.

“Next in order, I dug a little hole in the ground, and put some deer manure in the bottom along with grass stalks, and then I

¹*Goosey, goosey, ga-ga-ga* — the first line of a popular Russian folk song. The song accompanies a children’s game in which a group of children (representing a flock of geese) are fleeing home from their feeding grounds while another child (as a wolf) tries to catch them.

covered them over with dried grass, and then on top of this I placed the two sets of eggs Grandfather had brought me."

"What was the manure for?"

"For warmth. Eggs need warmth to hatch. And they need warmth from above, too. Sometimes I lay down on the ground myself, covering the hole with my stomach. When it was cold or rainy, I assigned this task to the bear."

"How did the bear keep from crushing the eggs?"

"You see, even though the bear is big, the hole containing the eggs is pretty small. He lay on top of the hole, and the eggs were at the bottom. Sometimes I would have the she-wolf guard the eggs, at other times I would sleep on the ground nearby myself, until they started to hatch. It was so wonderful to watch them hatching. Not all of them made it, though. From the nine eggs I started with, were born two goslings and three ducklings. I fed them grass seed and crushed nuts and gave them water to drink. Whenever I fed them, I would invite various creatures living on our territory to watch."

"What for?"

"To show them how I cared for the little chicks, to help them understand that they should not touch them, but that they should protect them instead. I would also sleep beside the hole where the goslings and ducklings were born, except on cold or rainy nights when I had the bear take over for me. The chicks nestled in his warm coat, which made it very nice for them."

"Next, if I am to proceed in the proper order: I put up stakes around the hole with which I made a wicker fence from branches, and put branches above the nest as well. As the goslings and ducklings grew and learnt to climb out of their hole, I would walk around their nest and make short whistling sounds: *tsu-tsu-tsu*. Upon hearing this, they would immediately climb out and run after me. They tried running after the bear, but I trained them out of it. The bear can travel quite a distance, and the birds might not make it in one piece."

"But nothing happened to them. They grew up, feathers appeared, and they learnt to fly. I would toss them up in the air to help them along. Then they began flying off on their own, but always returned to their nest.

"When autumn came and a whole lot of birds started gathering in flocks to fly south, my grown-up ducks attached themselves to a whole flock of ducks, and my geese joined a flock of geese, and they all flew off to warmer climes.

"But I guessed — I was almost certain — that they would return in the spring. And they did. Oh, how fantastic that was, Papa! They came back, and I heard their delightful cry: *ga-ga-ga*. I ran over to their nest and began calling: *tsu-tsu-tsu*. I fed them grass seed and some nut kernels which I had ground up beforehand. They took the feed right out of my hands. I was so happy, and all the creatures around heard the cry and came running oh so happily...

"Look, Papa, here we are! Look!"

There in a secluded spot between two currant bushes I saw the nest my son had fashioned. But there was no wildlife to be seen anywhere around.

"You say they've come back, but there aren't any birds here."

"Not at the moment. They have flown off somewhere to have a stroll or look for food. That is why they are not here right now, but look, Papa!"

As Volodya pushed the branches aside to widen the opening, I caught a glimpse of three nest holes. In one of them lay five small-sized eggs, probably, duck eggs. In the other, just one, slightly larger — a goose egg.

"Wow! That means they *have* come back. And they're laying eggs. Only just a few."

"Yes!" Volodya exclaimed in excitement. "They have come back and are laying eggs. They could lay more if I took some of the eggs out of the nest and fed the mothers more often."

I looked at my son's happy face, but could not fully comprehend the reason for his joyful excitement. I asked him:

"What are you so fantastically happy about, Volodya? I know none of you — either you or your Mama or your grandfather — eat eggs. Which means that your actions cannot be called 'work' or a 'job', since there's no practical benefit from it."

"You think so? But remember, other people eat bird's eggs. Mama says it is all right to use anything the animals themselves give to Man. Especially for people who are not accustomed to a vegetarian diet."

"What have other people got to do with your activities here?"

"I have decided that something needs to be done so that people living on their domains can be free from the burden of so many household tasks. Or almost free. So that they can have time to think and reflect. This is possible — if you understand God's intent in creating our world. I find delight in the science of getting to know His thoughts. It is certainly the grandest science of all, and it is something that must be known."

"We need to learn, for example, why He made the birds fly south in the autumn, but they do not stay in those warmer climes, but come back in the spring. I have thought a lot about this, and have guessed that He did this so that Man would not be burdened during the wintertime. In winter birds cannot find food for themselves, and they fly away. But they do not stay in the south, but come back — they want to be useful to Man. This is God's intent. There is much for Man to learn from what our Creator has conceived."

"What you're suggesting, then, Volodya, is that ducks and geese can live in every domain, lay their eggs, feed themselves, and then fly off in the autumn and come back in the spring?"

"Yes, quite right. After all, it worked with me."

"Yes, I see — it really did work with you. But there's just one concern I have... It will probably upset you to hear this, but still, I have to tell you the truth. Just so you don't go looking ridiculous with your proposal."

"Tell me the truth, Papa."

"You see, there's this science we call economics. Economists are trying to figure out what is the best way of handling the production of various goods — in this case, eggs. In our world a lot of chicken farms have been set up, where a whole bunch of chickens are kept in one place. They lay their eggs, and afterward these eggs are shipped off to grocery stores. People can go to these stores and easily purchase as many eggs as they need. It's all worked out to ensure the least expenditure of labour and time on a per-unit basis."

"What does 'expenditure of labour' mean, Papa?"

"It refers to the quantity of time and resources spent on the production of a single egg. You have to carefully work out what's going to be the most efficient method of production, and that will be the best method."

"Fine, I shall try to work it out, Papa."

"When you work out the whole thing, you'll understand. But to figure it out you'll need expense statistics. I'll try to get them from some economist."

"But I can calculate everything right now, Papa."

Volodya gave a bit of a frown, evidently concentrating, and after a minute announced:

"Minus two to infinity."

"What kind of a formula is that? What does it refer to?"

"The efficiency of the Divine economy is expressed in an infinite series of numbers. Even starting from zero, modern scientific economics is already two points down."

"You've got a pretty strange method of calculation there. I can't fathom it. Can you explain how you arrived at that figure?"

"I set the benchmark for our current case at zero. All the expenses involved in a chicken factory — its construction, maintenance and delivery of eggs to stores are summed up in the figure of minus one."

"What d'you mean, 'minus one'? These expenses should be expressed in roubles and kopeks."²

"Monetary units are relative and will always vary, and so they are not significant in this methodology. They all need to be lumped together under the arbitrary value of 'minus one'. Whatever expenses there are, in terms of a zero benchmark, they can be expressed as 'minus one'."

"And where did you get the second minus figure?"

"That is *quality*. It cannot be very good. The unnatural maintenance conditions and the lack of variety in feed cannot help but lower the quality of the eggs, and this gives rise to another value of minus one. So we get 'minus two' altogether."

"Okay, let's say you're right. But in your case, too, there are huge expenditures of time. Here, tell me, Volodya, how much time did you spend, as you put it, 'sitting on' the eggs, and then feeding the ducklings and goslings, and watching out for them?"

"Ninety days and nights."

"So, ninety times twenty-four hours. And all that in aid of producing no more than a few dozen eggs — and that only at the end of a year! For people living in their domains, it would be much more efficient to buy some little chicks at a market or hatch them over the winter with the help of an electric incubator, and in four or five months they'll start laying. In the

²*kopek* (Russian: *kopeika*) — a coin worth 1/100 of a rouble. It is derived from the Russian word for 'spear' (*kopë*, pronounced *kap-YO*), in reference to a warrior piercing a dragon with his spear — a scene depicted on early Russian coins. The word 'rouble' itself is derived from the verb *rubit'* ('cut with an axe') — early coins represented a silver band cut in rectangular pieces.

second year, before winter sets in, they're generally slaughtered, since their laying capacity goes down by the third year. So they kill them and start raising a new batch. That's technology for you."

"That is the technology of never-ending burdens, Papa. You have to feed the chickens every day, store up food for the winter, and every other year raise a new batch of chickens."

"Sure, you feed them and raise new ones, but thanks to modern technology it isn't nearly as time-consuming as your alternative."

"But those ninety days will launch a programme that will last forever. Once they come back, the migratory birds will raise their young all by themselves, they will teach them how to get along with human beings and come back to their homeland. And they will go on doing this for thousands of years. In launching a programme like this, Man is passing it on to future generations of his family. He is giving back to them a little particle of the Divine economy. A hundred years from now an expenditure of ninety days in calculating the cost of producing a single egg, will count as minutes, and continue to diminish with each passing year."

"But still, there are expenses, and you haven't taken these into account."

"These expenses are offset by a powerful counterweight, which is no less significant than what is produced by the birds."

"What counterweight?"

"When birds once again fly from faraway lands back to their native woods and fields, people are delighted to see them. Thanks to their joyful and beneficial energy, many people's diseases are eliminated. But this energy is ninety times stronger when they do not merely fly back from the south, but come directly to you and start greeting the Man living on that domain with their happy cries and refrains of exultation.

Their singing brings joy and strength not only to Man but to the whole Space around him."

Volodya spoke with confidence and inspiration. It would have seemed foolish to continue arguing with him. I pretended to be absorbed in contemplation or to be figuring out something in my mind. I felt a little put out that there was nothing I could teach my son or even offer him a few hints on.

And what kind of upbringing or education do we have here anyway? Here is my son standing right in front of me, and yet he seems like a child from another planet or another civilisation.

He has a different concept of life, a different philosophy and speed of thought. He can do instantaneous calculations. And it is clear, as I have been made aware, that even if I spent a year on computer calculations, whatever he comes up with would still be more accurate. It's as though everything inside him were turned upside-down. Or perhaps it might be more accurate to ask: *To what degree have we perverted our own lives — our concepts and meaning of life?* All our disasters have arisen from these perversions.

No doubt this is all true, but still... I'm so anxious to find some way of being useful to my son. But how? With no expectations left, I asked him quietly and offhandedly:

"I'll give some thought to those economics of yours. Maybe you're right... But tell me, son: you've been playing with different tasks here, working them out. Have you ever had a really *serious* problem to meet?"

Volodya sighed deeply and, it seemed, rather woefully. After a brief pause he replied:

"Yes, Papa, I do have a big problem. And only you can help me solve it."

Volodya was sad, while I, on the other hand, was delighted to find something at last where he required my help.

"And what does it involve, this big problem of yours?"



A big problem

“Remember, Papa, when I told you last time you were here that I was preparing to go off into your world when I grew up?”³

“Yes, I remember. You said you would come into our world and find yourself a Universe Girl to make her happy. You’d build a kin’s domain with her, and raise children together. I remember your telling me. So, you haven’t abandoned your project?”

“Not at all. And I often think of the future, about that girl and the domain. I can picture in detail how she and I will live there together. And how you and Mama will come visit and see how the dream which that girl and I co-created together is being turned into reality.”

“Well, then, what’s your problem? Are you afraid you might not find your girl?”

“That is not the problem. I shall look for this girl and find her. Come, I shall show you another little glade. And you will see it all for yourself— you will sense what the problem is.”

Volodya and I arrived at a small glade located right next door to Anastasia’s. When we reached the middle of the glade, we stopped, and Volodya invited me to sit down on the ground. Then, cupping his hands around his mouth, he gave out a loud and extended cry: *A-a-a-a!* First he cried out in one direction, then another and yet another. In just two or three

³See Book 6, Chapter 2: “Conversation with my son”, especially the section “I shall make a Universe Girl happy”.

minutes there began a rustling in the treetops all around the glade, and a whole lot of squirrels could be seen leaping from branch to branch, gathering together on a single cedar tree. Some of them simply sat down on one of the branches and stared in our direction, while others — apparently the more restless ones — continued hopping from one branch to another.

A few minutes later and out of the bushes came running three wolves. They sat down at the edge of the glade and also began looking our way.

A sable came along and took up a position about three metres from the wolves. Then two goats appeared. They didn't sit down, but stood at the edge of the glade, their eyes fixed on us. Soon afterward came a deer. The last to arrive was a huge bear, noisily making his way through the bushes. He too sat down at the edge of the glade, panting all the while, saliva dripping from his tongue. He had probably been a long ways off and had had to run for some distance.

All this time Volodya stood behind my back, with his hands on my shoulders. Then he took a few paces back from me and picked some herbs. Coming back to me, he said:

"Open your mouth, Papa, and I shall give you some herbs to eat. This is so they can see that I am feeding you from my hand, and will not be upset at the sight of a stranger."

I took the proffered herbs in my mouth and began to chew. Volodya sat down beside me, put his head up against my chest and said:

"Stroke my hair, Papa, so that they will fully calm down."

I began stroking his light-brown hair with delight. Then he sat down beside me and began to explain.

"I realised, Papa, that God created the whole world as a cradle for His son, Man. The plants, the air, the water and clouds — everything has been created for Man. And the creatures stand ready to serve Man with great delight. But we

have forgotten, and now it is important to understand what services the creatures can perform, what their purpose and destiny is. Even today a lot of people are aware that a dog can guard the house, find lost objects, and aid in keeping one's home safe from intruders. A cat, of course, can catch the mice that raid the larder. A horse is transportation. But all the other creatures have a specific feature and designation, too, which should be understood. I have tried the best I could to determine the function of all that you see here.

"Now they are sitting there and awaiting my command. This is the third year now I have been working with them to understand their purpose. Take, for example, the bear. Because of his big and powerful paws, he can dig an underground cellar, put supplies in it to save for the winter and dig them up again in the spring. He knows how to bring honey from a tree hollow."

"Yes, I know, Volodya. Anastasia told me that at one time people used bears as household help."

"Mama told me that, too. But look what I have taught the bear to do."

Volodya rose to his feet and stretched out his right arm in the bear's direction. The bear drew himself up on his haunches, and even seemed to stop breathing. When Volodya clapped his hand against his thigh, the huge bear took several giant strides and lay down at the boy's feet. Volodya squatted down beside the beast's enormous head, gave it a slap and began scratching behind the creature's ear. The bear purred with pleasure. When Volodya got up, the bear did the same, watching the boy's every move.

Volodya went over to the edge of the glade, where he found a dry branch, and stuck it into the ground about ten metres from where I was sitting. Then he returned to the edge and approached a small cedar tree about a metre high. He touched it and clapped his hands twice. Right off, the bear ran over to

the cedar and sniffed it. And then an incredible thing started to happen.

My son sat down beside me on the grass and the two of us began watching as the scene unfolded before our eyes.

The bear spent some time sniffing the little cedar. First he would walk away from it, as though measuring something, then he would run over to the spot where Volodya's dry branch was sticking up. And all around the branch he suddenly began scraping away the earth with his front paws.

Working furiously with his paws and their powerful claws, in the space of a few minutes he had dug a hole approximately 80 cm in diameter and about half a metre deep. He stopped to admire his handiwork, and even stuck his head into the pit, probably to sniff it.

After that the bear ran over to the cedar Volodya had indicated, and began to dig out the earth around it. When he had dug what amounted to a circular trench, the bear sat down on his hind paws next to the cedar, dug his front paws into the trench and pulled the little tree out of the ground, along with a sizeable clump of earth. Rising on his hind legs, he held the clump between his front paws and headed over to the hole he had dug earlier. He carefully sat down and lowered the clump with the cedar into the hole. It turned out the hole was about 15 cm larger than required. The bear backed off to take a look at his handiwork. Once more he pulled out the cedar and set it to one side, while he filled in the hole just a little more, before replanting the cedar. Now everything was just right.

The bear backed away to once more inspect his accomplishment. This time he was apparently satisfied, as he went back to the cedar he had planted and began filling in the crevice around the clump from which the tree was growing. He used his paw to scoop up the earth, stuff it into the crevice and then pack it down around the newly replanted tree.

It was quite a fascinating scene, but I had earlier witnessed how the squirrels brought dried mushrooms and nuts for Anastasia,⁴ or how the wolves played with Anastasia and protected her from wild dogs.⁵

Not only that, but a lot of people can observe all sorts of tricks with various animals just by attending a circus performance. My own dog Kedra⁶ also takes delight in carrying out a range of commands.

What I witnessed in the taiga glade also bore outward similarities to a circus performance, except that it didn't take place in an arena surrounded by a high net, but in natural surroundings. And the performers were not circus animals living in confined cages, but free — or 'wild', as we call them — dwellers in the taiga. They might well have seemed wild to us, but to my son they were simply friends and helpers. Just like our household pets and farm animals.

However, I must point out one mysterious and incredible distinction in particular: the loyalty of household pets and farm animals can be explained by the fact that Man gives them food and drink and provides shelter. People who go see animal acts at circuses may also notice that after each successful trick the tamer rewards the lion or tiger, giving them some kind of treat or trifle he keeps on his belt or in his pocket just for that purpose.

Circus animals which spend years confined in cages have no opportunity to hunt for their own food. They are fully dependent on Man. By contrast, the creatures here in the taiga are absolutely free and fully capable of finding food and shelter on their own. Yet still they come — not just come, but

⁴See, for example, Book 1, Chapter 6: "Anastasia's morning".

⁵See, for example, Book 3, Chapter 12: "Man-made mutants".

⁶*Kedra* — a name derived from *kedr* (the Russian word for 'cedar' or 'Siberian pine').

make an enthusiastic dash to respond to Man's call and carry out his commands. They carry them out with considerable desire and even servility. Why? What do they get in return? Volodya gave no food to the bear. But still, the bear's joy was many times more clearly evident than that shown by the circus animals upon receiving their treat.

The bear that transplanted the little tree on Volodya's command stood there shifting from paw to paw, his eyes fixed on the boy, as though he wanted to repeat the action or perform some other task. It is strange how this huge taiga bear really wants to keep on doing something for Man, and for a child at that.

Volodya was not about to set the bear any new task. He gestured the bear to come over, grasped the fur on the bear's muzzle with both hands, ruffled it a bit, then petted the muzzle and said:

"You're a super helper — not like the goats."

The bear purred with delight. This threatening creature sounded as though it was at the very pinnacle of bliss.

Anastasia has said:

"Such beneficial energy can flow from Man as has never before been seen. Every living creature on the Earth needs this energy just as it needs air, sunshine and water. And even sunlight is but a reflection of the great energy emanating from Man."

Our sciences have discovered a multitude of diverse energies and even brought about the artificial generation of electrical energy. They have split the atom and manufactured bombs. But how far (and in what direction) have our sciences advanced in studying the more significant and important question as to the energy emanating from Man himself? Is there any tendency toward studying this energy at all, including its mysterious capabilities? Or studying Man's abilities in general, and his function in both our world and the Universe?

Perhaps someone is trying by whatever means available to hinder Man from knowing himself. And I mean actual hindering.

It cannot be, it cannot possibly be Man's destiny to spend years sitting in a casino or at a bar for a shot of vodka, or drudging away at a cash register in some store or at a manager's desk in some office. And even a supermodel, or a president, or a pop-star — none of them come even close to Man's most important purpose.

And yet it is these very professions of our modern age, along with making money, that some enigmatic 'entity' is promoting today as the most important thing in Man's life. It's what we see in a good many of our films and TV shows, which concentrate on everything except the meaning of life. All they do is turn Man into a banana-head.

Isn't that the reason wars are happening all over the place? And the Earth is becoming more and more polluted? And people lose their sense of direction, they see no purpose in living, and so they take to vodka and drugs.

Who is supposed to stop all this rot that is taking place with our Earth? *Science?* But science isn't saying anything. *Religion?* Which religion? Where are the results? Maybe everyone needs to ponder this for themselves? Ponder it! For themselves!

To ponder, one must first think. But where? When? Our lives have become one giant bustle from morning 'til night.

Every single attempt that has ever been made to ponder the meaning of life has been suddenly aborted. Selling magazines featuring half-naked sensuous bodies — oh, sure! Savouring sexual perversion — oh, sure! Showing and telling about the beastly antics of pervert-maniacs — oh, sure! Writing and talking about prostitutes in the media — oh, sure!

But there is less and less talk about the meaning of Man's life and Man's purpose — it's becoming more and more a taboo topic.

I glanced up from my contemplations to look at my son. He was sitting on the grass beside me, watching me intently. I thought he might have something more he wanted to show me. I asked him:

"And what was it you were saying to the bear about *goats*, Volodya?"

"I cannot, for the life of me, Papa, determine what their purpose is."

"What's there to determine? Everyone knows what goats are for — to give milk to Man."

"Yes, milk, of course. But perhaps there is something more they can be taught."

"What more could they possibly...? Why bother looking for something else?"

"I have been watching them. Goats are capable of stripping bark off trees and stumps. And they can bite off branches from bushes. If you let them into a domain, they could cause harm to the plants. To stop that from happening, I am trying to teach them to trim the hedges around the domains."

"Trim?"

"Yes, Papa, trim. After all, people trim hedges to make them more beautiful — either in a straight line or in different shapes. Grandfather told me you call it landscape design, or topiary art. But the goats do not seem to have any concept of what I want them to do."

"And how are you teaching them?"

"I shall show you."

Volodya reached for a rope made of nettle fibres woven together, about three metres long. He fastened one end to a small tree and stretched the rope through a clump of bushes. Then, gesturing the two little goats to approach, he gave each of them a pat. He touched the bushes with his hand and even snapped off a small branch himself with his teeth. He said

something to the goats, and they set about vigorously gnawing off the bushy branches. Each time they neared the rope border, Volodya would give several tugs on the rope and make some disapproving sounds. The goats would stop for a time, holding their snouts up and looking enquiringly at the boy, but then go back to biting off the branches, paying no attention to the rope.

"You see, Papa, it is not working. They do not realise they are supposed to trim the bushes in an even line."

"Yes, I see. Is that the problem you were talking about?"

"That is not the main problem, Papa. It is something else."

"Then what?"

"You noticed, Papa, how happily the different creatures came running to my call?"

"Yes, I did."

"I have been working with them for several years now, and they have become accustomed to communicating with me, but only with me. They look forward to this interchange, they want to be petted. But once I go off into your world, they will miss me. They will miss not having a Man ever come to see them again, or call them and give them something to do. I feel that the communication with Man and serving Man has become the most significant focus in their life."

"Couldn't they communicate with Anastasia?"

"Mama has her own circle, her own creatures she is friends with. Besides, she is very busy and does not have time for all of them.

"But, you see, *these...*" — and here once again Volodya pointed to the creatures still sitting around the edge of the glade — these I chose myself, and I am the only one who has been working with them these past few years.

"Three months ago I asked Grandfather to be present with me at all our training sessions. Grandfather muttered, but he

was always there beside me. But recently he told me he would be unable to replace me."

"Why?"

"He said he did not have the same interest as I had in animal-training. And once again he began to mutter that I should not have spent so much time with the animals individually. And that I should not have given them so much petting. And he reminded me that these creatures look upon me not only as their leader, but as their child, too, since the older among them saw me when I was a baby and even nursed me. You see, I made some kind of mistake, and now I must definitely correct it. Only now I am no longer able to correct it all on my own."

I looked at the creatures still sitting at the edge of the glade. They gave every indication that they were waiting for Volodya to give them some sort of instructions or to do something with them. I imagined how they would miss him if he were to go away. The same way my dog Kedra misses me when I have to leave my home in the country for days or weeks at a time. She has a warm little doghouse and I don't keep her chained up — she's free to roam the fields or the forest or the village. And I have a neighbour who feeds her every day. He makes *kasha*⁷ for her, and gives her bones to chew on. But my neighbour tells me:

"She misses you, Vladimir Nikolaevich. She'll often sit by the gate and gaze down the road you come home on. And sometimes she'll whimper."

And whenever I arrive, Kedra rushes headlong to greet me, rubs against my legs, and sometimes she's so enthusiastic she'll jump right up and try to lick my face, soiling my clothes

⁷*kasha* — a traditional Russian and Eastern European porridge made with wheat, buckwheat and other grains.

with her dirty paws. And there's no way I can train her to be not quite so ebullient in expressing her emotions.

But these creatures in the glade... All the time we talked they sat there quietly watching us, looking the picture of composure. What do they want? After all, nobody is making them sit that way or wait on some kind of command from Man.

My God... A thought all at once bubbled up with absolute clarity and struck my heart. It was much more than just about these creatures sitting in a taiga glade — it was the realisation that all the creatures on the Earth have a specific purpose and await contact with the highest being on the planet, namely, Man. They have been created to help Man fulfil his supreme mission. Like all life on the planet, they were created by God to help Man realise his grand destiny... But Man...

I looked at the creatures in the glade and began to realise that my son really did have a serious problem on his hands: he could not simply abandon these creatures. Nor could he bring himself to give up his dream about the girl he would be setting up a domain with.

"Yes, Volodya, that really is a problem," I told my son. "Doesn't look as though there's any solution. Not one we can find."

"There *is* a solution, Papa, but it does not depend on me."

"On whom, then?"

"*You* are the only one who can solve this problem, Papa."

"Me? And just how am I supposed to do that? There's nothing *I* can do here, son."



There is a solution

"I think, Papa, that you will be able to help me if you really want to," said Volodya quietly.

"You think so? But, you see, I have no idea what to do. *You* may think so, but I have no idea."

I was still sitting on the grass, while Volodya stood in front of me, looking me in the eye with some kind of an imploring gaze, his lips whispering something inaudible. I could tell by his lips that he was saying one particular word over and over again. Then, without taking his eyes away, he said it distinctly:

"*Sis-ter*. I earnestly beg of you, Papa, to bear me a sister, together with Mama. I shall nurse her and raise her myself. They will help me. We shall not distract you and Mama from your activities. I shall teach her, when she grows a little. I shall tell her about everything. She will remain here with my creatures and my Space.

"Bear me a sister, together with Mama. Unless, of course, you are ill... or are too tired. That is, of course, if you can. Grandfather told me that men in your world often get ill and grow older faster because of the way of life there, the air not fit to breathe and the foul water. You are a little past fifty years old, Papa. But if you are tired, Papa... If your strength is pretty much exhausted... Then spend three days with me. Just three days. I have everything all prepared, and a great deal of strength will be restored to you."

My son was excited, and I interrupted him.

"Wait, Volodya, calm down. Of course I'm a little tired. But I think I'll have enough strength. That's not the point. In principle I have nothing against giving you a sister, but when it comes to bearing children, a desire on the part of *both* parents is required."

"I am sure of it, Papa. I know for certain that Mama will not refuse. If you agree, let us not waste any time, but begin right now to prepare for the birth of my sister. I have been studying up on it. Grandfather has helped me a great deal. I have made calculations and have everything prepared. Stay with me three days and three nights, and do not go off anywhere, and do not get distracted by anything, Papa. Your energy and strength will increase."

"What makes you think I don't have enough energy or strength, Volodya?"

"I think you have enough, but you shall have more."

"Okay, I shall spend all three days with you alone, but we must go and let Mama know."

"I shall explain everything to her myself, Papa. I shall tell her we have a common project. She will not go into specifics and will not object."

"Well, all right, then, let's get started."

I even began to wonder what my son had prepared that would restore a great deal of strength and energy to Man after only three days. And I shall say right off that the procedures he prepared may seem rather strange, but the sensation resulting from them on the third day defies explanation in words or writing.

It wouldn't be appropriate, either, to say that a Man becomes ten or twenty years younger, though he may indeed look as much as five years younger. But on the *inside*... Somehow everything inside me seemed to be working differently. Not only did I have new strength, but the world around me seemed just a bit different.

CHAPTER FOUR



Rejuvenation

First ordeal

No sooner had I agreed to follow through with the procedures thought up by my son than he signalled the assembled creatures to *go away*. He grasped hold of my hand, and we ran down to the lake. Volodya stopped several times along the way to pick herbs in various places, which he softened and rolled into a ball. When the ball was ready, he instructed me to eat it, which I did. And in just a few minutes I noticed a heavy drip of snot exuding from my nose and I began to vomit. It seemed that all my stomach juices had been pumped out. I was unable to speak for all the vomiting, while Volodya explained:

“That is good, Papa. Do not be afraid. It is good for all that useless stuff to come out of you. Only a pure state will remain. This is what they do in cases of poisoning.”

I was physically unable to offer any kind of answer, but thought to myself: *That's true: poisoning victims drink tablets which produce nausea and vomiting. There are laxatives, of course — castor oil, for example. But what do I need this ordeal for? I haven't been poisoned.*

As though he had tuned in to my question, Volodya explained:

“You, of course, have not been poisoned, Papa, but the food you have been consuming is right on the verge of having a poisoning effect. Just let go of everything filthy inside you.”

After the vomiting and the discharge of the phlegm from my nose, along with a copious flow of tears from my eyes,

I began having a series of soft bowel movements, and five times I ended up running into the bushes for a lengthy period. The whole procedure lasted two to three hours. Then came relief.

“Now do you feel better, Papa? Better than before? Eh?”

“Yes,” I affirmed.



Second ordeal

Volodya once again took hold of my hand and off we ran. When we reached the shore of the lake, he instructed me to wash myself and swim around a bit. Upon coming out of the water, I noticed him extracting a clay jar from a hole in the ground, about a litre and a half in size.

“Now, Papa, you need to drink this water. It is called *dead water* — because it contains very few microbes. This water should not be drunk if the air is polluted. But we have pure air here, so it is all right to drink dead water. It will rinse your insides and cleanse them, and wash out a lot of microbes and bacteria from your body. Drink as much as you can, Papa. When you have drunk up this whole jar, I shall give you another, and when you have finished that I shall give you a third jar, containing living water. And all the microbes and bacteria you need will be restored in a balance that is just right for you.”

I should point out right off that Volodya and his family consider dead water to be that found at great depths below the Earth's surface and containing a minimum of bacteria. I believe our mineral water in bottles is precisely what they call

dead water. In any case, I think *all* of our drinking water is dead water, and that is why our children suffer from disbacteriosis, especially newborns.

Living water, on the other hand, they consider to be surface water from pure streams or bodies of water, a few of which have indeed been preserved in the depths of the Siberian taiga.

There's something I wish to emphasise here. Grandfather later explained to me that spring water is not considered living water when you drink it right out of the spring. To be considered 'living water', it must first be kept for three hours or so in a wooden or clay vessel with a wide neck.

"Living water needs to absorb sunlight," he said. "With the aid of sunlight, organisms are generated which are indispensable to human life. You call them microbes and bacteria."

Then the water should stand in the shade for at least another three hours. After that it can be drunk as 'living water'.



Third ordeal

"So take a drink whenever you feel like it, Papa. In the meantime we shall proceed to the next phase. Usually, for people polluted by the outside world, this whole process takes about nineteen days, Grandfather said, though it is even better to stretch it out over thirty-three days. Since you do not have that kind of time, I have shortened it for you down to three days, but we shall manage. Come with me to another spot — I have set up a particular device there."

We walked about a hundred metres away from the lake, and there amidst a group of trees I saw a place prepared for me to lie down, made of dried grasses. Next to this lay four ropes made of woven nettle fibres or flax.

At one end of each rope there was a noose, while the other was tied to a tree. After I lay down, Volodya put each of my hands and feet through a noose, tugged on them a little and began tightening them with the aid of sticks placed half-way along each rope. After a little tugging, as though trying to literally quarter my body, he jerked each of my hands and feet in turn. I could feel a crunch in my joints. Then he tightened the rope even more, saying:

"Papa, you need to lie like this for an hour on your stomach and an hour on your back. And so that it will not be boring for you and even more beneficial, I shall give you an invigorating massage. And you can just relax, or even go to sleep, if you like."

My son and I went through this procedure two hours each day on all three days.

As I later found out from Grandfather, this procedure served to lubricate all my joints. It is especially important for elderly people. It can even add to one's height, since it straightens out the spinal column. But the main benefit is increased lubrication of the joints. Think about it: when we walk or run or work out in the gym to pump up our muscles, almost all exercise involves increased pressure on our joints. In Volodya's procedure, though, it is exactly the opposite: the pressure is taken off.

Each time during the stretching procedure, Volodya gave me a massage. On the second day he rubbed down my body with some sort of sweetish juice or tea, and a whole lot of insects crawled over me. I had been told earlier by Anastasia that they served to cleanse the pores of my skin.¹ In our own living conditions, the pores of the skin can be cleansed by

going to a Russian *banya* and applying, for example, a birch besom.² When a Man steams and sweats, the pores of his skin are cleansed, too.

Interspersed with the stretching procedures we did some fairly common exercises: running, swimming, chinning ourselves on the bough of a tree (using it as one would an exercise bar). About three times a day Volodya suggested I do a handstand, head down, and hold the position for as long as I possibly could. I stood like that, my legs leaning against a tree trunk. This, too, is a rather interesting procedure: a lot of blood rushes to one's face, making it tense up and causing a smoothing of the wrinkles.

For the whole three days we lived on cedar milk, flower pollen, cedar nut oil, berries and a small quantity of dried mushrooms (all this is available in our society). Going through all the procedures thought up by my son and reflecting on how they could be adapted to our conditions, I came to the general conclusion that all this can be done effectively back home. One can even use body-cleansing agents available in pharmacies, as well as making use of diuretic remedies and fasting. It is not difficult to obtain dead water either — all water sold in bottles today is dead water. You can get living water, too, if you have access to a pure wellspring.

You begin to feel the healing effects of these procedures right off.



¹See Book 1, Chapter 25: "Bugs".

²*banya, birch besom* — see footnote 20 in Book 2, Chapter 1: "Alien or man?". Besoms may be made from other types of wood as well — oak or juniper, for example.

A mysterious procedure

But included in this set of procedures was a rather mysterious one, which would be quite a challenge to replicate under our conditions, although maybe someone will have an idea and let me know. I shall describe it in detail. Three times a day — morning, just before lunch and just after three o'clock in the afternoon (more or less) — my son gave me some tea to drink which he had prepared.

Each time when the hour came for me to take the tea, Volodya would run off to his hiding-place and bring back a small jar of this tea, which he invited me to drink, but no more than one swallow at a time. The first time he did this, he said:

“Take a drink of this tea, Papa, and remember how big a swallow you took. As soon as you have drunk it, lie down on the grass, and I shall listen to what is happening with your heart.”

I drank the tea and lay down on the grass. Volodya put his little hand on my chest and kept very still. Within a few moments I felt either a warming or a tingling sensation in different parts of my body. My heart began to beat furiously. It wasn't as though it had started beating any faster — I had the sensation of my heart muscles expanding normally, but contracting much more sharply than usual, forcing out the blood.

As I was later informed by specialists, in cases of a vigorous and sharp blood flow through places where the capillary vessels are partially blocked, warming and tingling sensations can be expected.

Volodya listened to my heart-beat for several minutes, and then said:

“Everything is fine, Papa. Your heart can actually withstand an even larger swallow. But it is best not to take any chances. The next time take a slightly smaller swallow.”

When I asked my son why he was giving me this tea and what its composition was, he replied as follows:

"This tea, Papa, will give you a great deal of strength, and help you recover from any diseases you may have. But, most importantly, it will enable you to discover the strength and energy you will need for the birth of my sister."

"What, d'you think I don't have enough already?"

"Perhaps. But now you will have strength and energy in abundance, and in the exact balance you need."

"Are they permanent, or will I use them up with the birth of the child?"

"For bearing subsequent children you will need to drink this tea once more. After all, *they* do it this way each time."

"And just who might 'they' be?"

"Sables and other animals. I only studied the sable's actions. It was Grandfather who advised me as to when, at what time and for how many days I needed to watch them in particular."

"And how does Grandfather know about all that?"

"Grandfather, you see, Papa, has all the knowledge of the great wise priests of yore. Even knowledge that has been forgotten by the priests of today. And even knowledge that was secret many thousands of years ago. This tea was taken by the priests before the birth of their children, also before death, so that they could remain immortal."

"What d'you mean, 'before death, so that they could remain immortal?'"

"Well, I mean, so that everyone would think they were dead — whereas, in fact, they only changed bodies and were reincarnated on the spot, and all their information stayed with them. There are other methods of quick reincarnation, but very few that will allow the retention of the information possessed at the time of death. That is why people can be reborn but still have to study life all over again, learn

everything right from scratch, and they are unable to compare the present world with the past. And they get confused in their life because they include no knowledge of life and no feelings capable of sensing God."

"But with Grandfather, all the information about the past, you're saying, has been retained?"

"Yes, Papa. Our Grandfather is a great priest and wise-man. There is only one person living on the Earth today who significantly surpasses him in power."

"Where is he living right now, this strongest and wisest one — do you know? You must be talking about the high priest?"

"I am talking about our Mama Anastasia, Papa."

"Anastasia? But how could she have more information and greater knowledge than your great-grandfather?"

"Grandfather says he is hindered by too much information. And he can forget things. But Mama experiences no such hindrance, because there is no information contained in her."

"What d'you mean? Which is it — does she really know more, or has she no knowledge at all?"

"I did not express myself quite accurately, Papa. With Mama Anastasia all the information... how shall I put it?... she has a great deal more, only it is compressed in the form of feelings. And whenever she needs to, she is able to feel in a single moment something that Grandfather might require a day or two, or even more, to think about."

"I can't say I understand everything you've said, but it is interesting. Tell me more. What about you? Does this mean that you don't possess information about the past, seeing how you've had to consult with Grandfather?"

"That is correct."

"Why? You mean to say you're mentally inferior to them — Grandfather and Great-grandfather? And what do they tell you about this? Grandfather probably tells you that I'm to blame?"

"Grandfather never told me anything like that."

"But what about Mama? What did she say?"

"I asked Mama why I do not know as much as my forebears. And not as much as she, or even you, Papa. And this was her answer:

"All the truths of the Universe, son, and all the information accumulated right from its pristine origins, has always been available to every Man, nothing hidden. Not everybody is capable of understanding it and making it their own, because their life-goals and the aspirations of their souls do not correspond to those of the Universe. Man has free will in everything, and is free to choose a path other than that of the Universe. But God is free too, as to when, how and to whom He gives a hint. You must not worry about information that is lacking in you. Seek out your dream and know that the whole will be offered to you in full, if the dream that is born within you is worthy of co-creation."

"Hmmm... So tell me, Volodya, what do *you* make of all that?"

"Once my dream and life-goal are created in all their detail, all the knowledge I need to turn the dream into reality will be born in me all on its own, without fail."

"But in the meantime, then, you will go on consulting with Grandfather?"

"Yes, with Grandfather, and Mama, and you, and I shall try to ponder life all on my own."

"Does that mean I have to consult with Grandfather about the recipe for the extraordinary tea you've been giving me these past three days?"

"When it comes to the recipe, I can tell you about that myself."

"Then tell me."

"This recipe was prepared using taiga herbs. So that I would be able to know which herbs to choose, and in what

correlation, for three days and nights I observed a sable — one that likewise had an aspiration to be a father. Grandfather told me that the female sable will not allow her mate to approach her if he fails to prepare himself properly. And I observed what herbs he ate during those days, and at what time he chose to pick them. That, too, turned out to be important. All the herbs he ate I gathered as well, only I had to gather a larger store of them, since you, Papa, I can tell, weigh quite a bit more than a sable.

“Once I had gathered samples of a particular kind of herb, I would put them into a vessel and grind them down with a pestle until a juice emerged. All this time I thought only good and pleasant thoughts — about you, Papa, about Mama, and about my future sister. Then I would take the paste which resulted and empty it into a clay jar. I poured water over the jar’s contents and added cedar oil so that it formed a film on top. When you drank that swallow of tea, Father, and your heart started beating a bit faster, I could tell the tea had turned out well.”

As I listened to my son, I thought: *Not many people have the opportunity to observe a sable in its natural surroundings. But perhaps they could keep watch on what herbs a cat or a dog eats, for example. For that it would be necessary to carry or transport these pets into a forest and follow their behaviour, and, if possible, identify which herbs they ate.*

I was most interested in the tea recipe which my son followed, since just three days’ using it produced a palpable effect, while Volodya had indicated a complete therapy course ought to last either nineteen or thirty-three days. That means that after a full-term course, in combination with the other exercises, Man can really free himself from many ills, halt his body’s ageing process and rejuvenate himself in some sense of the word. I want to stress that even this three-day application in practice confirms that such an effect is possible. Then

there is folk wisdom, too, to take into account, as well as the scientific basis of these procedures.

Of course people have gone to chemists' or drug stores and seen the herbal mixtures our pharmaceutical industry has to offer for the treatment of a variety of ailments.³ Many know that in Nature there are a whole lot of medicinal plants. But not everyone knows that these can only be really effective, either prophylactically or therapeutically, if they are picked on the right day and at the right time of day.

As to preparing herbal mixtures, along with everything else must be considered the way medicinal herbs correlate with each other. As we can see, there are too many factors that need to be known in order to prepare a mixture like Volodya's. And it is highly doubtful whether any of our herbal healers today knows about all the factors involved.

I very much wanted to take this opportunity of presenting, as a gift to my readers, a recipe for body restoration never before published anywhere in the world, and in a simpler form than Volodya's, so that it will be easily accessible to the majority of people.

Directly my son's three-day therapy course came to an end, he informed me he would like to go to bed earlier than was his custom (it turned out that he barely managed to get two or three hours' sleep a night the past three nights), and he dozed off immediately, while I started heading back toward Anastasia's glade.

I was fascinated by two questions. First, why did our son not possess a knowledge of the past, as did Grandfather? And secondly, was there any way of simplifying the recipe for the tea which he had prepared for me?

³In Russia today almost all pharmacies carry a large selection of dried medicinal plants, with their healing properties clearly marked on each package.



A vision

Thoughts of food, however, were gradually relegated to the back burner as I began to concentrate more and more on thoughts of my future daughter. On the one hand, it wouldn't be a bad thing at all if Anastasia gave birth to a daughter as well as a son. But on the other hand, when this daughter gets older, she will either have her own Space or inherit the Space created by my son and face the same problems Volodya is having to deal with right now. Besides, who could she possibly marry, here in the taiga?

She could go off into our world, but that wouldn't be easy either. It would mean leaving her own Space and her loyal animal friends. And I can't imagine any young man agreeing to come and live with her in the taiga. It's not all that comfortable here in the wilds for someone from the outside. And, to be honest about it, that includes me. It is interesting to talk with Anastasia — I would even say her company is alluring. When I'm with her, I feel a sense of peace and joy in my heart. But when I'm left all alone and she's not around, I feel uncomfortable, to say the least — even a bit fearful.

The creatures treat Anastasia and our son quite differently from me. Of course they don't attack me, but whenever we meet, they still regard me with an air of suspicion. I once attempted — in Anastasia's presence — to command the squirrels to bring me some cedar cones. I made the same gestures as Anastasia, but there was no reaction from the squirrels. Another time I tried calling the she-wolf. Just like Anastasia, I held out my hand to her, then clapped it against my thigh.

But instead of running toward me, she stood rooted to the spot, and her hackles stood on end in a show of aggression. And I lost any desire to further communicate with these creatures. I realised that they could be loyal only to one specific Man in perpetuity.

So it could turn out that some young man comes to see our daughter in the taiga and he will not feel comfortable in her Space. Volodya has not given sufficient thought to his sister's future. Turns out he feels sorry for the creatures, but apparently not for his sister. And I didn't think about it either — I absent-mindedly gave him encouragement.

Immersed in these thoughts, I was surprised to discover that I had already arrived at Anastasia's glade. No sooner had I taken a few steps in the direction of the familiar dug-out than I noticed Anastasia herself standing there, her body half-turned to me, combing her long hair with her hands. I stopped dead in my tracks: she did not look at all like the same woman I had known for the past ten years. And when she turned to face me, my legs became jelly, my heart began throbbing and I realised I could not move from the spot.

Just ten to fifteen paces from me stood a woman who looked the picture of a fairy-tale vision. She was wearing a long, sheer, light-coloured dress down to her ankles, almost like a ball gown, gathered with a belt around her slender waist. Her head was crowned with a wreath woven of grasses and flowers, like a diadem. Her golden hair hung in wavelets around her shoulders. But that wasn't all! Her stately figure and face were so beautiful as to defy any possible description.

I stood there, afraid to move, my gaze unblinkingly fixed on Anastasia. It seemed as though if I took my eyes away I would lose consciousness. My head began spinning, but I continued to gaze at her without blinking. I found myself digging my nails forcefully into my hand, seeking escape in pain from this extraordinary state of mind. But I hardly felt any pain at all.

And as this uniquely beautiful woman gradually and graciously approached me, I lost all sensation, not just of pain but of any part of my physique. She slowly came right up to me, and I recall feeling the enchanting fragrance of her body. I could sense her light breathing and... I lost consciousness.

When I woke up I was lying on the ground. Anastasia was sitting beside me, massaging my temples and the bridge of my nose. Her diadem-wreath was gone, and her hair was brushed back and tied with a blade of grass. I felt an almost complete calm as I gazed into those tender greyish-blue eyes which had become so dear to me. And I finally came to myself upon hearing her voice:

"What happened to you, Vladimir? Did you get overtired, or did our son somehow upset you?"

"Our son... No, quite to the contrary, he has been giving me treatments these past three days. We went through a series of exercises."

"And you overexerted yourselves?"

"Volodya did. He fell asleep. By contrast, I've begun to feel very good indeed."

"Then why did you lose consciousness? Your heart was throbbing and has still not completely calmed down."

"Because... Oh, Anastasia, why did you dress up that way? Your hair's somehow different. And the way you walked as you approached me — that was unusual, too."

"I wanted to do something nice for you, Vladimir. After all, you are more accustomed to look at women in fancy clothes. I thought you and I could take a walk together through the taiga or along the lakeshore. And here you are lying down. If you want to have a rest, let us go to the dug-out, and there you can have a nap."

"First let's go and take a walk, as you proposed," I said as I rose to my feet. "Only you, Anastasia, walk behind me, please."

"Why?"

"Because... Yes, I am more accustomed to looking at women in fancy clothes, as you say. But it is better for me if you don't dress up that way, or wear your hair like that, or adorn yourself like that."

"You did not like the way I looked, Vladimir?" enquired Anastasia, as she trotted along behind me.

"That's not it. I liked it very much. Only, in future, do it just one step at a time. Your hair first, for example. And then spend some time wearing it that way. Then you can put on your diadem-wreath, and a day or two later the dress. Only without the belt to start with, and afterward you can put on the belt. You see, if you do everything at once, it's really hard for me to get accustomed to. It looks strange."

"Strange? Does that mean you did not recognise me, Vladimir?"

"I recognised you. But... It's just that I was simply overwhelmed with your beauty, Anastasia."

"Aha, you admit it! You admit it! That means you really think I am beautiful? Eh?"

I felt her hands resting on my shoulders, and I stopped. Then I closed my eyes, turned around and replied:

"You, Anastasia, are not just beautiful. You are..."

She pressed herself against me, putting her head on my shoulder.

"Our son, Anastasia," I went on, in a whisper, "would like to have a little sister."

"And I would like you and me, Vladimir, to have a daughter," Anastasia quietly responded.

"May she have your looks, Anastasia!"

"And may our daughter be like you..."



I shall not describe that night. Or the following morning. They are beyond description. But I shall say one thing to my men-readers: if any of you manage to see a goddess in the woman you know, your days and nights — many, many days and nights, in fact — will be divine. All the miseries of the past will vanish before them. And there will be no more storms to darken your day. I'm not talking about sentimentality here, nor about beautiful words and professions of love. The whole point is...

In any case, let each figure it out for themselves, if they can and wish to do so.

CHAPTER FIVE



Divine nutrition

It was only several days later that I remembered I wanted to find out from Anastasia the recipe for the therapeutic tea, as well as the overall method of correct nutrition or dietetics for my readers. It's a good thing I remembered. It seems that Anastasia knew about an unusual — I might say, unique — method of nutrition which can be applied even to city living conditions.

To my surprise, instead of giving me the tea recipe right off, Anastasia began talking about Man's capabilities, about patients and healers. We had spoken of this on several other occasions, but what she had to tell me this time was indeed interesting.

"Reality, Vladimir, must be defined only through one's self. Every Man living on the Earth today is capable of seeing into the lives of people thousands of years ago, of looking into the future, and of creating his own future. All have this tremendous ability within themselves. It just needs to be understood. Once it is understood, then nobody can lead them away from the truth. People will come into harmony with each other, and endless warfare will cease.

"A lot of efforts have been made to distort past reality. The possibility of distortion arises when Man abandons his own reasoning powers and forms constructs of the past based on somebody else's words and conclusions."

"It is not entirely clear to me, Anastasia, how every Man on the Earth can arrive at a knowledge of people living in centuries past, let alone past millennia. There is a whole science,

too, exclusively devoted to studying the history of mankind. But even today scholars argue over Man's origin and purpose. Historical events are interpreted in different ways."

"In different ways? — does that mean there are correct and incorrect interpretations? Or perhaps there is some distortion in the way they *all* describe the past? As a rule, the distortions are introduced for someone's particular benefit. But when you, all by yourself, recreate scenes of the past within yourself, you will see the truth — you will determine your purpose and place in the Universe."

"But how, for example, would I be able to see historical scenes of thousands of years ago all on my own?"

"You can picture them through logical thinking. And even the life of the Vedruss civilisation will appear to you."

"And what should I think logically about?"

"About images of people you have seen over the half-century of your life, and the changes that have taken place in them."

"It's still not too clear to me just how I should be thinking."

"It will become clear if you are not too lazy to think. Come, Vladimir, let us begin together, and you can continue on your own, and every Man may recreate scenes of the past, in order to integrate the very best parts into his future."

"All right then, but you be the first to start."

"I shall begin. Look hard and, if you can, add details — they are important. Today you see a whole lot of hospitals and pharmacies with medicines for thousands of ailments."

"Yes, that's something everyone can see. What of it?"

"Do you recall that just thirty years ago there were fewer of them?"

"Yes, of course."

"And how many were there a hundred or two hundred years ago?"

"A lot fewer. Everybody knows that modern medical science is only a little over two hundred years old."

"You see, your own logic has led you to a conclusion: not too long ago there were no hospitals at all. Now think, and recall: who treated people in cases of illness?"

"Who?"

"You yourself lived in a village and saw how your grandmother gave your father and mother herb teas to drink."

"In that village it wasn't just my grandmother who could bring about cures — there were others too."

"And in every human settlement there were most certainly people who gathered and preserved therapeutic herbs. And every Man could obtain help right away, whether he came down with a minor ailment or even a serious disease. And payment for help was a pittance, often just a simple 'thank you' sufficed."

"Well, sure, they were neighbours, after all. And there were plenty of herbs to be found all around."

"Yes, there were very many useful herbs. And many people were aware of the properties of these herbs."

"Of course they were. I myself knew about some of them, but now I've forgotten."

"You see, you have forgotten. Many people have forgotten. What does a Man do today if he gets a scratch or a cut?"

"He goes to a pharmacy, buys a bandage or a band-aid and sticks it on the wound."

"He spends time getting to the pharmacy and spends money when he is there. By contrast, in the past, every child knew that if you apply a plantain leaf directly to a wound, the wound will quickly heal and there will be no infection."

"I know that too, but today in many places the herbs are contaminated. All around, you find noxious fumes from cars, dust, acid rain..."

"Yes, you are right. But that is not the point. When we talk about images of the past, you could draw the conclusion

that Man's knowledge of curing people in the past was superior to that of people today."

"It would seem that way."

"I hear a note of doubt or uncertainty in your voice, Vladimir. In that case the image will not appear before you. You must be absolutely certain in the force of your confidence. Or in your rejection. Continue to pursue the course of logic."

"You see, Anastasia, all logic, too, tells me that Man's knowledge in the area of folk medicine in the past was significantly greater than that possessed by people today. One might even say, immeasurably greater. It follows that the services effected on the basis of this knowledge were significantly more perfected than today. But somehow it is challenging to suddenly find that all our modern hospitals, pharmacies and medical institutions are completely superfluous. It simply boggles the mind!

"When someone in the Vedruss civilisation — our ancestor — came down with an ailment, he would eat a herb or drink a tea, and the ailment was gone. When someone in *our* civilisation takes ill, he goes to the hospital, pays a fee to be seen by a doctor, the doctor prescribes some kind of pills or shots, and the patient has to pay again for the drugs, often quite dearly so. And then in lots of cases the drugs turn out to be counterfeit. Officials from the Ministry of Health say that up to 30% of the drugs sold at our pharmacies are counterfeit.

"And then a whole bunch of terrible new diseases keep popping up. It's as though someone deliberately erased the perfect knowledge we once had and replaced it with something less efficient or even illusory. Moreover, official medicine still today treats folk healers with a fair degree of scepticism, probably because it sees them as competition. But why do not the state and society realise that for hundreds and thousands of

years mankind has efficiently healed itself through folk medicine, accumulating a huge amount of experience over this time, and hence this deserves to be developed and studied? And, in the final analysis, to be taught in the schools?

"But that would mean all the businesses involved in modern medicine would collapse... incredible! Simply incredible, Anastasia! I think I'm beginning to understand: modern medicine is not as much about curing people as about running a business! And if it's business we're talking about, that means that all the companies making pills find it much more profitable when people are ill. The more sick people there are, the more income will kick in for the drug companies. By the laws of business, in such a situation the number of sick people will quickly begin to steadily increase. It's a vicious circle. I'm becoming more and more convinced that health care in the distant past was much more rational and effective than today. Only there are a few historical facts that are standing in the way of a final conclusion."

"What kind of facts, Vladimir?"

"Well, for instance, history has recorded epidemic outbreaks of plagues, smallpox and leprosy. Some history textbooks say that whole settlements died out. Did that really happen?"

"Yes, it did."

"But now, through the help of modern medicine, the plagues have been beaten, along with cholera and smallpox. For example, they inoculate everyone against smallpox and that's the end of it. That means that the folk healers of the past were defeated by these diseases, while modern medicine has succeeded."

"That is not true, Vladimir. Take a closer look at the timeframes and put simple facts together. These epidemic outbreaks you speak of began happening at a time when folk healers were subjected to persecution. Many of them were

even put to death. During the occult ages¹ they were seen as a threat to the authorities. Both then and now it was believed that pagans worshipped Nature and were unspiritual people. This is not true: pagans respected Nature as the creation of God. And they had knowledge of many of the Divine creations which people are ignorant of today.”

“That’s enough, Anastasia. I no longer have any doubts. It is plain that modern medical science is a long ways from the science of folk medicine. I’m convinced of that. But why did you go to such pains to persuade me?”

“It was not just for you. I wanted your readers, too, to be able to understand by comparing facts.”

“But what for?”

“When one fact is proved beyond a shadow of a doubt, other indisputable conclusions will come about. They may seem incredible, but please do not be so easily amazed, Vladimir.”

“What incredible conclusions, for example?”

“First, answer this question. Tell me how people — the majority of people — explain how mankind in ancient times possessed such colossal information about Nature.”

“What d’you mean, how? If you’re talking about the prescriptions of folk medicine, it’s quite clear they were passed down from generation to generation.”

“All right, that may be. But I think you will agree that for each of the thousands of prescriptions, there had to be an original author.”

“According to logic, of course, there had to be, but now it is no longer possible to trace the authorship of these prescriptions.”

“It is possible! All the knowledge of the grand creation was imparted by the Creator to each and every one without

¹For more information on the occult ages, see Book 6, Chapter 8: “Occultism”.

exception. This I shall prove to you, Vladimir, and to everybody. Do not be too hasty to dismiss what I say as incredible."

"I shall try not to. Go on."

"People think that originally Man was many times more feeble-minded than today. But that is not true, Vladimir. People of pristine origins had Divine knowledge right from the beginning."

"But what d'you mean, 'from the beginning', Anastasia? What, did God Himself write out prescriptions for a whole bunch of herbal treatments? Historians' descriptions allude to mankind gradually accumulating its knowledge over the centuries."

"But to pursue the course of logic to its end, that particular allusion would lead to a different conclusion."

"What kind of conclusion?"

"It would follow from that that Man is not the perfect creation of God but the most underdeveloped of all creatures that ever lived on the Earth!"

"How does that follow?"

"Think about it. Your dog knows what herbs she needs to eat when she comes down with an ailment. And a cat will know to run to the forest to find a herb she requires. But nobody wrote them a prescription. A bee knows all about extracting nectar from a flower, building a honeycomb and storing honey in it, and gathering pollen. And what raising the next generation is all about. If one link in the chain of knowledge the bee family is endowed with should be removed, the whole family would die out.

"But bees continue to exist today. And that can only mean one thing: the Creator has given them all the knowledge they need right from the start, right at the moment of their creation. And that is why the bees have not died out, but have lived for millions of years, and are still building their unique

honeycombs even today, just as in the first moment of their creation. And the ants, too, continue to build their homes. And flowers continue to unfold their petals with the advance of each new dawn, just as on the first day of their creation. And the apple, pear and cherry trees know exactly what kind of juices they need from the ground to grow their fruit. All information is given to them right at their inception, right at the moment of their creation. And Man is no exception.”

“Yes... Incredible. All logic really does lead to that conclusion. And that means... Hold on — just where is all this knowledge right now?”

“It is preserved in every single Man. And the therapeutic recipe for the healing herbal tea is one that every Man is free to compile for himself.”

“But how?”

“You see, Vladimir, God gave it to Man right from the beginning. It is capable of curing a great many diseases of the flesh and prolonging life. It is extremely simple, and at the same time not so simple. Man should be able to figure it out with his mind. Let me start with some pre-history.”



In the Vedruss civilisation everybody lived to be more than a hundred years old. And they knew no diseases of the flesh. They nourished themselves according to God’s prescription. Not arbitrarily and not haphazardly but with the greatest thoughtfulness the Creator specially arranged it so that the herbs, vegetables, berries and fruits did not ripen all at once, but one after the other in a strict sequence.

One ripened in the early spring, others over the summer, or later in the autumn. Their ripening time was determined by the moment when the specific fruit, vegetable or herb could offer the greatest benefit to Man. A Man living on his own domain, feeding himself as God prescribed, could not take ill. The type of food and the time of taking it had been determined for Man by God. Man himself decided the quantity of food, but not through reason — he ate as much as he liked. And his body could accurately determine, down to the gram, the required quantity of food.

In the autumn each family put up stores for the winter: berries, root vegetables, herbs, nuts and mushrooms. Over the winter, in every household a plate stood on the table, with little piles of produce from the summer harvest. All the members of the family were involved in their own activities, but whenever they felt hungry or thirsty, they would go over to the table and take what they needed without thinking about it. Note, Vladimir: they took what they needed *without thinking*. Their bodies knew exactly what kind of food was needed and in what quantity — everyone had been endowed with this ability by God. This ability can be revived now. All that is needed is information.

I have adapted the Vedruss method of nutrition for people of today. Try it yourself, and encourage others to try it. It goes as follows.

A Man living in a modern apartment needs to acquire a small quantity — a hundred or two hundred grams each — of all the vegetables, fruits and edible herbs growing in the region where he lives.

Before using any of this produce he should go a whole day without eating, drinking only spring water, and having a glass of red beet juice for lunch. After drinking the beet juice it is better not to leave his home. The stomach

and bowels will start undergoing an intensive cleansing process.

Upon awakening the following morning and feeling hungry, he should be able to take any vegetable, herb or piece of fruit and put it on a small plate. After sitting down at the table, he should carefully observe what is lying on the plate, sniff it, lick it and then eat it with an unhurried chewing. It is best to be alone in the room during this time, isolated from the sounds of the artificial world.

The feeling of hunger may not disappear after eating a single piece of food, or it may reappear after a short period of time. In that case he should select a second piece and eat it in the same manner as the first.

Man should take all the produce he has obtained and sample them in any sequence at short intervals.

The time for sampling any particular food is determined by the sensation of hunger.

The taking of food should definitely begin in the morning.

By the end of this day a Man should have sampled all locally grown produce. If there is a large variety available and one day is insufficient, the sampling can extend to the following day.

This procedure is extremely important. It will give many people's bodies, perhaps for the first time in their lives, a chance to become acquainted with the taste qualities and properties of the local produce, and to determine how needful it is to Man at a given moment and in what quantity.

Once the body has become familiar with all the produce, one should cut each vegetable into small pieces and lay them out on a large plate. Small clumps of greens and berries should also be put out, either alongside or on another plate. Any produce that will quickly spoil on the plate should be immersed in spring water.

Also on the table one should put honey, flower pollen, cedar oil and spring water. Man may go about his own daily affairs, but when he feels hungry he can go over to the table and pick up an item he likes (either with his hands or with a wooden spoon) and eat it.

It is possible some of the food may be eaten up completely, while the rest may be left untouched. This means that your personal wise physician and nutritionist — your body which was given to you by the Creator — selected for you what you needed at that moment, while what you did not need was left untouched.

The uneaten produce need not be put again on the table the following day. But after three days a complete variety should once again be displayed. It is possible that one's body will need something different by then.

In time Man will be able to determine which items can be temporarily excluded from his diet, so as not to waste his efforts in obtaining them. But it is possible that after a period of time his body will indeed have need of them again, and so from time to time one should lay out on the table as wide a variety as possible.

I know that people living in your world often need to be away from their dwellings, but even here one can adapt. For example, one can make or acquire a small birch-bark container, in which to put a portion of the food from the table. One's body will choose what is most required.

In case of an extended trip, one's body needs to become familiar with the produce available in the new territory, since, in spite of identical names, there may be significant taste differences.

In this method of nutrition, Vladimir, it is important to grasp one essential point: it is not only the animals that are able to determine which kinds of food will be most beneficial to their bodies at a given moment and in what

quantity. This knowledge is present, too, within every single Man.

Our son thought up everything correctly: to prepare the healing tea for you from taiga herbs, he decided to observe a sable. But if you yourself knew the taste of every herb, your body would be able to determine and select the herbs you need far more accurately than the sable.

When you get back to your apartment, allow your body to get to know the taste of all easily available produce. Do not mix the food together or add salt, otherwise your body will not be able to determine the value and significance of the produce.



This method by which any Man can compile his own dietary régime or recipe for healthful nutrition seemed to me to be most original and logical. The body's needs — in terms of quantity and variety of produce — will naturally differ from one individual to the next. Consequently, there cannot be a single recipe or dietary régime which is the same for all. But through the aid of the method proposed by Anastasia, every Man can make up his own individual régime, which will be as accurate and useful as possible for him.

It appears as though man-made recipes and prescriptions are not always beneficial to one's health. Instead, they tend to be technology-based and more convenient for the manufacturers and organisers of our modern nutrition industry. Take McDonald's, for example — one of the most powerful and influential corporations, known around the globe —

inculcating in the whole world a taste for uniform hamburgers and cheeseburgers along with packages of fried potatoes, roping in everybody under a single unitary norm. Such a system undoubtedly works very well to the manufacturer's advantage — uniform products, uniform equipment and preparation technology. How far removed such uniformity is from the natural method of nutrition, and how harmful!

More and more people all over the planet are becoming aware of this. Wednesday, 16 October 2002 (the UN's World Food Day),² became the annual official day of protest against McDonald's — a protest against the promotion of junk products under the guise of food, the use of aggressive child-oriented advertising campaigns, the cruel exploitation of workers, unethical treatment of animals, destruction of the environment and the world dominance of large corporations over our lives.

More and more, McDonald's is being held up by a worldwide circle of protesters as a symbol of contemporary capitalism. One after another, all across the globe lawsuits are being brought against American corporations dealing in 'junk food' — McDonald's, Kentucky Fried Chicken, Burger King and Wendy's — on behalf of millions of consumers led astray by the systematic and unethical promotion of harmful food products. These people have consequently suffered from obesity, heart ailments and a variety of other serious health

²*World Food Day* (also known as *World Nutrition Day*) — established in 1979 by the member countries of the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) to raise awareness of world poverty and hunger and to commemorate the founding of the FAO on 16 October 1945 in the city of Québec (Canada). A specific theme is selected for each year's celebration. The Worldwide Anti-McDonald's protest is an independent movement which chose their annual protest day to coincide with World Food Day. According to their literature, the Worldwide Anti-McDonald's Day has been marked since 1985.

problems. Concern over this health threat is growing everywhere in Europe and the USA, exacerbated by mad cow disease and the use of genetically modified feed, as well as direct consumption of genetically modified produce (e.g., potatoes and corn) and their traces in other products (chocolate, pastry etc.).

But is it only our nutritional system that is constructed with somebody's particular profit motive in mind? What about our contemporary governmental institutions?

Take, for example, our modern democratic society — how ideally suited is it to human life? I was most interested to hear what Anastasia would have to say about this.

"Tell me, Anastasia, if someone could construct a nutritional system for their own advantage at the expense of millions of people, I wonder whether our social order might have been deliberately set up with a similar motive."

"Indeed it has. Think about it, Vladimir: ages pass, and the names of your societal structures change, but their *raison d'être* remains the same — the exploitation of people."

"Well, it hasn't always been the same. For example, we used to have slavery, and now we have democracy. I think, under democracy there is far less exploitation than when we had slavery."

"Vladimir, would you like me to show you a scene from the past and tell you a parable?"

"I would."

"Then look and see."

CHAPTER SIX



Demon Cratius

The slaves walked slowly in single file, every one of them carrying a polished stone. Four lines of them, each line stretching a kilometre and a half long, from the stone quarries to the site where construction on the walled city had begun, under the watchful eyes of armed guards — one military guard for every ten slaves.¹

Off to one side, on the pinnacle of a thirteen-metre-high ‘mountain’ crafted out of polished stones, sat Cratius, one of the high priests. For the past four months he had been silently observing the construction activity. Nobody distracted him, not a single person dared interrupt his contemplation, even with a sideways glance.

Both slaves and guards accepted this artificial mountain with its throne on top as a fixed feature of the landscape. And nobody paid attention to the figure either sitting motionless on the throne or walking to and fro around the lookout platform atop the ‘mountain’. Cratius had set himself the task of restructuring the state, consolidating the power of the priests for a millennium, subjugating to them all the people of the Earth, turning all without exception (including national rulers) into slaves of the priests.



¹Anastasia’s narrative is told in the first part of this chapter without quotation-marks.

One day Cratius came down from his throne, leaving a double in his place. The priest changed his clothes and took off his wig. He gave orders to the captain of the guard to have him bound in chains like a simple slave and placed in the line behind a strong young slave named Nard.

Looking into the faces of the various slaves, Cratius had noticed that this young man in particular had a penetrating and purposeful look, not a wandering or detached gaze as did many of the others. Nard's countenance alternated between excitement and intense contemplation. *That means he's hatching some kind of plan*, the priest realised, but he wanted confirmation of the accuracy of this observation.

For two days running Cratius followed Nard's every move, silently hauling the stones, sitting beside him at mealtimes and sleeping next to him in the barracks. On the third night, directly the *Sleep!* command had been given, Cratius turned to the young slave and in a tone of bitterness and despair whispered to no one in particular:

"Will this situation keep up the rest of our lives?"

The priest watched as the young slave gave a shudder, and suddenly turned to face him. His eyes were sparkling, which was noticeable even in the dim torchlight of the cavernous barracks.

"It won't last much longer," the young slave whispered back. "I've been working out a plan. And you, old fellow, can be part of it!"

"What sort of plan?" the priest asked with a sigh of indifference.

Nard began to explain with an air of confidence and enthusiasm:

"You see, old man, soon you and I and all of us will be free men instead of slaves. Figure it out for yourself: there's just one guard for every ten of us. And one guard, too, for every

fifteen women slaves who do the cooking and sewing. When the time comes, if we all fall upon the guards at once, we can overpower them. It makes no difference that the guards are armed and we're in chains. We outnumber them ten to one, and our chains can also be used as weapons, to shield us from the blows of their swords. We'll disarm all the guards, tie them up and seize their weapons."

"Hold on there, young man," Cratius sighed again, and added with feigned indifference: "Your plan isn't completely thought through. Sure you can disarm the guards watching over us, but it won't be long before the ruler sends in replacements — a whole army, maybe — and he'll have the insurgents killed."

"I've thought of that, too, old man. We'll have to choose a time when the army's not around. And that time is coming. We've all noticed how the army's preparing for a campaign. They're getting provisions ready for a three-month trek. That means that in three months the army will arrive at its destination and engage the enemy in combat. It will be weakened in battle, but it will be victorious, and bring back many new slaves. They're already building new barracks to house them. We have to start disarming the guards just as soon as our ruler's army goes into battle. The couriers will need at least a month to go call it home, and it will take at least three months after that for the weakened army to return. By the time the four months are up we'll be ready to meet them. We'll have at least as many fighters as there are in the army. The slaves they seize will want to join us when they see what's happened. I've thought it all out in advance, old man."

"I see, young fellow, with your plan you can disarm the guards and overpower the army," the priest answered, already sounding more cheerful, and then added: "But what will become of the slaves after that, and what will happen with the rulers, the guards and the soldiers?"

"I haven't given too much thought to that. Only one thing comes to mind, though: whoever was a slave in the past will become a free man. Whoever's not a slave today will be a slave tomorrow," replied Nard with some hesitation, as though thinking aloud.

"But what about the priests? Tell me, young man, after your victory, will they be slaves or not?"

"The priests? Haven't thought about that either. But now I'm thinking: the priests can stay where they are. The slaves and rulers listen to them. Sometimes they're hard to understand, but I get the feeling they're harmless. Let them keep on telling their stories about the gods, but we know best how to live our lives and have a good time."

"Have a good time — that's great," responded the priest, and pretended he couldn't wait to get to sleep.

But there was no sleep for Cratius that night. Only contemplation. *Sure, he thought, the simplest course of action would be to report this to the ruler, and have them seize this young slave — he's clearly the chief instigator. But that won't solve the problem. The slaves will always have the desire to be freed from bondage. New leaders will emerge, new plans will be hatched, and as long as that goes on, the main threat to the state will always be from within.*

Cratius was faced with the challenge of working out a plan to enslave the whole world. He realised there was no way he could attain his goal through physical compulsion alone. What he needed to do was exert a psychological influence on every single individual, on whole nations of people. He had to bring about the thought of every single human being to the notion that *slavery is the highest bliss*. He had to launch a self-developing programme to disorient whole nations in space, time and ideas — especially in their literal perception of reality.

Cratius' thought was working faster and faster, he was no longer conscious of his body, or the heavy chains on his arms and legs. And all of a sudden, like a bolt of lightning, a

programme came to his thought. Even though all the details were still to be worked out, and he could not yet explain it to anyone else, he could already feel it within, exploding off the scale. Cratius was now feeling himself to be the omnipotent ruler of the world.

Lying on his bunk in chains, he was full of self-exultation: *Tomorrow morning when they're escorting us all to work, I'll give the secret signal and have the guards captain take me out of the line and remove the chains. I'll finalise my programme, say a few words and the world will start to change. Incredible! Just a few words, and the whole world will be subject to me, to my thoughts. God really has given to Man a power unequalled in the Universe — the power of human thought. It brings forth words which can change the course of history.*

The situation's turned out very well indeed. The slaves have prepared their plan of insurrection. It's logical, this plan, and is clearly capable of leading to an interim result very favourable to them. But with just a few words I shall ensure that not only they, but their future descendants, and the rulers of the Earth too, will be slaves for millennia to come.

In the morning, on Cratius' signal, the captain of the guard freed him from his chains. And the very next day the five other priests, along with the pharaoh, were invited to his observation platform. Cratius began his speech before the gathering as follows:

"What you are about to hear must not be noted down or passed along by any of you. There are no walls around us, and my words will be heard by no one but you. I have thought up a way of turning all people living on the Earth into slaves of our pharaoh. That is not something one can do even with the aid of vast numbers of troops and exhausting wars. But I shall accomplish it with a few simple sentences. All I need do is utter them and just two days later you will see how the world has begun to change.

“Take a look down there and you will see long lines of slaves in chains, each slave carrying a stone. They are guarded by a host of soldiers. The more slaves there are, the better for the state — or so we always thought. But the more slaves there are, the more we have to be afraid of their rebelling. So we increase the size of our guard.

“We are obliged to feed our slaves well, otherwise they will not be able to perform their heavy manual labour. But still they are lazy and inclined to rebellion. See how slowly they move, and the guards have become lazy and do not bother using their whips to beat even the strongest and healthiest slaves. But they will soon be moving much more quickly. They won’t need any guards. The guards themselves will be turned into slaves. This can be effected in the following way:

“Before sunset today heralds will be sent out everywhere to proclaim the pharaoh’s decree: *With the dawn of the new day all slaves will be granted complete freedom. For each stone brought to the city, the free men will receive one coin. The coins may be exchanged for food, clothing, housing, a palace in town, or even a whole town. From here on in, you are free people.*”

After the priests had let Cratius’ words sink in, one of them, the eldest, said:

“You are a demon, Cratius! The demonry resulting from your plan will cover most of the nations of the world.”

“So, I may indeed be a demon, and what I have thought up, people in the future may call democracy.”



At sunset the decree was proclaimed to the slaves. They were astounded. Many of them could not sleep at night, thinking about the new and happy life that lay ahead of them.

The next morning the priests and the pharaoh once again climbed up to the lookout platform atop the artificial mountain. They could not believe the scene unfolding before their eyes. Thousands of former slaves chasing one after the other, hauling the same stones as before. Dripping with sweat, many of them were carrying two stones apiece. Others with only one stone in their hands, were literally running, kicking up the dust as they ran. Some of the guards were also hauling stones. These people, who now considered themselves free — after all, they were no longer in chains — strove to obtain as many of the sought-after coins as they could, so that they could build a happy life for themselves.

Cratius remained at his post on the platform for several months after that, continuing to observe with satisfaction what was going on below. The transformation was colossal. Some of the slaves had organised themselves into groups and built themselves carts. Then they piled stones on top of the carts, and pushed them along, their skin covered in sweat.

They will invent many more devices, Cratius thought to himself with satisfaction. Internal services have already started — food and water delivery. Some slaves have been eating right on the go, not wanting to waste time going back to the barracks for a meal, and paying for the food delivery with the coins they've earned. Wow! They've also got doctors going around, offering help to people with physical needs right on the spot — also for coins. And they've appointed themselves traffic regulators. Soon they'll be choosing their own rulers and judges. Let them choose: after all, they consider themselves free now, whereas nothing has really changed — they're still hauling the same stones as before...

And so they have been running, down through the millennia right up to the present day, through the dust, sweating to carry the heavy stones. And today the descendants of those slaves still keep up their senseless running.



“You’re probably thinking of ordinary working people, Anastasia?” I observed. “Sure, anybody could agree with that. But you can’t apply the term *slaves* to heads of corporations, or government officials, or entrepreneurs.”

“Do you see a difference, Vladimir? If so, tell me what it is.”

“On the one hand you’ve got people labouring and hauling stones like slaves. The others are *in charge* of the hauling — or, in today’s terms, managing the operation.”

“But managing, after all, is still work, and often more complex work than slaves hauling stones.”

“Well, in a sense you’re right: entrepreneurs have a bit more thinking to do. Their thought is occupied with their work from morning ’til night. So, does that mean that the pharaohs, the presidents and chancellors are slaves, too?”

“Yes, that is correct. Even the priests have become slaves, the ones who dreamt up this whole fateful scheme.”

“But if there are slaves, there must also be slave-owners. Who are they, if you aren’t including even the priests in this category?”

“The slave-owner is the artificial world people have been creating themselves. And the guards sit within most people’s minds or bodies, whipping them and making them earn coins.”

"It's a sad scene indeed," I observed, "and it looks as though there's no way out. Over the past thousands of years empires have come and gone, religions and laws have changed, but in fact nothing has really changed: just as Man was a slave before, he remains one now. Tell me, is there any way this situation can be corrected?"

"There is."

"How? And who can do it?"

"The image."

"What d'you mean, *image*? What kind of image?"

"The image that offers people a different situation. Judge for yourself, Vladimir: people who control the world today through money believe that only power and money can bring happiness to Man. And all the people out there striving to earn a few coins have convinced them that they are right. But often — very often, in fact — the winners in this senseless rat-race are the ones who suffer the most. They reach illusory heights and feel, more acutely than others, the whole senselessness of their life. I shall show you a scene from the future — go ahead and describe it. Let it be played out in real life."

CHAPTER SEVEN



The billionaire

The billionaire John Heitzman was dying on the forty-second storey of his office tower. The whole floor had been converted into his personal apartment. Two bedrooms, a work-out gym, a swimming pool, a dining room and two studies had comprised his refuge for the past three years. During this time he had not left his apartment even once. Not once had he taken the express lift down to where the core of his financial and industrial empire was in full operation. Not once had he gone up to the roof, where his personal helicopter was on standby, replete with a full crew awaiting his command.

Three times a week John Heitzman retreated to one of his studies to receive four of his closest associates. At these brief sessions, which lasted no more than forty minutes, he listened to their reports with some indifference, and occasionally issued brief instructions. The billionaire's orders were never a subject for discussion — they were simply carried out swiftly and to the letter. The book value of the empire under his exclusive control kept increasing by an average 16.5% annually. Even over the past six months, when Heitzman ceased convening even his tri-weekly sessions altogether, the ledgers showed no decline in profits. The system he had created continued to run smoothly with no glitches.

Nobody knew the billionaire's true financial worth. His name was hardly ever mentioned in the press. Heitzman held strictly to the rule: *Money hates trouble*.

As a young man he had been admonished by his father along these lines:

“Let those upstart politicians strut their stuff on the TV screens and in the pages of the press. Let the presidents and governors spout their addresses to the people, assuring them all’s well. Let the billionaires in the public eye go gallivanting about the country with their fancy cars and bodyguards. That is not a course, my dear John, you yourself should follow. You should always remain in the shadows and use your power, the power of money, to control governments and presidents, the wealthy and the poor, in a variety of different countries. But they must never guess who is controlling them.

“The plan is simple in the extreme. I was the one who created the Monetary Fund, which lists the names of many different investors. In actual fact seventy percent of the fund’s capital has been invested by me under different names. On the surface, as far as the dimwit masses are concerned, the fund was created for the support of developing countries. In actual fact I created it as a device for collecting ‘tribute-money’ from all the countries involved.

“Here’s an example. Let’s say an armed conflict breaks out between two sides. One of them (more often, both) needs money. Let them have it — it will be repaid with interest. Or some country is experiencing a social upheaval and, again, money is required. Let them have it — it will be repaid with interest. Or two political forces come into conflict; one of them will get money through our agents, and once again it will be repaid with interest. Russia alone pays us an annual sum of three billion dollars.”

At age twenty, John Heitzman had especially enjoyed these discussions with his father. Despite his earlier severity and reticence to talk, one day the father summoned John to his office and invited him to make himself comfortable in a soft armchair by the fireplace, while he himself poured a cup of his son’s favourite coffee with cream and asked with a spark of genuine interest:

"How are your college studies going, John?"

"They're not always that interesting, Dad. I get the feeling the professors aren't too good at giving a clear and comprehensible explanation of the laws of economics."

"Good. An apt assessment. But more precisely: professors today can't explain the laws of economics because they haven't the faintest idea of them themselves. They think economics is the domain of economists. But it isn't. World economics is under the control of psychologists, philosophers and high-stakes players.

"When I was twenty, my father — your granddad, John — let me into the secrets of the management process. Now that *you're* twenty, I think you're worthy of inheriting this knowledge."

"Thanks, Dad," replied John. Thus began, in these fireside chats, lessons in the laws of economics one never hears about at university. The father taught his son using his own unique method. The whole educational process was conducted in these heart-to-heart conversations, on a good-natured tone, with examples and elements of play. The information the senior Heitzman revealed to his son was astounding. There was no way one could obtain it anywhere else, even in the most prestigious universities in the world.

"Tell me, John," asked the father, "do you know how many wealthy people there are in our country? Or in the world?"

"Their names are listed in business journals in order of their estate-value," replied John calmly.

"And where do we rank in these lists?"

This was the first time Father had used *we* instead of *I*. That meant he already considered him, John, a full partner. While he did not want to offend his father, John replied:

"Your name, Father, isn't included in these lists."

"Yes, you're right. I'm not there. Even though just our annual profit alone amounts to more than the whole estates of

many included in the lists. And my name isn't there because one's wallet should not be transparent. Many of these people work either directly or indirectly for our empire — for yours and mine, son."

"Dad, you must be a genius at economics. I can't even imagine how you can make such a huge empire pay us 'tribute-money' every year without military intervention. You've managed to set up such a tremendous economic operation!"

The senior Heitzman took a pair of fire tongs and gave a poke to the logs in the hearth. Then, without a word, he poured two glasses of light wine for his son and himself. It was only after his first wee sip that he finished explaining:

"You know, I didn't set up any operation at all. The capital under my control simply allows me to give orders, and others carry them out. Many analysts and government experts in various countries, even their presidents, would be astonished to learn that the current situation in their countries is not determined by their own actions, but rather by my will.

"Political technology centres, economics institutes, analytical think tanks and government agencies in many countries — none of them are aware that they're working along strict guidelines laid down by my departments. And I don't have all that many employees. For example, all of Russia's socio-economic policy and its military doctrine are determined and controlled by one department comprising four psychologists. Each psychologist has four secretaries. Not one of them knows about the activities of the others.

"I'll tell you how the control system works — it's really quite simple. But first, John, you should understand the true laws of economics — which you'll never get from any college professor. Professors don't even know they exist. Here's a law: in the conditions of a democratic society, presidents, governments, banks, as well as major and minor entrepreneurs in all countries work for a single entrepreneur, who

stands at the top of the economic pyramid. They worked for my father, now they're working for me, and soon they'll be working exclusively for you."

John Heitzman looked at his father and could scarcely take it all in. Certainly, he knew that his father was rich. But here they were talking about much more than riches — they were talking about supreme power, which was now going to be passed by inheritance to him, John. All this incredible information still had not sunk in completely. How could it be that, in a free and democratic society, everyone from presidents on down to the hundreds of thousands of firms, both major and minor — supposedly all separate legal entities — were in fact working for just one man, namely, his father?

"When I first heard from your granddad what I have just now shared with you, I had a hard time figuring it all out. Right now, John, you're probably in the same boat...

"But let me make one thing perfectly clear," the elder Heitzman went on. "There are wealthy people in this world. But for every wealthy person there is someone even wealthier. And there is one who is the wealthiest of all. All the other wealthy people — and, consequently, all the people under their control — work for him, the one who is the wealthiest of all. This is the law of the system under which we live.

"All this talk of unselfish aid to developing countries is nothing but a bluff. Sure, wealthy countries grant credit to developing countries through international funds, but in fact they do this simply to get back a healthy amount of interest in return for using their credit — in other words, to collect 'tribute-money'.

"Russia, for example, pays three billion dollars a year to the IMF, and this amount only represents the *interest* on the credit allotted to Russia. Many economists are aware that the basic financing for the IMF is provided by American capital. They realise that the extortionate interest rates on credit use

is siphoned off to the USA. But who they go to specifically, nobody knows. America as a country is simply a convenient shield in the capital game. And it is dependent on capital more than any other nation. Tell me, John, did you know that America has a national debt?"

"Yes, Dad, I know. It's an astronomical figure. Just last year it amounted to... And servicing the debt cost..."

"So, that means you realise that a country which loans to other countries at the same time takes out huge loans itself?"

"Through its own Federal Reserve?"

"And who does it belong to — this Federal Reserve?"

"It... It..."

John had never thought about whom America was in debt to, but as he tried to answer his father's question it suddenly dawned on him: in the United States of America every taxpayer pays into the Federal Reserve. The Federal Reserve of the USA is a private bank. And, consequently, all America is paying hundreds of billions of dollars to private individuals... or, to a single individual.



John Heitzman had never been flustered in his life. He led, as they say, a 'healthy lifestyle'. He did not drink or smoke, he maintained a healthful diet, and worked out every day in his private gymnasium. Only in the past six months he had stopped going to the gym. He had spent these six months lying in bed in one of his spacious bedrooms, crammed full with state-of-the-art medical equipment. Doctors maintained on-call shifts around the clock in the next room.

But John Heitzman did not trust modern medical science. He felt no need of even talking with his doctors. There was one professor of psychology, however, that he occasionally deigned to favour with brief answers. Heitzman did not even care to know his doctors' names, including the name of this professor, though he did make a note to himself that he was the most sincere and honest of the lot. The professor talked a good deal, but what he said often included not just medical assertions but also reasonings and a desire to determine the causes of a disease.

One day he came in all excited and announced right at the doorway:

"I spent all last night and all this morning thinking about your condition. I think I've discovered the cause of your illness! That means that once we've removed the cause, we can talk about a pretty quick recovery... Oh, sorry, Mr Heitzman — I forgot to say hello. Good afternoon, Mr Heitzman. I got a bit carried away with my ideas."

The billionaire did not answer the professor's greeting, or even turn in his direction, but that was how he treated all his doctors. And sometimes he would make a gesture to a doctor who had just entered the room — just a slight movement with his hand, which they all knew meant: *Go away*.

Not perceiving any such gesture this time, the professor kept on explaining excitedly as follows:

"I do not agree with my colleagues on the need to transplant your liver, kidneys and heart. Granted, these organs of yours aren't functioning up to par at the moment. No sir! Not up to par! That's a fact. But neither will transplanted organs. The reason they're not up to par lies in your extreme depression. Yes sir, in your depression. I've gone over your medical history quite a few times now. And I think I've made a major discovery. Your attending physician — he's a really great guy — he wrote down everything in detail. Every single

time he noted your mental condition. Your internal organs would always start to fail the moment you got into a depressive state. Yes sir! Quite a state...

"Now here comes the \$64,000 question: is the failure of your internal organs causing the depression? Or the other way around: is the depression causing organ failure throughout your body? I'm absolutely convinced that the depression is the original cause. Yes sir! It's your extreme depression. It's a condition where someone ceases to strive for any goal, he loses interest in what's going on around him, he doesn't see any sense in living. And then the brain begins to transmit only half-hearted commands to the whole body! And I mean the whole of it! The stronger the depression, the weaker the commands. At a certain level the brain may cease giving these commands altogether, and then comes death.

"So, the ultimate cause is depression, and as for eliminating it entirely, well, that's something modern medicine has no answer for. So I turned to folk medicine. And now I'm convinced that your extreme depression is the result of a curse. Yes sir! More specifically, someone's put a spell on you, and I'm prepared to back that up with quite a number of facts."

The billionaire was about to make his *Go away!* gesture. He disliked all such esoteric healers — people who promised to exorcise demons and take away spells or set a defence against them — people he considered petty operators or swindlers. *No doubt the professor was on the rebound from the ineffectiveness of modern medicine*, he thought, *and so had fallen to the level of these so-called 'healers'*. But the billionaire did not manage to execute the gesture. The professor headed him off, with words evoking just a smidgen of interest, but interesting all the same.

"I have the feeling you're getting ready to send me away. Maybe for good. I ask you... No, I beg you, give me just five or six more minutes. It's very possible that once you've understood what I have to say, *you'll* make a full recovery, and

I'll make an important discovery. Rather, I've already made it — I just need to have it confirmed once and for all."

The billionaire did not make his *Go away!* gesture.

For three whole seconds the professor stared at Heitzman's motionless hand and realised he could continue, which he did at a rapid-fire pace:

"People look at each other differently. Sometimes with indifference, other times with love, or hate, or envy, or fear, or respect. But it's not the outward expression of the eyes that is the main factor here. The outward appearance can be just an ordinary mask, like the faux smile of a waiter or a salesman. What's important are the true attitudes, the true feelings one person harbours towards another. The more positive emotions people express towards a particular individual, the more positive energy is concentrated in him. On the other hand, if negative emotions predominate in the atmosphere surrounding a person, he will experience an accumulation of negative and destructive energy.

"Among the common folk this is called a *spell*, and folk-healers base their actions on this phenomenon. By no means all folk-healers are charlatans. The whole point is that a person who has been the target of too much negative energy from those around him is himself capable of neutralising it or, in other words, compensating for it. By telling the patient that he has removed the spell by certain types of actions, the healer helps him believe that he is cleansed. If the patient believes the healer, he is really evening out the balance within himself between the positive and the negative. If he doesn't believe, it won't happen. You don't believe in folk-healers and, consequently, they won't be of any help to you.

"But that isn't to say that you don't have an excess of negative energy which is destructive to your mind and body. Why negative? Precisely because a man in your position can only be looked upon by people around you with resentment, and

I don't mean just a bit of harmless envy. They might look at you — or, more specifically, treat you — with hatred. People you've fired or haven't given a raise to. A lot of people feel your power and react with fear. You see, all *that* amounts to negative energy. To counteract it you need positive energy. This can be supplied by family members or relatives, but your wives have run out on you, you don't have any children or friends, and you don't communicate with your relatives. You have no sources of positive energy around you.

"Now an individual human being is capable of producing positive energy — and in sufficient quantity — within himself, all on his own. But for this he needs to set his heart on some kind of dream or goal, and the step-by-step realisation of this goal will bring about positive emotions. You've already achieved so much in life that now, it seems, you don't have any more goals or dreams left.

"But it's extremely important to have such a goal and to strive to attain it. I have analysed the physical and mental health of different types of business people. Someone who likes mixing dough and bakes pies and sells them is happy that he can now afford to buy something he needs, and dreams of developing his business. After all, it's only with development that he receives many of the goods and services civilisation has to offer.

"A bank manager or the owner of a profit-making concern likewise strives to develop his business, strives for increased profits, but often with less enthusiasm than someone who makes or sells pies. It's paradoxical, but true — the enthusiasm just isn't as great. It isn't as great because he's got significantly fewer tempting benefits ahead of him than the pie salesman. For him the achievements of civilisation have no special value, they're just routine.

"If someone with a relatively modest income suddenly has the chance to buy a car, the purchase of the car will evoke in him a tremendous feeling of satisfaction or even ecstasy,

while someone who is relatively well-off won't get any thrill from a brand new car. To him it's a mere trifle. Paradoxical, but true: rich people have fewer occasions for delight than those less well-off.

"There's one other factor that can bring satisfaction — beating one's competition. But you, Mr Heitzman, it seems, have no competition at all.

"So it turns out you have only negative energy acting upon you, and there's a great deal of it out there. Oh, and I forgot to mention: there's just one force that can conquer the masses of negative energy — just one, but it's powerful, incredibly powerful — it's called *the energy of love*. It's when you find yourself in a state of love and someone loves you. Unfortunately, in your case, however, you don't have any women in your life. In fact, it looks like you don't really have any interest in them at all, and at your age and in your condition you're not likely to have any more interest in women.

"There's a lot of evidence to back up my conclusion. I've compared the longevity stats of rich people, prominent politicians and presidents over the past hundred years. The results are quite persuasive. Longevity for the world's power brokers doesn't look all that great by comparison with the common folk — in fact, most often it's less.

"Paradoxical, but true: facts are facts. Presidents and millionaires, in spite of being under constant medical care, in spite of having access to the state-of-the-art technical help and medicines and to only the highest-quality foodstuffs, are getting sick and dying just like anyone else. All this is eloquent testimony to the fact that surrounding negative energy exerts a colossal influence, and no medical science, even the very latest, is able to counteract it.

"So, what's the bottom line? A dead-end situation? There is a way out — it may be small, it may be only one of its kind, but it's there! Yes sir! It's there. Memories!

“My dear Mr Heitzman, please, try to remember the different stages of your life. Any memory that will bring back pleasant feelings.

“Most importantly, if there’s anyone you’ve given a serious promise to and not carried it out, see if there’s any way you can carry it out now. I ask you, for your own sake, for the sake of science, to take at least two or three days and try to remember the good moments in your life. We’ve got equipment to monitor the functioning of many of your body organs. The monitoring goes on minute by minute. If you do what I’m recommending, and if these instruments start indicating positive results, there’s indeed a chance we’ll be able to see you through to a full recovery. Yes sir! You’ll make it! I’ll certainly find a way. Or maybe you’ll find it on your own. Or maybe it’ll just come about all by itself... Your life will come across it on its own.”

The professor fell silent and once again fixed his gaze on the hand of his patient, lying motionless before him. A few seconds later and the customary gesture sent the professor out of the room.



Like many people, John Heitzman began to recall his past. He had at least something of an understanding of what the professor had said to him. He could try to find happy moments from his past life, and they might have a positive effect. The problem was, though, that everything he had experienced in his life seemed not just devoid of anything pleasant, it was uninteresting and even senseless.

Heitzman remembered how he took his father's advice and married the daughter of a billionaire, thereby adding to his empire's wealth. The marriage did not bring him any satisfaction, his wife turned out to be barren, and after ten years of conjugal life she died of an overdose of narcotics.

Then he married a famous fashion model, who was the very picture of a wife passionately in love. But just six months after the wedding his security service showed him snapshots of his wife cavorting with her former lover. He was not about to discuss it with her. He simply gave orders to his bodyguards to see to it that he would never have the occasion to see or be reminded about her again.

By now in his recollections Heitzman had reached the starting-point of his participation in his father's empire. He had not been able to pinpoint even one pleasant instance that he felt like holding on to and use as a source of positive emotions.

There was just one moment of pleasantness that he could remember. It was when he proved to his father that there was no need of becoming the sole owner of the Monetary Fund. Other investors in the fund, looking for a good return, would devote their mental energy to increasing the fund's capital, and thus would be working for them, for the Heitzmans.

His father took some time to think about this. Then, several days later, at dinner time, he broke with his customary reticence to offer praise and said:

"I agree with your proposal, John, regarding the Fund. You're on the right track. Congratulations! Go ahead and give some thought to other areas too. It's time for you take over the reins."

For the next several days John Heitzman was in an upbeat mood. He ended up making several more decisions and increasing the profits of their financial-industrial empire even

more. However, he no longer derived any special feeling of joy from this.

The reports of increased profits were cold and dispassionate. No further praise would be coming his way. His father died, and praise from underlings brought no particular pleasure.

John Heitzman continued going back in his recollections and reached the time of his childhood. The rare moments of contact with his father were dimly illumined in his thought. His ever-strict father, as a rule, would issue admonishments in the presence of nannies and teachers which he had hired for young John.

Then all at once a wave of warmth rolled through the body of the billionaire lying motionless in his bed. His body gave a pleasant shiver. In Heitzman's recollections the curtain rose on a bright and very clear scene. He saw a far corner of the garden of his family's estate and there, surrounded by small acacia bushes, a little house about two metres high, with a single window.

For some quite inexplicable reason all children yearn to create their own little house, their own space. That yearning is there, no matter whether the child has his own room in his parents' house or lives in the same room with his parents. With almost all children there comes a time when they start building their own little cubby-hole. In every Man, apparently, there is a gene that preserves some kind of ancient memory, telling him he ought to set up his own space. Whereupon any adult or child heeding this call, which arises from the depths of eternity, goes about setting it up at once. Never mind how amateurish it turns out by comparison with modern apartments, a Man who has built this for himself derives much more satisfaction from it than he would from the most chic and stylish apartment.

And so the nine-year-old John Heitzman, who had two spacious rooms all to himself in the family manor, still decided to build his own little house with his own hands.

He constructed it out of plastic boxes that had been used for transplanting seedlings. These boxes turned out to be handy building materials. They came in a variety of colours. John made the walls using blue boxes, with a yellow border around the whole perimeter. He piled the boxes on top of each other, fastening them together in tongue-and-groove fashion. On one wall John made the box-bottoms face outward, which meant that the whole inside wall was comprised of a multitude of shelves. Boards with stapled-on plastic film served for the roof.

He spent a whole week building his little house, taking advantage of the three hours a day he was allotted for leisure walks in the fresh air. On the seventh day, just as soon as leisure time came, he headed straight for his creation in the far corner of the garden. Pulling back the acacia branches, he saw the house he had built and froze in astonishment. There by the entrance stood a little girl looking in the doorway of his creation. The girl was wearing a light-blue calf-length skirt and a white cardigan with frills on the sleeves. Her chestnut-coloured hair fell in ringlets around her shoulders.

At first, young John reacted with some jealousy to the presence of a stranger beside his creation, and he enquired with a hint of annoyance:

“What are *you* doing here?”

The girl turned her pretty little face toward him and replied:

“I’m admiring.”

“What are you admiring?”

“This marvellous and clever little house.”

“Wh-what kind of house?” young John queried in amazement.

“Marvellous and most clever,” repeated the girl.

“Houses may be marvellous, but I’ve never heard them called *clever*,” observed John thoughtfully. “Only people can be clever.”

"Yes of course, people can be clever. But when a clever person builds a house," the girl countered, "the house turns out to be something clever, too."

"And what do you find clever about this house?"

"The inside wall is very clever. It has ever so many shelves. You can put a lot of useful things on those shelves — toys, too."

John was pleased at how this little girl reasoned things through. It flattered him, and possibly the girl herself pleased him.

She's pretty, and reasons things through cleverly, he thought to himself. And aloud he said:

"This house I built."

And he immediately added:

"What's your name?"

"I'm Sally, and I'm seven years old. I live here in the servants' quarters, since my dad works as a gardener here. He knows a lot about plants and is teaching me. I already know how to raise flowers and how to graft branches onto trees. And what's your name, and where do you live?"

"I live in the manor-house. My name's John."

"Does that mean you're the master's son?"

"Yeah."

"So, Johnnikins, let's play house!"

"How do we play that?"

"We play like we live in this house, the way grown-ups live. You can be the master, since you're the master's son, and I'll be your servant, since my dad's a servant."

"That won't work," observed John. "A servant's supposed to live in the servants' quarters. Only the husband, his wife and their children can live in the manor-house."

"Then I shall be your wife!" exclaimed Sally, and asked: "Can I be your wife, Johnnikins?"

John did not answer. He went into the house, took a glance around, and then turned to look at Sally who was still standing just outside the doorway. He said rather brusquely:

“Okay, come on in and pretend you’re my wife. We have to think about how we’re going to decorate the inside.”

Sally stepped into the house. She looked into John’s eyes with tenderness and excitement and said, almost in a whisper:

“Thank you, Johnnikins. I shall try to be a good wife to you.”

John did not come to his house every day. During the time allotted for leisure walks he was not always allowed to play in the garden. Escorted by bodyguards and tutors, he would be taken instead for a visit to a city park or Disneyland, or go horseback-riding.

But when he managed to get away to his little house, he almost always found Sally waiting for him. With each succeeding visit John took interest in the changes that had been occurring in the house. First of all a carpet appeared on the floor, contributed by Sally. Then little curtains on the window and over the entrance.

Next came a little round table with an empty photo-frame on it. Sally said:

“Johnnikins, you’re coming here less and less often. I keep waiting for you, but you don’t show up. Give me a photograph of yourself, and I’ll put it in this frame. I can look at your picture and it will make it easier waiting for you.”

John left her his photograph when he came to say good-bye to the house, and to Sally. He was going to be moving with his parents to another villa.



Multibillionaire John Heitzman lay on his bed in his fancy apartment and smiled as he recalled, with ever greater detail, his childhood contact with the little girl Sally. It was only now that he realised that this little girl loved him. She loved him with her first childhood love — reckless, unanswered and sincere. Perhaps, just perhaps, he loved her, too, or perhaps she was just a passing fancy. But she loved him as probably no one else would love him the rest of his life, and so the memories attached to the little house he built in the garden and his contact with Sally still evoked in him a lot of warm and pleasant feelings. These feelings warmed his body and made him feel good.

After leaving the manor-house, he met with Sally one more time, eleven years later. But this time... New feelings excited his whole body. John Heitzman even sat up a bit in his bed. His heart had started chasing the blood through his veins with ever-increasing strength. That meeting... He had forgotten about it. He had never thought about it all this time. But now it occupied all his thoughts and made him excited.

He came back to the estate where he had spent his childhood, returning after eleven years just for a day's visit. That was all the time he could afford. After lunch he went out into the garden, and somehow he found himself heading down to the far corner of the garden, where in among the acacia bushes he had built his little house. As he pushed back the branches and stepped into the little glade, he literally froze in astonishment. The house he had built out of plastic boxes eleven years ago stood on the same spot as before. But all around... All around were little beds of flowers, and a sand-covered path led to the entrance, where a little bench was now standing. And the house itself was wreathed in flowers. The bench had not been there before, but it was there now, the grown-up John noted to himself. He pushed aside the

curtain covering the entrance, bent down and stepped into the little house.

At once he could sense someone's recent presence. His childhood photo stood on the little table as before. The shelves were neatly lined with Sally's childhood toys. On one of the shelves, next to the table, stood a little bowl of fresh fruit. An air mattress lay on the floor, fitted with a coverlet.

John stood there in the little house for about twenty minutes, remembering pleasant feelings from his childhood. *Why is this happening?* he thought. His family owned a whole lot of fancy villas. There was even a castle, but neither the castle nor the villas had ever evoked such pleasant feelings as arose here, in this little house constructed of plastic seedling boxes.

When he came out of the little house, he spied Sally. She was standing there silently at the doorway, as though reluctant to interfere with the surge of recollections that had broken upon his thought. John looked at her, and noticed her cheeks flush with a rosy glow. She lowered her eyes in embarrassment, and said in a soft, velvety, extraordinarily tender and emotional voice:

"Hello, Johnnikins!"

He did not answer her right away. He stood there admiring Sally's extremely beautiful, mature body. Her figure-hugging dress fluttered in the breeze. Through the light material could be seen the outlines of her sculptured form — no longer that of a child but of a maiden, feminine and supple.

"Hi, Sally," John said, breaking a long pause. "You're still keeping house here?"

"Yes. After all, I promised. There's some fruit inside — it's just been washed. Have some. It's for you."

"I see... For me... Well, then, let's go in together and have a bite."

John pulled the curtain aside, letting Sally go ahead of him. She went in and squatted down. She took the bowl of fruit

down from the shelf and placed it on the table beside the photograph in the frame.

There were no chairs in the little house, and John sat down on the rug. He reached out for a bunch of grapes and inadvertently touched Sally's shoulder. She turned her head and their eyes met. She inhaled sharply, which caused a button to come undone on the cardigan stretched taut across her breasts. John grasped hold of Sally's shoulders and drew her close to himself. She did not resist. Quite to the contrary, she leant against him with her feverishly glowing body. Sally did not resist when John slowly and carefully laid her down on the rug, or when he caressed her and kissed her lips, and her breast, or when...

Sally was a virgin... Neither before nor afterward did John enter into intimate relations with any virgin. And now, after forty years had passed since that last meeting, he, John Heitzman, suddenly realised that this had been the only really beautiful, reason-defying intimate moment he had ever had with a woman. Or, rather, with a girl, whom he had made a woman.

After that they fell asleep for a little while. When they awoke, they began talking with each other. What had they talked about? John Heitzman racked his memory as best he could. He very much wanted to remember at least part of their conversation. And he remembered.

Sally had mentioned how beautiful life was. She said her father was saving up some money to buy her a plot of land, on which, if he could afford it, he would build her a modest house. And Sally herself would do the landscape design and put in a wide variety of plants, and she would lead a happy life and raise her children there.

Back then John decided within himself that he would help Sally. *Wow, he thought, here's a girl that can be happy just with some plot of land and a little house. Mere trifles! I mustn't forget to help her acquire the land, and the house.*

But John did forget about his intentions. He forgot completely about Sally. He was distracted by his life with its manifold charms. A new yacht and his own private aeroplane brought joy for a few days at their first appearance. He found a longer-lasting distraction in playing the money markets, in adding billions to his father's financial holdings (which he subsequently inherited) — a distraction which excited his nerves and feelings for more than twenty years. It dominated over everything else. He went through first one marriage, then a second, as a matter of course. His wives left no trace of themselves behind. After he turned forty, playing the financial markets ceased to give him any pleasure, and he began to suffer increasingly frequent periods of depression, which finally led to a nervous breakdown.

But now John Heitzman was no longer in a state of depression. His recollections of Sally had quite stirred him up. Yet at the same time they made him angry at himself. *How could this have happened?* he thought. *I promised myself that I would help Sally, this girl who loved me, to obtain a plot of land, and a house, and I forgot.*

Now John Heitzman was a man accustomed to keeping his promises, especially those he made to himself. He realised he would never stop being angry with himself until...

He pressed a button to summon his secretary. When the secretary entered, John Heitzman was sitting on his bed. Even though he found it difficult to get out the words, for the first time in the past six months he began talking:

"Over fifty years ago I was living in a certain manor-house — I don't remember the address, you can find it in the archives. There was a gardener working there — don't remember his name, but it's in our archived bookkeeping accounts. The gardener had a daughter, her name was Sally. Find out where Sally's living now. I need this information by tomorrow morning at the latest. If you have it earlier,

let me know at once, regardless of the hour, day or night. Do it!"

The secretary rang at dawn the next morning. As he walked into the office, John Heitzman was sitting in his wheel-chair by the window, wearing a dark-blue three-piece suit. He was shaved, and his hair neatly combed.

"Sir, the gardener was let go forty years ago and died soon afterwards. Before his death he managed to buy five acres¹ of land on an abandoned ranch in Texas. On this land he started building a house, but broke his back during the construction and died. His daughter Sally finished building the house and now lives in it. Here's the address. That's all the details we have at the moment. But on your order we'll go ahead and gather all the information you need."

John Heitzman took the piece of paper from his secretary's hand and examined it carefully. After folding it neatly, he put it into his inside jacket pocket and said:

"Have the helicopter ready for take-off in thirty minutes. It should land about four or five miles from her villa in Texas. Have a car meet me at the landing site. Just an ordinary-looking car — no limousine, no bodyguards, just the driver. Do it!"



At three o'clock in the afternoon John Heitzman, limping slightly and leaning on his cane, made his way up the gravelled path to a modest cottage surrounded by luscious greenery.

¹ 5 acres = 2 hectares approximately.

When he first spied her, her back was turned to him. The elderly woman was standing on a small stepladder, washing the outside of a window. John Heitzman stopped and stared at this woman with her beautiful ash-coloured hair. She could feel his gaze and turned to face him.

For a while she simply stood there with her eyes fixed on the old man standing on the path. Then all of a sudden she jumped down from her ladder and ran to greet him. Her step was light, and nothing about this woman looked old. She stopped about a metre from where Heitzman was standing, and in a quiet but emotional voice said:

“Hello, Johnnikins!”

Immediately she lowered her eyes and put up her hands to cover the blush on both her cheeks.

“Hello, Sally!” said John Heitzman, without another word. Or, rather, he was speaking, but only to himself, not aloud. *How beautiful you are, Sally, and how beautiful are your sparkling eyes, and the little wrinkles around your eyes! You are still just as beautiful and good as before!* Aloud he said:

“I was just passing through, Sally. I heard you were living here, so I decided to stop by. And maybe to stay the night... if I’m not imposing, that is.”

“I’m so happy to see you, Johnnikins. Of course you can stay the night. I’m here alone, but tomorrow my two grandchildren will be arriving for a week. I’ve got two of them: a granddaughter, she’s nine, and a little grandson — well, he’s twelve already. Come on in, Johnnikins, and I’ll give you a bowl of herb tea. I know the kind of tea you need. Come on.”

“So, you were married, Sally? You had children.”

“I’m still married, Johnnikins,” Sally answered cheerfully. “And we had one son. And now two grandchildren... Why don’t you sit down at the table out there on the porch, and I’ll bring the tea out to you.”

John Heitzman sat down in one of the plastic armchairs on the veranda. When Sally brought out a large bowl of some kind of tea, he asked her:

"How come you said you knew what kind of tea I needed, Sally?"

"You see, my father used to gather herbs for your father. He'd dry them and then make a tea, and this tea was of great help to your father. And I learned how to gather herbs, too. My dad told me that you, too, Johnnikins, have inherited this same disease."

"But how did you know I was coming?"

"I didn't know, Johnnikins. You see, I gather them in case of any need. But tell me, Johnnikins, how are you doing? How's your life turned out?"

"In a lot of different ways, I guess. I've been busy with a variety of things, but I don't want to think about that right now. You've got a fine place here, Sally — it's beautiful, so many flowers... and a garden!"

"Yeah, it's really nice. I really like it here. But you see over there to the right, they've got a building project in the works. They're planning to build a waste treatment facility. And over to the left there'll be another factory of some sort. They're talking about moving us out..."

"But you're tired from your trip, looks like you've been travelling quite a distance, Johnnikins. I can see how exhausted you are. I'll make up a bed for you by the open window. Just have a lie down and relax. Only drink up your tea first."

John Heitzman got undressed, with some difficulty. He really was tired. His muscles, atrophied by six months of lying motionless in bed, could only barely keep him on his feet. He finally managed to pull the blanket over him, and he fell asleep at once. Lately he had been unable to get to sleep at all without a sleeping pill. But here, all at once...

He slept in until noon and did not see the morning. He got up and took a shower and then went out to the veranda. Sally was getting lunch ready in the summer kitchen, and a little boy and a little girl were helping her.

"Good afternoon, Johnnikins! Looks like you got a good sleep. You look so rejuvenated! Here, meet the grandchildren. This is Emmy, and this young fella's name is George."

"And I'm John Heitzman. Good morning!" said the elderly man, extending his hand to the boy.

"So there, you're officially introduced," declared Sally. "You two go take a walk and work up an appetite while Emmy and I get lunch ready."

"I'd like to show you our garden," George said to Heitzman.

The old man and the young boy walked through the marvellous garden together. The boy kept pointing out various plants and could not stop talking about them. Heitzman, in the meantime, was concentrating on thoughts of his own. When they reached the end of the garden, the boy announced:

"Now, behind this acacia bush is my 'apartment' — Grandma made it for me."

Heitzman pulled aside a branch and looked... There in a small glade behind the acacia stood his little house — made from the same plastic seedling boxes. Only the roof looked a bit different. And the curtain covering the entrance was different. Heitzman pulled back the curtain and stooped slightly as he stepped into the little house. All the furnishings were just as he remembered them. Only the photograph on the table was laminated in plastic sheathing. The photo was of Sally's grandson. *Everything's just the way it should be*, he thought. *The little house now has a new occupant and hence a new photograph.* Heitzman picked up the photo and held it in both hands. To make conversation, he remarked:

"Well, now, little George, your photo came out pretty well here!"

"But that's not *my* photograph, Uncle John. That's a picture of a boy Grandma was friends with in childhood. It just happens he looks like me."



John Heitzman made his way back up the garden path as fast as his legs could carry him, limping with his cane, and stumbling.

Panting and feeling a little confused, he approached Sally and asked:

"Where is he now? Where's your husband, Sally? Where?"

"Please calm down, John," said Sally softly. "You shouldn't allow yourself to get so excited. Please, sit down..."

"It turns out, John, that back in my childhood I promised a very fine young boy that I would become his wife..."

"But that was a game!" John Heitzman was practically shouting as he leapt up out of the chair. "A children's game!"

"Maybe so," Sally responded. "Anyway, let's say I'm still continuing to play at it. And I'm pretending that you're my husband... my husband and my beloved."

"George does look a lot like me, the way I looked as a boy. Does that mean you gave birth to a child after that night, Sally? Did you have a baby?"

"Yes, John, I had our son. And he looks like me. But he very much has your genes, and our grandson is the spitting image of *you*."

John Heitzman's gaze alternated between Sally and the boy and girl setting the table out on the veranda. He was no longer able to speak. His thoughts and feelings were confused. Then, for reasons which he himself did not fully understand, he said in a business-like tone:

"I have to leave right away. Good-bye, Sally."

He took a couple of steps down the path, then turned and headed over to Sally, who was standing there quietly. Barely supporting himself on his cane, he got down on one knee in front of her, took her hand and gave it a long, slow kiss.

"Sally, I have some very important, urgent matters to attend to. I have to leave immediately."

She put her hand on his head, softly rumpling his hair.

"Yes, of course. You have to leave, if you've got important matters and problems to take care of. If you run into any difficulties, John, you can always come here to our home. Our son now manages his own little firm — it's known by the lovely name of Lotos — and he does landscape design. He's had no special training, but I taught him myself, and he's doing some very smart designs, and there's hardly any shortage of orders. He helps me financially, and visits me every month.

"But it seems you've got some money problems? And something of a health problem, too? Come back, John. I know how to give you treatment and we've got enough money to live on."

"Thank you, Sally... Thank you... I've got to hurry! I've got to..."

He walked down the path to the gate, his thoughts all caught up in a plan he had in mind. In the meantime Sally watched John's receding figure and whispered to herself: *Come back, my love!* She was still repeating this phrase like a mantra even an hour later, forgetting about her grandchildren. She did not even notice the helicopter circling for more than half an hour overhead, over her plot of land with its little house and marvellous garden.



By the time John Heitzman's helicopter landed on the office tower roof, his close associates and their secretaries were already hard at work in the board room, feverishly checking figures, getting ready to report to the boss. They had grown unaccustomed to meeting in his presence, and now it was with considerable fear and trepidation that they awaited his arrival.

When John Heitzman entered the room, everybody rose to their feet. He began speaking even before reaching his chair at the head of the board-room table.

"Sit down. No reports today. Listen carefully to what I have to say, I'm not going to repeat myself. No time. So. In Texas there's this villa — here's the address. Your instructions are to buy up all the lands around this house within a radius of a hundred miles. Buy up all the industries located on these lands, even if it means paying three times their worth. Whichever one of you is responsible for buying and selling real estate can leave the room now and get to work immediately. Put all our agents on the job if required. This operation should take no more than one week."

One of the associates jumped up and hurried toward the exit.

John Heitzman continued:

"All buildings, factories and facilities located on these lands are to be demolished within a month, max, even if this means hiring hundreds of construction companies. A month from now grass should be planted on these sites."

Heitzman instructed the last associate remaining in the room:

"There's a firm in Texas with the pretty name of Lotos. Sign a five-year contract with it. Engage this firm to design communities for all the lands we buy up around that villa in Texas. Whatever the firm asks, double it. Do it!"

Two weeks later John Heitzman appeared before an audience of fifteen hundred people. The audience, recruited with the help of personnel firms, comprised landscape design specialists, botanists and agronomists. Everyone wanted to get work — especially since the advert mentioned the contract amount, twice the standard average.

John Heitzman walked up to the podium and began speaking in his usual authoritative tone, which was rather sharp:

"According to the contracts being offered you, each of you will receive free of charge a plot of land for lifetime use, measuring five acres. You'll be offered several designs for pre-fab homes to choose from, and these homes will be built on each plot at whatever spot you designate, all at my company's expense. For the next five years the company will make payments to each adult member of your family as specified in the contract. Your job is to make the territory you receive a place of beauty. You will plant gardens and flower-beds, and make ponds and pathways. You will make everything beautiful and good. The company will pay the cost of seedlings and whatever seed materials you request.

"That's it. If there are no questions, those who wish to accept my offer can sign their contract."

But the fifteen-hundred seat auditorium was enshrouded in utter silence. Nobody got up from their seats to head over to the tables, where secretaries were waiting with contracts ready to sign. After a minute of complete silence, an elderly man rose from his seat and asked:

"Tell me, sir, these lands where you propose we settle, are they contaminated with deadly pollutants?"

"No," replied one of Heitzman's associates. "On the contrary, this whole area has a comparatively clean environment, and the soil is quite fertile."

"Then tell us honestly," asked a young woman jumping up from her seat, "what kind of an experiment are you proposing to conduct on people? Many of us have children, and I for one do not want to subject my child to goodness-knows-what kind of an experiment."

The hall erupted with a general buzz, and cries of *Opportunists! Inhuman! Monsters!* could be heard. People started getting up and filing toward the exit. Heitzman's associates tried to explain and respond to the questions, but to no avail.

Heitzman himself sat there helplessly and watched the people leave the room. He realised that their departure was the final blow to his hopes. Or something even worse... He so wanted to do something nice for Sally, for his son and grandchildren. He wanted not only for there to be no more belching smokestacks in the vicinity of Sally's cozy cottage, but for there to be gardens around, and good neighbours too. He had bought up the lands, and the belching smokestacks had been demolished on his orders. And grass had been sown in their place. But the land could only become good if good people lived on it. And here they were leaving. They did not understand. How could they understand, anyway? What could make them believe?

Stop! All at once it dawned on him. They knew nothing about the situation, and that was why they did not believe. But now if he told them the truth... John Heitzman rose to his feet and quietly, still hesitantly, began to speak.

"People!" he began. "I understand. I need to explain to you the reasons for this action by my company. But they're impossible to explain. There's no way they can be explained. Because it's just that I... You see, it's like this... Or, rather,

there's something personal to me in all these contracts. Or how shall I put it?..."

Heitzman was confused, and did not know how to continue. But the people had stopped in their tracks. They were standing in the aisles, in the exit doorways. And they were all looking intently at Heitzman. They were silent, and here he was, not knowing how to proceed. Yet somehow he managed to pull himself together and go on:

"Back in my childhood... In my youth... you see... I loved this girl. But I didn't realise back then I was in love with her. I was later married to other women. I got involved in business. For the past fifty years I never saw this girl. Never even thought about her. And then just recently I remembered her. I discovered she was the only person who ever sincerely loved me. And she still does. But I didn't know about it. Like I said, I'd forgotten all about her. And I realised that she was the only one I could ever love..."

"And then... I met her. Now, of course, she's along in years. But for me she's still the same as back when I knew her years before. She loves her garden. She does everything so beautifully. And I wanted there to be beauty around her. And good neighbours. It's better for her to have good and happy neighbours living nearby.

"But how to make that happen? As a businessman I've managed to put a bit of money aside. And so I bought up the land, divided it into plots, and drew up these contracts. I did it for the one I love. Or, just maybe, I did it for myself?"

This last sentence John Heitzman uttered almost as though putting the question to himself. After that he began speaking as though talking aloud to himself, as though he did not see the people standing in front of him.

"We live for something — what do we live for? We strive for something — what is it we're striving for? I'm going to die soon — what am I leaving behind, except dust?"

"But now, I'm not going to die, not until I finish my project. And I'll leave behind something eternal — I'll leave behind a garden for the one I love. I'll leave behind many gardens.

"You know, first, I wanted to simply hire a whole lot of workers and sign a contract with a big company doing landscape design. Sign a contract so that employees could look after the plants. But then it dawned on me. Any kind of beauty will turn out lifeless, if you don't create it for yourself. And that's why I decided to make it so that someone created it for themselves. That's why I'm offering you the plots of land and the houses, and all I ask in return is for beauty around the one I love.

"You didn't believe that the terms offered in these contracts were genuine. You didn't know what goals the party offering you these contracts was really pursuing. Now you know."

At this point John Heitzman fell silent. The people standing in the hall were silent, too. The first to break the silence was the woman who had expressed the most scepticism earlier. First she hurried over to the row of tables standing by the stage with the contracts laid out, and asked one of the secretaries to enter her name on a copy, which she signed without even reading it. Then she turned to the people standing in the auditorium and exclaimed:

"There, I've signed it. I was the first one to sign. That means I'll go down in history, because I was the first. When you think about it, not a single man, no matter how rich, has ever given a greater gift to the one he loves than this person standing there on the stage. And it would be impossible for him to do more."

"Nobody could even think of doing more," cried another woman, "in the whole recorded history of mankind!"

"I love you!" called out a third.

"I want a plot right next to your beloved," declared a fourth. "What's her name?"

"Her name..." began Heitzman, but went on: "maybe it's better she doesn't know. Let her think that this was all the will of fate."

With a single surge, the people in the hall headed over to the tables standing by the stage. A queue formed. People gaily joked with each other, calling each other simply *Neighbour*; but the majority, especially the women, kept staring at the man on the stage with sparkles of love in their eyes.

For the first time in his life John Heitzman felt the energy of good directed at him — the energy of love and unfeigned delight emanating from many human hearts. An all-triumphant energy, capable of healing any ill. He walked off the stage, now without a trace of a limp.

For several months he personally took active part in the demolition of the remaining facilities on the bought-up lands, discussed the details of design of the whole community around Sally's cottage and alternative landscape designs for different plots, along with the whole infrastructure.

A year later, when John Heitzman once again approached the gate leading to Sally's cottage, as far as the eye could see, people were already planting little saplings for their large gardens. Several saplings stood near Sally's gate, with a carefully wrapped root system. It seemed as though Sally had intuitively felt him coming, for she ran out to greet him.

"John! It's so good to see you again! Really good! Hello there, John!"

She ran up to him with a spring in her step, bubbling over like a young girl. She grasped John's arm, pulled him over to have a cup of tea, all the while happily chattering away non-stop.

"You know what's been happening, John?! You know what a miracle's been taking place here all around! I'm so superbly happy! There'll be no more belching smokestacks next to our

house. There'll be good neighbours! See how life's sprucing up all around?! Really sprucing up! If you've had any business failures, John, don't worry your little head about it. You can just laugh at it and come and move in with us. We're wealthy now. Our son's just got himself a real big contract, and I mean big! He's now in charge of a whole design and planning project. And we've got ourselves a little more land. Our son's going to be building himself a new house. And the two of us, if you want to, can live here."

"I do want to," replied John Heitzman, adding: "Thank you, Sally, for the invitation."

"But why go on living in an old house?" boomed out a voice from behind John Heitzman's back. He turned around and caught sight of his son. He knew right off that it was his son. And the young man continued:

"If I understand correctly, you are actually my father?... When little George told me that you thought the photo of Mom's childhood friend was of him, I knew who'd come. And Mom never did learn to hide her true feelings.

"I, of course, don't yet have the same feelings towards you that Mom does, but for the sake of my happy parents, I am ready to pay for the building of a new house for the two of you."

"Thank you, son," said John Heitzman, almost overcome with emotion. He wanted to give his son a hug, but for some reason hesitated. The young man stepped toward him on his own, extended his hand and introduced himself:

"I'm John."

"Great!" said Sally. "And it's great now that you two have got acquainted. When you get to know each other better, you'll really like each other. But right now let's have some tea."

And as they sat at the table Sally kept on talking animatedly, non-stop, about the extraordinary events that had been taking place in the last few months.

"Can you just imagine, John? Just imagine! Here they've been telling a story like the most beautiful tale in the world. A tale which is coming true to life. Just imagine, John — people say that all these lands were bought by one and the same person. Then this person invited the best designers, agronomists and gardeners and gave each of them several acres of land free of charge for their lifetime use. He told them to make their plots beautiful. And he offered them all the saplings and seeds free of charge, and will even keep on paying them for five years to beautify their own plots. Just imagine, it is *he* who will be paying *them*. He poured all his savings into this project, right down to the last cent."

"Well, maybe not all," Heitzman protested.

"People say he put in all. And you know why he did all this?"

"Why?" asked John Heitzman calmly.

"That's the whole beauty of it. He did it so that the one he loved could have a place to live amidst all this beauty. They say she's a landscape designer as well. And somewhere around here she's got a cottage too. Only nobody knows who she is or where she lives. Can you just imagine, Johnnikins, what will happen when people find out who she is?"

"What?"

"What else? Everybody will want to go have a look at her and even touch her like a goddess. I myself, for instance, would want to touch her. She's probably an extraordinary woman. Maybe she's extraordinary outwardly, maybe inwardly. Everybody around is saying that there's no other woman in the world who could inspire a man to take such an unusual and beautiful step. That's why all the people will want to see her and even touch this man and his extraordinary wife."

"Probably they will," John Heitzman agreed, adding: "But what can we do about it, Sally?"

"What d'you mean, *we*?" Sally wondered aloud.

"I say *we*, because that extraordinary woman, the one on whose account all these things around are happening, is *you*, Sally!"

Sally stared at John without blinking, trying to make sense of what she had just heard. When the first glimpses of understanding dawned on her, she let the cup she was holding slip out of her hands, but nobody paid attention to the sound of it breaking to pieces. John Heitzman turned his head in the direction of another sound — the sound of a chair falling, when his son impulsively jumped up from his seat. The younger John rushed over to his father and said excitedly, in a soft baritone voice:

"Father! Father! Can I give you a hug?"

John Heitzman was the first to embrace his son. He could hear how his son's heart was racing. His son gave him a hug in turn, whispering excitedly:

"The world has never witnessed such a powerful declaration of love, without even using the words of love, ever! I'm proud of you, Father! I'm so happy for you, Father!"

When father and son turned to Sally, she was still trying to come to terms with what had happened. All at once her cheeks flushed with a rosy glow, as though smoothing out the wrinkles around her eyes. Tears began rolling down her cheeks. Sally was embarrassed. She rushed over to the elder John, grabbed him by the arm and led him down the front porch steps. Their son watched as his parents, hand in hand, started making their way slowly down the path, heading for the acacia bushes which concealed the little house of their childhood, and then began skipping toward the acacia like youngsters.

Ten years later a much younger-looking John Heitzman was sitting at a local café-bar with some other men from the community. He laughingly explained:

“No, I won’t run for any presidential office — don’t even try to tempt me. And it’s not just a matter of age. You don’t have to be president to run the country. That’s something you can do from right in your own garden. See, you’ve shown by your own example how to really make a good life, and all America is now turning into a flourishing garden. If it goes on like this, heck, we’ll even overtake Russia!”

“We’ll do it! We’ll do it” echoed Sally, who had just come in. “Only now, let’s head for home, Johnnikins. The baby won’t go to sleep without you.” Then she added, whispering in his ear: “And neither will I.”

And so they began walking home, down a shady, sweet-smelling allée, these two not-yet-old people: John Heitzman and Sally. In the springtime it always seemed that their life was just beginning. Just as real life was beginning all over America.



“That’s a beautiful ending to your story,” I told Anastasia, when she had finished telling her account of the future. “And all your stories are so encouraging. But will something like that really happen? In real life?”

“It will definitely happen, Vladimir. That is no made-up story, but a projection of the future. The names and locales are not important. What is important is the essence, the idea, the dream! And if my story has evoked positive feelings, then people will certainly project its essence into the future, and many people will add their own details and infuse the projection with their own great meaning and conscious awareness.”

"How does all that come about?"

"See how simple it is. Did you like the story?"

"Did I like it? *I'll* say!"

"Do you want it to come true in the future?"

"Of course I do."

"What if you tell it to others? Will there be those who will want to see something like that come true, too?"

"I dare say there will."

"You see, that means that anybody will want to, who takes on the role not just of an observer of history, but an actual participant in it. And they will make the story come true."

"Yes, I think that's clear enough. But I'm just a bit sad that you went and painted such a beautiful scene in respect to foreign entrepreneurs, rather than Russians."

"Vladimir, for Russians, life is already drawing beautiful and real scenes all on its own. Or, to put it more accurately, many Russians are working out the Divine eternity. And that is something you could tell about all by yourself."

"By myself? Well, I guess so. I really do know quite a few Russian entrepreneurs who have taken not just one but several hectares of land and are building their domains on them. Like the ones you described. Only their stories aren't as romantic."

"Grand chapters need to be written about anyone who has made conscious contact with the Earth. Such a story will be inexhaustible. Look, here is just one story — see if you can recognise some familiar names."

CHAPTER EIGHT



I am giving birth to you, my angel!

Viktor Chadov, an entrepreneur, awoke at dawn. His girlfriend lay beside him in the big bed, still asleep. The thin blanket hugged the contours of her delicate figure.

Every time they attended formal receptions together or went to some fancy resort hotel, her body attracted men's envious or lustful glances.

Not only that, but Inga (as this sleeping beauty was called) possessed a most charming smile and gave the impression on those around her of being a smart and educated woman. Viktor took such great pleasure in her company that he bought a second four-bedroom flat, furnished it with ultra-modern pieces and gave Inga the keys. Occasionally, if his intensive business schedule allowed, he would spend a night or two with her. He was grateful to this twenty-five-year-old woman for these marvellous nights they spent together, and the opportunity to chat with her, but he had no plans to marry her. He had no special feelings of love for her. And, besides, he knew which side his bread was buttered on: after all, he was 38 and she 25. Naturally, it would not be long before this young woman would start hankering for a younger man. And, with *her* body and brains, that would not be too difficult to find. And she would find a younger and even richer man, all thanks to him. After all, if he married her, he would be also introducing her to a circle of influential businessmen.

Inga turned her face toward him, smiling in her sleep. The blanket had slipped down just enough to expose one of her alluring, so perfectly shaped feminine breasts. But this time

Viktor Chadov experienced none of his usual stimulation at the sight of her half-naked body. He carefully replaced the blanket on his sleeping partner. Silently, trying not to wake her, he got up from the bed and headed out to the kitchen.

He made some coffee and poured himself a cup. Lighting a cigarette, he began pacing the spacious breakfast-room floor, practically oblivious to his surroundings.

What a dream! His feelings were still aroused by last night's extraordinary dream. Yes, his *feelings*, rather than his mind. Viktor had dreamt that he was walking along a shady allée, concentrating on the feasibility of a routine commercial deal. Behind and in front of him walked his bodyguards. He was irritated at their presence and had a hard time concentrating. His attention was also distracted by the constant noise of traffic along the edge of the park.

Then all of a sudden his bodyguards disappeared and the traffic noise died down. And he could hear the birds singing, he could see the marvellous spring foliage on the trees lining the allée, and the flowers on the bushes. He stopped and delighted in the soft and pleasant feelings welling up inside him. And he felt better than he ever had before in his life.

And all at once he noticed, far down the allée, a little boy running toward him. The sunlight was shining from behind, giving him a kind of halo, and it almost seemed as though here running toward him was a little angel.

A moment later and it dawned on him that this was none other than his own little son. The lad's hands and feet were in constant energetic motion. With a joyful premonition, Viktor squatted down and threw open his arms to embrace him, while his little son, in turn, threw open his arms on the run. But then all at once the boy stopped in his tracks, about three metres shy of Viktor. The smile faded from the youngster's face, and the look in his eyes made Viktor's heart start to pound.

"Come on, come to me! Come and let me hug you, son."

The boy answered with a wry smile:

"There's no way you can do that, Papa."

"Why not?" Viktor asked in surprise.

"Because..." answered the boy with a tone of sadness. "You can't hug me, Papa, because you can't hug a son which hasn't been born. After all, you didn't give birth to me, Papa."

"Then you come and hug me, son. Come on."

"I can't hug a father who didn't give birth to me."

The boy tried to smile through his tears. A tear was already trickling down his red cheek. Then the boy turned, hung his head, and slowly wandered off down the allée.

But Viktor was still standing there on his knees, rooted to the spot. The boy kept getting further and further away. As did the soft and pleasant feeling Viktor had had a moment ago. Once again, from the distance, it seemed, he could hear the roar of traffic. Unable to move, Viktor summoned up his remaining strength and called out:

"Don't leave me! Where are you going, son?"

The youngster turned, and he could see another tear trickling down his face.

"I'm going into the nowhere, Papa. Into the infinite nowhere." Again the lad hung his head without saying a word. Then he added: "I'm sad, Papa, I'm sad that I wasn't born and so I cannot restore your life with myself."

With head lowered, the little angel receded into the distance and presently disappeared, literally dissolving in the Sun's rays.

The dream ended, but the impressions of the marvellous soft and pleasant sensations lingered on. It was as though they were summoning Viktor to take action.

After finishing his third cigarette, Viktor extinguished it firmly and decisively. He rushed into the bedroom, calling out loudly on the way:

"Wake up, Inga, wake up!"

"I'm not asleep," answered the beautiful girl from the bed. "Just lying here, lolling about. I've been wondering where you disappeared to."

"Inga, I want you to have a child. Could you have a son with me?"

She threw off the blanket and leapt out of bed. She ran over to him, flung her arms around his neck and pressed against him with every inch of her supple and beautiful body. And then in a hot whisper she confided:

"The most delightful and beautiful declaration of love is when a man asks a woman to bear his child. Thank you... that is, if you're not just joking."

"I'm not joking," he replied firmly.

Putting on a bathrobe, Inga responded:

"Well, if you're not joking — if you're serious, that is... This is a decision we need to think through. First, I want my future child to have a father. But you, my dearly beloved, are still married."

"I'll get a divorce," Viktor promised. In fact, he had already divorced his wife three months before, but for a variety of reasons had not yet told Inga the news.

"Once you get your divorce, then we can start talking about a child. But I'll tell you right off, Viktor. Even if you get divorced, it's still too early to think about children.

"In the first place," Inga reasoned — half in jest, half serious, "I still need a year to finish graduate school. Secondly, I'm so tired of studying that once I finish, I'd like to take another year just to fool around, make the rounds of a few resorts and have a good time. So, if you're talking about a child... Well, children could put an end to that little plan once and for all!"

"Okay, I was joking," Viktor interrupted her rambling train of thought. "I've gotta go. Got an important meeting coming up. I've already called for my car. So long!"

He left, but it was not for any meeting, and he had not called for any car. Viktor walked slowly down the sidewalk, giving the once-over to every woman he met. He was viewing them through new eyes — a view he himself was not accustomed to. He was trying to pick out a woman who might be worthy of bearing him a son — a woman he felt he could have a child with.

Immediately all the stylish girls with heavy makeup who had earlier attracted his attention fell away. He had completely lost interest in all the girls who dressed in tight-fitting clothes or semi-nude in mini-bikini tops to show off their figure.

It's clear why they do that — it's what's on their minds, he thought to himself. And then they try putting an intelligent expression on their face. They use their various body parts to attract men, and maybe someone will bite. And they do bite, of course, only not to have kids. It's a bite for a shag, no procreation there. Go on, dummies, wiggle your behinds! I'm not going to let any wigglers like that have my child.

Two girls he happened to notice coming toward him were smoking as they walked, and one of them was holding in her hand an open bottle of beer.

Now they're the kind that are absolutely no good for having children. Only an idiot would want to have a child with that sort.

Another thing Viktor noticed was that very few of the women and girls he saw were really healthy-looking. Some were slouching, others had an expression on their face that made them look as though they were suffering from stomach cramps. Still others showed definite signs of either obesity or anorexia.

No, it wouldn't do to have children with them, Viktor thought to himself. Wow! It looks like every one of those women is dreaming of a prince sidling up to them in a white Mercedes, and yet they themselves couldn't do the most basic thing of all for that prince. In their own unhealthy state, they couldn't possibly give him a healthy child.

Viktor did not bother to call his driver. Instead, he went on to his office on the trolleybus, still looking up and down every woman his eyes fell upon, trying to find among their number one who was worthy to bear his child, but to no avail.

All day long, including during his lunch break and when he was alone in his office, he could not stop thinking about the woman who was to give him a son.

At times he had the impression of looking for a woman he himself could be born from. At long last he came to a conclusion: if an ideal partner could not be found, she would have to be created. For this he would need to find a more or less healthy young woman with an attractive (or, at least, not a repulsive) appearance, one with a good character, and arrange for her to have all sorts of training and health-improvement exercises in the best sanatoriums. But the main thing would be to send her off to be tutored in a top educational institution, one where she could learn all about preparing for pregnancy, carrying the child to term and the birthing process itself, as well as basic pre-school education.



At the end of his working day, he called in his firm's lawyer, Valentina Petrovna, a woman who had been made wiser by the school of hard knocks.

He invited her to have a seat and began in a roundabout way:

"I have a bit of an unusual question for you, Valentina Petrovna. It's rather personal, but it's very important to me. A cousin of mine asked me to make an enquiry for her. Anyway,

she's planning on getting married soon, and she asked me to find out where she can locate an educational institution in our country for women to study up on the best way to carry their pregnancy, as well as what the birth process and subsequent child-raising involves. And what the role of the father should be in this."

Valentina Petrovna listened intently. When he finished, she thought for a while before saying:

"As you know, Viktor Nikolaevich,¹ I have two children, and I've always been interested in literature on birthing and the raising of children, but I've never even heard of that kind of school, either in our country or abroad."

"Strange! They teach everything nowadays, and yet this most important issue isn't touched in either our high schools or our post-secondary institutions. I wonder why?"

"Yes, it *is* strange," Valentina Petrovna agreed. "I've never really thought about it before, but now this state of affairs does seem strange to me. The State Duma, it looks like, doesn't shy away from discussing the topic of sex education in the schools, but the question of teaching how to give birth to and bring up children isn't even raised."

"That means that every couple is obliged to experiment on their own child?"

"That's what it boils down to," replied Valentina Petrovna. "An experiment. There are, of course, a wide variety of courses teaching parents what to do at birthing time, how to handle newborns, but there's no scientific basis underlying the process, and it's pretty nigh impossible to decide which courses are really going to help and which are harmful."

"Did you take any courses yourself, Valentina Petrovna?"

¹*Petrovna, Nikolaevich* — These are patronymics. See footnote 9 in Book 1, Chapter 1: "The ringing cedar".

“Well, for our younger daughter I decided on a home birth, in the bathtub, with the help of a midwife. A lot of women are doing that today. People believe that it’s more comfortable for a child to make its appearance in the world in a home environment, in the presence of family. They say newborns can tell when people treat them with love as opposed to just simply indifference, which is what you get in many maternity wards. It’s like a conveyor belt there, after all.”

Viktor did not find his conversation with Valentina Petrovna all that encouraging. In fact, it depressed him. For two whole weeks he spent all his free time thinking about the problem of childbirth. For two whole weeks, as he walked about the city on foot, visiting high-class restaurants, bars and theatres, he would give probing looks into women’s faces. He even went out into the countryside, but could not find anyone suitable for him there either.

One day he parked his jeep near a teacher’s college and peered through the jeep’s tinted glass windows at the girls passing by. After three hours he noticed a young woman coming down the steps with her hair tied back in a short, light-brown braid. She had a stately figure and, as it seemed to him, an intelligent-looking face. As she walked past his jeep on the way to the bus stop, Viktor rolled down his window and hailed her:

“Excuse me, please, miss. You see, I’ve been waiting for my friend here, and I can’t wait any longer. If you could show me the best route to the centre of town, I’d be happy to give you a lift home after that, if you like.”

The girl looked at the jeep, assessing the situation, and then quietly answered:

“Sure, why not? I’ll show you.”

After she got into the front seat and they had introduced themselves, the girl pointed to the pack of cigarettes on the dashboard and said:

"You got some nice cigarettes there. Mind if I have a smoke?"

"Help yourself," replied Viktor. He was just as glad when his mobile phone rang at that moment. No important message, but when he hung up, Viktor put on a worried face and told the girl, who by now was aggressively puffing on a cigarette:

"Something's come up. I've gotta get to an urgent business meeting. You'll have to excuse me."

With that he let the girl out on the sidewalk, cigarette in hand, after deciding there was no way he was going to let his son be poisoned by tobacco smoke.

All during these two weeks Viktor did not meet with his girlfriend at all. He did not even ring her up. He had decided that if she did not want to have a child with him, if all she wanted to do was have a good time and hang around fancy resorts, he had no use for her.

Certainly, it had been fun spending time with this beautiful and intelligent woman, but now his life-plans had taken a completely different turn. *I'll leave her the flat*, Viktor decided. *After all, this woman did spice up my life for a while*. He headed over to the university Inga attended, to give her his keys to the apartment. On the way there he rang her up on his mobile:

"Hi, Inga!"

"Hi!" came the familiar voice over the telephone. "Where are you now?"

"I'm almost at your university. Will you be finished classes soon?"

"I haven't gone to the university for ten days now. To tell you the truth, I can't see myself going back there any time soon."

"Something happened?"

"Yeah."

"Where are you now?"

"At home."

When Viktor opened the front door and entered the flat, Inga was lying on the bed in her bathrobe and reading some kind of book. Glancing at Viktor, she said, without getting up:

"There's coffee and sandwiches in the kitchen."

And once more she buried her nose in her book.

Viktor went into the kitchen and took a couple of gulps of coffee. After lighting a cigarette, he plunked his keys down on the kitchen table, then went back to the door of the bedroom, where Inga was still reading, as before.

"I'm leaving," he told her. "Maybe for quite a while, or maybe for good. I'm leaving you the flat. Good-bye. Take care of yourself, hang loose."

And with that he headed toward the door. Inga caught up with him right in the doorway.

"Hey, wait a minute, there, scamp!" she said with an upbeat tone, tugging at Viktor's sleeve. "You're leaving me, eh? You turn my whole life upside-down, and now it's 'Good-bye'?"

"Now how have I turned your life upside-down?" Viktor asked in surprise. "You gave me a good time, and I bet it wasn't too bad for you either. You now have the flat all to yourself, and a closet full of clothes. Take care of yourself, have fun the way you wanted to. Or is it more money you want?"

"You know, you really *are* a scamp! C'mon! First you spit on my soul, and then you carry on about the flat, clothes, having fun?"

"Hey, take it easy. Don't make a scene. I've got important business to attend to. Good-bye!"

Viktor reached for the door handle. But Inga once again held him back, grabbing hold of his arm.

"Not so fast, darling. Hold on a moment. There's something I want you to tell me. Did you ask me to bear a child, or didn't you?"

"I asked, and you said no."

"Yeah, I said no, at first. Then I thought about it for a couple of days and changed my mind. I quit graduate school, quit smoking, I work out every morning, and now I've got hold of these books about life, and children. I can't put them down. Here I am reading up on the best way to have a child, and he says 'Good-bye'! I can't imagine anyone but you as the father of our..."

When Inga's words finally sunk in, Viktor gave her a boisterous hug, whispering her name over and over again. Then he hoisted her in his arms and carried her into the bedroom. Tenderly, as though handling a most precious treasure, he laid her down on the bed and began tearing off his clothes. With greater passion than ever before he embraced her as she lay on the bed. He began kissing her shoulders and breast, at the same time trying to remove her bathrobe. But all at once his efforts met with a silent protest, and she started to push him away.

"Hey, calm down there... please!" Inga said to him. "That's not the way. To put it in a nutshell, I'm not going to have sex with you today. Or tomorrow, or a month from now."

"What d'you mean, no sex? Didn't you just tell me you agreed to have a child?"

"That's what I said."

"But how can you have a child without sex?"

"Sex should be something quite different. Fundamentally different."

"How so?"

"Well, it's like this. Tell me, my dear, future, loving Papa, why do you want your child to be born?"

"What are you talking about?" Viktor sat down on the bed in shock. "Everybody knows why. There's no two ways about it."

"You're making yourself very clear. But still, let's be specific as to what you want and which way you want to go about

it. D'you want your child to be born as a consequence — a side-effect — of your fleshly desires? Or of our joint fleshly desires, for that matter? Or would you rather see him as the desired offspring of our mutual love?"

"I don't think a child would fancy being just a side-effect."

"So, then, the offspring of love. But, you see, you're not in love with me. Sure, you find me attractive, but that's not the same as love."

"You're right, Inga, I find you *very* attractive."

"There, you see? And you're very attractive to me, but that's still a ways from love. We have to earn each other's love."

"You must have been hitting some pretty strange reading material, eh, Inga? Love is a feeling, it comes all by itself from goodness-knows-where. And it disappears goodness-knows-where. You can earn somebody's *respect*, sure, but love?..."

"But it is precisely each other's love that we've got to earn, and our son will help us do it."

"Our son?! You really feel we're going to have a son?"

"Why 'going to'? It's already a fact."

"Hey, what does that mean?" Viktor jumped up. "Are you telling me you're already pregnant? You've been hiding it from me, eh? Whose child is it? How far along is it?"

"It's yours. And it hasn't started yet."

"So, it's not there yet at all?"

"It is."

"Listen here, Inga. I really have no idea what you're on about. You're talking some sort of nonsense. Can't you put it, somehow, more clearly?"

"I'll try. You see, Viktor, you got this desire to have a child and you've begun thinking about it. Then I got the same desire, and I too began thinking about it. We know today that human thought is material. And that means, if we both have a mental concept of our child, it already exists."

"And where is it now?"

"I don't know. Maybe in some other dimension we don't know about. Maybe, out there in some one of the galaxies of the Universe he's running barefoot through the stars and looking down on this blue Earth where he's going to get a material embodiment. Maybe he's now choosing the place and conditions he'd like to be born in, and wants to let us know. Can't you hear, or feel, what he's asking us?"

Viktor looked at Inga wide-eyed, as though seeing her for the very first time. She had never come out with reasoning like this before. He could not make up his mind whether she was serious or simply joking. But that phrase *maybe he's now choosing where he'd like to be born* stuck in his mind.

People are born in all sorts of different places — some are born in an aeroplane, on board ship or in a motor car. Many are born in hospitals in maternity wards, some at home in the bathtub. They are born wherever it works out for them to be born, but where would children *like* to be born? For example, he, Viktor, if he had had the opportunity and the choice, where would he like to have been born? In Russia, or in one of the best hospitals in England or America? But none of these alternatives struck him as being particularly appealing.

Inga interrupted Viktor's train of thought:

"I've already worked out a detailed plan for our joint preparation for meeting our son."

"What sort of plan?"

"Listen to me carefully, my dear." Inga spoke decisively like never before, either sitting in an easy chair or pacing the floor. "First, we've got to get ourselves in top-notch physical shape. From now on we shan't smoke or drink. We have to do a thorough cleaning out of our insides, starting with the kidneys and liver, with the help of various teas and fasting. I've already selected a method.

"From now on we shall drink only spring water — that's very important. I'm already having five litres of spring water

delivered every day. Sure, it costs twice as much as in the stores, but never mind, we'll get by.

"Every day we need to do physical exercises to strengthen our muscles and intensify our blood circulation. We still need fresh air and positive emotions, which are not all that easy to come by."

Viktor liked Inga's decisiveness, as well as her plan of action. Without giving her a chance to finish, he declared:

"We'll buy the best work-out equipment for our physical exercises, and hire the best masseurs. I can send one of my drivers to pick up spring water for us every day. The driver can also go and collect air from the forest — he can use a compressor to store it in cylinders under pressure, and then we can release the air in our flat a little at a time. Only I have no idea where we can get or buy positive emotions. Maybe we could go visit some fine resorts, like on our honeymoon trip? I mean it — *a honeymoon*."

Viktor's mood was getting more and more upbeat by the minute — thanks both to Inga's decisive and carefully thought-through approach to childbirth and to her desire to have a child by him. And he was glad to know that the son he had foreseen in his dream would be borne not by just some flighty female interested mainly in money but by Inga, who was taking such a serious and responsible approach to the matter.

He really wanted to do something nice for Inga, whom he already considered to be the mother of his future son! He got up, quickly put on a suit, walked up to Inga and solemnly declared:

"Inga, will you marry me?!"

"Of course I will," Inga replied in accord, as she buttoned up her bathrobe. "Our son should have official parents. Only there's no point in going to some fancy resort for our honeymoon — that doesn't fit in with my plan of preparation for childbirth."

“What does fit in, then? Where else can we get positive emotions?”

“We should go around the outlying villages and find a spot we both really like. It has to appeal to both of us, and that means it will appeal to our son too, when he sees it. We’ll buy a hectare of land there, and you will build a small house where our child’s conception is to take place. I shall stay there all nine months of my pregnancy, maybe with an occasional brief outing. We’ll plant a new garden right there on our very own plot of land. I shan’t give birth in a hospital, but in the little house on our family domain.”

Viktor could not believe his ears. He could not believe that Inga — a smart, glamorous woman who used to be so keen on hanging out at fashionable clubs and popular resorts — could have changed her whole way of life so radically. On the one hand, he was flattered by Inga’s vision — after all, she had *his* child in mind. On the other hand, did not this vision harbour just a hint of abnormality?

He had heard from one of his friends of the existence of a series of books describing an unusual approach to childbirth. His friend had mentioned the importance of each family having their own hectare of land, and had given him this little book with a green cover called *The Book of Kin*. He had not got round to reading it, but he had heard that these books had been stirring up quite a controversy among the public. People who read them were beginning to change their whole way of life.

All at once, Viktor’s eyes fell on a pile of books with green covers lying on one of the bedside tables. He walked over and read the series title: *Ringling Cedars of Russia*.² Among them was *The Book of Kin*. Viktor now realised that all these unusual

²*Ringling Cedars of Russia* (Russian: *Zvenishchie Kedry Rossii*) — This was the original Russian title of the Ringling Cedars (or Anastasia) series.

ideas Inga had about preparation for childbirth she had taken from these books, and she was getting ready to carry them out to the letter. He was still not quite sure whether this was a good or a bad thing.

There was something disturbing about Inga's unusual and unquestioning conviction. It was as though an invisible someone had changed her views and whole outlook on life. But had these books changed Inga for the better, or had they made her just a little quirky? Viktor kept rehashing the question over and over in his mind, and began to argue with her:

"Inga, I know you got your ideas from these books. I've heard about them. Some people find them exciting, others say there's a lot in them that's simply fairy-tale-ish and can't be proved. Maybe you shouldn't just automatically believe everything that's in them? Think about it — what's the point in our taking a plot of land and building a little house and wearing ourselves out planting trees?

"I've got enough to buy us a fine mansion with landscaped grounds, a swimming pool, nice lawns, pathways and a garden, if that's what you want."

"There's a lot of things we could buy, of course," Inga blurted out, very emotionally, for some reason, "even a facsimile of love. But I want us to plant our garden ourselves. All by ourselves! 'Cause I want to be able to say to my son when he grows up: *You see this apple tree, son, and that pear tree and the cherry tree? I planted and watered them myself when you were just a little tyke. I did that for you. You were oh so little, and these trees were oh so little. Now you've grown, and they've grown too, and they've begun to bear fruit for you. And I've tried to make the whole Space around your little Motherland nice and beautiful for you.*"

Inga's outpouring of emotion was convincing, and Viktor liked what he heard. He even started having regrets that nobody in his lifetime had been able to take him to a garden like that and say: "This tree here was planted and grown for you

by your parents." *Yes, of course, Inga's right*, thought Viktor, *only why is she talking only about herself, as if I don't exist?* Feeling a bit slighted, he asked:

"Inga, why would you tell our growing son only about *your* part in this?"

"Cause you don't want to plant a garden," Inga calmly replied.

"What d'you mean, I don't want to? You bet I do, if it's important for our future."

"Well, then, if we're going to do everything together, I'll tell our son *we* planted this garden for him."

"That's more like it," Viktor observed, comforted.



For two months Viktor and Inga spent all their weekends driving around the outskirts of the city, looking for a place to build their future kin's domain. It was a most pleasant undertaking, and right at that time it seemed to Viktor that there was no more important task in life than searching for the one place on the Earth that would satisfy his soul and, consequently, that of his future son.

And so it happened one day that they came to the edge of a deserted village about thirty kilometres outside the city.

"There it is," Inga said quietly, jumping out of the car first.

"I feel something here, too," responded Viktor.

Later they made a second trip to the place, and spent a whole day looking over the site and talking with the local residents. They were told that the soil was not all that fertile, as there was ground water fairly near the surface. But that did

not faze Viktor. He became more and more persuaded that this particular land, along with the little birches growing on it, as well as the sky and clouds above it — that all of this belonged to him. To him and his future son, and to his and Inga's grandchildren and great-grandchildren. And if the ground was not all that fertile, no matter — he would make it fertile.

It did not take long to draw up the documents to purchase two hectares of land, and after four short months the plot sported its own pretty, almost fairy-tale cabin, built of kiln-dried logs.

The cabin featured a sauna and a biotoilet, along with hot and cold running water straight from a well dug on the spot. And on the second floor — a cozy bedroom with a window overlooking a forest and a lake.

Inga designed the layout of the cabin with all its furnishings. She also came up with a plan for the landscaping. Together they planted cedars, firs and pines around the perimeter of the lot, as well as little fruit-tree saplings. Every evening Viktor would hurry home to his little cabin on his future domain, where the mother-to-be of his child was taking care of the home front.

All the women Viktor had known before not only receded into the background — they simply ceased to exist for him at all. Inga's radical approach to childbirth engendered new feelings in him. They were still not entirely clear to him, and they were probably quite different from traditional love, but he was quite convinced that he could never part from her, and only she could bear...

It was only with her that he could build a future. The two of them went in to Moscow together to attend courses on home childbirths. There was one peculiarity of Inga's that Viktor found disconcerting — her outright refusal to have intimate relations with him. She kept insisting that their child should not be born as a result of fleshly lusts, but from Man's

infinitely greater and more meaningful desire, which was something else again.

Now this time the author of these little green books has gone too far! thought Viktor. *Come on, could it really be possible to do away with the factor of fleshly desire completely?*

But one day, as he lay beside Inga on the bed, not having any kind of sex in mind but thinking only of his future son, he touched her breasts. Inga at once pressed against him and put her arms around him...

In the morning, while Inga was still asleep, Viktor headed over to the lake. The world around him seemed entirely different — it seemed unusual and joyful.

What had happened the previous night he had never experienced before, either with Inga or with any of the other women he had known. This was no ordinary sex. It was an inspired impulse of creativity. Of course people are born and people die. But if they never experience anything like this over their whole lifetime, they are missing something — maybe the most important thing. But thanks to Inga, it did not escape Viktor. And he began to experience new warm — yea, fervent — feelings toward the one woman in his life: Inga.



All nine months of her pregnancy Inga spent on the domain, going into town only occasionally. She had it all worked out where the baby pram would be kept and where the crib would stand. She even had Viktor plant a modest-sized lawn where she could walk with their little son.

Her contractions began a week ahead of the expected time. Their future son was apparently anxious to make his appearance in his marvellous Space on the Earth.

From the information they had received during their childbirth courses, Viktor knew what a father should do to assist during the labour, but the only rational thing he turned out to be capable of accomplishing was to ring up the midwife they knew and call for an ambulance to stand by in case of emergency. Inga had to draw the water in the bathtub herself, prepare the towel and measure the water temperature, while he paced the room trying to think what he should be doing, but could not for the life of him recall what it was.

With no husbandly help to count on, Inga climbed into the bathtub on her own. The contractions continued, but each time one occurred, she simply drew upon her beautiful voice to sound forth on notes of joy and triumph.

Finally, out of all he had learnt during the courses, Viktor managed to remember one thing: *positive emotions*. He glanced over at the windowsill and saw the flower Inga had planted in a pot there — now in full bloom. He grabbed the flower-pot and ran with it into the bathroom, exclaiming excitedly over and over again:

“Look, Inga, your flower’s blooming! Your flower’s blooming! It’s come out, just look!”

He was standing there holding the flower-pot when his son’s little body appeared in the bathtub.

The midwife arrived only after Inga had already placed the tiny body on her tummy. Seeing Viktor standing there holding the flower-pot, she snapped:

“And just what are you doing?”

“I’m giving birth to a son,” replied Viktor.

“Ah,” the midwife nodded in agreement. “Then put your pot back on the windowsill and bring me...”

I need to tell all men... thought Viktor, as he ran about the house for the umpteenth time, *true and lasting love comes only when together with your beloved you give birth to a long-desired child.*

CHAPTER NINE



A fine state of affairs!

A fine state of affairs! We live out our lives, and we don't even try to figure out what our society's all about! And yet it is one of the most important questions in life. It's one that's troubled me for a long time now. I really wanted Anastasia to have a look at the documents on the building of the domains which I had brought with me, along with my appeal to the President of Russia and the draft legislation drawn up by my readers.

After thinking it over, however, I decided not to show these documents to Anastasia. I didn't want to risk upsetting her. Especially now, if it turns out she's pregnant, she needs positive, and not negative, emotions.

I finally decided to give the whole packet of documents to Anastasia's grandfather and asked him for his opinion.

"Oho!" exclaimed Grandfather, as he took the voluminous packet from my outstretched hands and remarked: "What d'you want me to do, Vladimir — read all this?"

"Yeah, I want to hear your opinion about them — about how things have turned out."

"And what good would that do you?"

"It would help me decide what course of action to follow."

"You ought to be deciding your own course of action, without any kind of advice."

"Does that mean you're not willing to read these?"

"All right, I'll read them, just so you won't take offence."

"I shan't take offence. What sense is there in reading if you're obviously reluctant to do so?"

"Sense? The sense is in not wasting time on useless stuff."

Grandfather sat down on the ground beneath the cedar, opened the folder and began leafing through the pages, taking his time. Occasionally his gaze would pause and focus on a particular page. Sometimes he just kept turning the pages with a passing glance. After a while he said:

“Vladimir, I need to look at everything carefully. Why don’t you go take a walk in the meantime?”

I walked about twenty metres off and began pacing back and forth, waiting for him to finish reading the documents I had brought with me (including the articles prepared for the *almanac*).¹ I would like to share these with you too, dear readers.



Talking with presidents

Please tell me, esteemed sirs — all you presidents, prime ministers and chancellors — who in fact is in control of nation-states?

The question may seem strange at first glance. Any school-child will offer the reply:

“Countries are under the control of the president, the government, the Duma.”²

But an answer like that simply points to the extent of the mass illusion at work here, and not just in our country. All

¹*the almanac* — see footnote 1 in Book 7, Chapter 28: “To the readers of the Ringing Cedars Series”.

²*Duma* — the lower house of the Russian parliament (see next chapter).

sorts of ordinary people are under the spell of this illusion, just like the rulers themselves. It can and must be dispelled with the aid of logical thinking. Those who are unable to discern the illusoriness engendered upon the Earth will die without having really lived, because the whole of their so-called life is but an illusion.

And so — how to dispel this illusion?! First of all we should define what it means to ‘control a nation’. In the main, and perhaps exclusively, this refers to the control of social processes and phenomena. The chief person in this control system is called a president.

So, let’s ask him:

“Tell us, please, Mr President, are you in charge of drug addiction in our country?”

“No,” the president will reply. “I’m not in charge of that.”

“What about the rapid development of prostitution?”

“No, I’m not in charge of that either.”

“And what about widespread corruption and bribery?”

“No.”

“And the extinction of our population?”

“What are you talking about? I’m not in charge of anybody’s extinction.”

There are a whole lot of questions which he would have to answer with the phrase “No, I’m not in charge of it.” He has, in fact, no alternative, since giving any other answer would brand the ruler a criminal.

So it turns out that there are unmistakable large-scale processes taking place in society, influencing the lives of every single individual, but the supreme ruler and the whole host of officials under his command have nothing to do with these processes. *What, then, are they, in fact, in charge of?*

Upon closer inspection, all they do, it turns out, is involuntarily and unwittingly supervise the concealment of the true rulers, who, you see, really do have a reason to hide.

In any case, no president, chancellor or prime minister can possibly be the real ruler of a nation, either in theory or in practice. Their only task is to carry out someone else's will under the guise of their own, and this can be attested by scholars — psychologists, for example.

You and I can come to a similar conclusion if we make a careful analysis of our own lives.

Haven't our own lives been influenced by 'someone' — say, in kindergarten, school or college? If they want to, they can bring us up to be communists, or fascists, or democrats, as in our present situation.

And through this process of upbringing and indoctrination, they engender the corresponding social processes.

"Reality should be determined only through one's own self," Anastasia has said. Her words are good, and true. But to understand reality, we need to reflect, contemplate. However, our prevalent way of life leaves precious little time for reflection, and so by default we use someone else's definition of reality that has been imposed on us.

In the case of a head of state, he has even less time for reflection than ordinary people. His daily schedule is calculated down to the hour and minute, and often not by himself.

History also teaches us the impossibility of a universally visible ruler actually controlling a nation-state.

It is known, for example, that in Ancient Egypt the pharaoh was raised by priests. Naturally, they knew in advance what many of the pharaoh's future decisions would be. But even during the tenure of his reign they would still keep giving him advice. So in actual fact, the pharaoh was merely carrying out somebody else's will.

Rulers in the Orient also had wise-men at their courts and consulted with them. But neither the Egyptian priests nor the Oriental court wise-men, nor the sages of our Vedruss

period, ever burdened themselves with affairs of state. Their principal task was that of analysis and reflection.

Not affording such an opportunity to our present rulers and parliamentarians renders them incapable of exerting an effective influence on the processes taking place in society. It deprives them of power.

This was confirmed to me by a well-known three-term deputy of the legislative assembly, who is also a professor with a Ph.D. in economics. But he confirmed this only after serving his parliamentary terms, when he finally had the opportunity to engage in reflection and analysis.

It was confirmed in the scandalous incident reported in the press when a deputy of the present Duma complained to the Constitutional Court that the President's Deputy Chief of Staff advised a group of State Duma representatives in no uncertain terms not to reason things through but simply to vote as they were told.

Incredible as it may seem, the Deputy Chief of Staff, perhaps intuitively, turned out to be the closest of all to the truth. It was far quicker and more efficient for him to make decisions on his own than to have a crowd of people beating their brains out over these decisions — a crowd of people who didn't have the opportunity to think. This conclusion is confirmed by the fact that none of the parties in the State Duma have put forward even a slightly articulate platform that the public can understand.

The situation with the ideas and programme already put forward by Anastasia offer the clearest evidence of the inability of the existing system to engage in independent decision-making.

Anastasia's programme has been supported by a great many people, and, as studies have shown, the overwhelming majority of these people lead a sober lifestyle and are inclined to reflection. Vast numbers of people in different parts of the

country have overcome great challenges in their efforts to implement this programme. On the government level, however, there are people who seem incapable of even seeing what is going on in the public arena.

Not only that, but counteraction has begun which has served to highlight precisely the influence foreign powers have been exerting on Russia, and the fact that the country is far from being under the control of its own government.

This counteraction, of course, does not come from the ranks of the priests, who plan out programmes for centuries and millennia to come. It is simpler and more specific, and arises from the current system of world order, in which Russia has been assigned to the role of a supplier of raw materials for the West and a market for its substandard merchandise.

By 'the West' I do not mean the ordinary people of Europe or America. I'm talking about a group of transnational companies and financiers who are interested in their own profits.

As we can all attest for ourselves, over the past decades their plans have been implemented at an alarming rate, while our rulers, to say the least, have done nothing to prevent this implementation. This is another fact clearly testifying to their lack of any kind of true power or authority.

The only counteraction to the destruction of the state and the annihilation of a significant part of its population is the programme put forward by Anastasia.

"But," the majority of my readers might reasonably argue, "why do you continue to appeal to those who have no power and are incapable of changing anything?" I shall respond.

1. I am appealing, after all, not only to the authorities, but in the first instance to *you*, dear readers, in the hope that our combined efforts will enable us to understand the situation we find ourselves in — in the hope that this situation will come out in your interpretation in family chronicles. This is an absolutely vital step. Otherwise not only we, but

our children, too, will have an unenviable future to look forward to.

2. I remember Anastasia's question: "But who is to blame for the lack of acceptance of truth — the one who does not accept the truth or the one from whom he receives it?"³ I think that I am partly to blame for the lack of sufficient governmental support offered to those who have begun to set up their domains. I was not able to express the idea in a language government officials could understand. Sure, we all speak the same Russian language, but different segments of the population use it differently, and attach different interpretations to words.

In short, I am unable to express myself in a language government officials understand.

The President's administration, the Government and the Duma are all comprised of people, just like you and me. They too have children, wives and grandchildren, for whom, as would any other parent, they wish a bright future. And if they should prove capable of understanding the situation, they will gain true power and will be in a position to significantly influence the positive processes taking place in our society. But where and how can we find the words capable of putting an end to this "vanity of vanities"?⁴ We must look! Otherwise new politicians will appear and will come up against the same system blocking their thought. Hence I am appealing to you, my readers, with a request to find together the words which will be understood by the various segments of our society.

And so for the umpteenth time, I stand my ground and appeal to our President and Government.



³Quoted from Book 2, Chapter 7: "Who's to blame?"

⁴*Vanity of vanities* — a quote from Ecclesiastes 1: 2.

TO THE PRESIDENT AND GOVERNMENT OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

As supreme ruler of the Russian State, you are undoubtedly more interested than anyone else in the prosperity of our country. Like any head of state, you would like to be recognised by the public for having left the brightest of all possible legacies during your tenure in office — namely, laying a foundation for the prosperity of our nation and its people.

Similarly, every Russian family desires to shape its life and daily routine in a manner worthy of human existence. And every mother who bears a child dreams about a happy future for her offspring, realising that such a future is possible only when the nation as a whole is heading in a clear and predictably good direction.

It is on this premise that you are endeavouring to build our national institutions — our government, our ministries and our regional authorities. Nevertheless, no matter how sincere your desires and the endeavours of our state apparatus may be, our country continues to be plagued by corruption, drug addiction, prostitution, juvenile crime and many other social ills.

Our environmental and demographic situation is becoming hopelessly entangled. Families are falling apart. The country's overall population is in daily decline. We as a people are simply dying out.

Everything you are doing is extremely important: the consolidation of the vertical power structure, the reorganisation of the state apparatus, the reform of the military, the doubling of the GDP in the economic sector. All our national indicators are on the plus side, the dynamics are positive, but... the public doesn't feel it. The people of our country — our neighbours, colleagues and co-workers, relatives, parents and

children — are all finding it more and more difficult to understand each other, to find kind and sympathetic words to say to each other, to build their mutual relationships on the basis of honesty, decency and trust. Fear for tomorrow, for the future of their children, shows no signs of letting up. Are not these the most important indicators to consider?

We see signs of an increasingly active struggle against social ills, but these ills are not abating. Why not? Why do the people's desires and the President's endeavours not correspond with what is happening on the ground?

Isn't it time we all faced the truth squarely in the eye and came to the conclusion that we are struggling merely with effects, and not with their underlying causes? Isn't it time for you to openly admit that our country is playing host to an ideology foreign to our society, and realise that there are certain definite forces underlying many of our ongoing social ills? As a professional KGB man, you couldn't help but be aware of this.

These forces have made such fools of our peoples that we are beginning to suffer from tunnel vision. Take a simple example: *advertising*. Both learned psychoanalysts and ordinary people will tell you that mass advertising is nothing but a device which exerts a powerful influence on the human psyche. With the aid of this device people in many countries can be persuaded to consume food products which are harmful to their health, or wear uncomfortable clothing, or vote for certain politicians. And this device, which can exert a colossal influence on masses of people, seems to be in your hands, in the hands of our national government. Isn't that so?

Most definitely *not*! It is actually subject to *other* masters. Attempts to bring resolution to this question immediately give rise to accusations of violating freedom of speech. These accusations come from those who actually have no interest whatsoever in promoting people's freedom of speech. The

mass media are, in fact, in the hands of the world's financial magnates.

And they keep spreading this monstrous lie among whole populations, hiding behind the cynical excuse that it is advertisers who support all TV and all the interesting programmes we “so love to watch”. But, in fact, TV is not paid for by any advertisers. All they do is pass on a portion of the money they collect from the public, which they build into the cost of their products in order to pay for their advertising on TV, radio, public transport and the street. Thus it turns out that the public collectively are the real supporters of TV operations — every time they purchase substandard consumer goods and food products containing chemical additives. They support mediocre and downright shoddy TV programmes and soap operas, which keep promoting the image of Man as a maniacally preoccupied Neanderthal.



The science of imagery, and who governs the country's ideology

Throughout history national ideologies have been created through devices which exert an influence on human society through images, through the clandestine ancient knowledge of the science of imagery.⁵ Some of our learned chaps might object that there is no such science. But there is. And its

⁵For further references to the science of imagery, see Books 4, 6 and 7, especially Book 6, Chapter 6: “Imagery and trial”.

existence is determined not by the will of academics, but by the very nature of Man. Man is created to think, and thoughts in turn form images.

In recent times we are wont to associate the science of imagery with Ancient Egypt. We learn from history how priests created images to liberate nation-states or seize power over whole peoples.

It was the same kind of knowledge that the SS troops attempted to master in Hitler's Germany, or the KGB's Division 13 in Soviet times.⁶

Certain elements of this science are intuitively employed by modern political technologists in the West, and more recently in our own country. Hence the terminology *image-making, way of life, way of thinking*,⁷ *a candidate's image*.

To the political technologists it is quite unimportant what a candidate's inner aspirations are, what kind of Man he is, whether or not he is good at his job. Money and the mass media help them create an image which will appeal to the public. And what people end up voting for in elections is not so much the Man himself as the image created for him by the political technologists. It won't be long before we'll all be voting for cardboard cut-out politicians and a papier-mâché president!

As for the shaping of images of whole nation-states and their peoples, these are the masterpieces of an incomparably higher-rank species of political technologists.

Centuries of human history have borne witness to a host of examples of controlling a nation-state through images. The most salient and obvious example for people today of the work of these top-ranked political technologists — or

⁶*Division 13* — designating the unit of the KGB responsible for covert operations, including sabotage, assassination and even terrorism.

⁷*way of life, way of thinking* — both these terms in Russian contain the word for 'image' (*obraz*).

‘modern priests’ — may be the history of our country and its peoples over the past century.

We all know about the downfall of the Soviet Union, one of the mightiest empires in the world. But what preceded the formation of the USSR and what gave rise to its subsequent collapse?

Precedent to the formation of the USSR was the creation of an attractive image of a socialist future and then of a communist state. Landowners and manufacturers were cast in the image of bloodsuckers of the proletariat. The tsar still reigned in Russia, and the monarchy seemed unshakeable. Yet at the same time an image was at work which was busy attracting followers, and these in turn found all sorts of ways to bring down the monarchy and create a new state — in the new image.

The fall of the USSR was also preceded by the creation of an image — an image of the country as a totalitarian state, along with a discussion on the need to replace it with a new one — a happy, free democratic state along Western lines. The government and leaders of the communist state were cast in the role of bloodthirsty thugs trampling on freedoms and on the people themselves. The socialist order was painted as intolerable and leading nowhere. The image of communists created by theatre and cinema directors, actors and artists, on which whole generations of the populace had been raised, was now summarily shunted aside. But what was there to take its place?

The resulting vacuum began to be filled with images of flourishing businessmen, gangsters, prostitutes and Hollywood starlets. Our young people strove to imitate their habits and morals. There is no disputing the fact that material wealth is fast becoming the criterion by which prosperity is measured. Who attains it and how — that doesn’t enter into the picture. The need to build a developed democratic

state has been proclaimed to all, but not a word has been (or is being) said about the insurmountable problems in other 'democratic' countries — drug addiction, colossal corruption, environmental degradation, mental depression, decline in birth-rate and a whole lot else besides.

Women naturally refuse to have children when they see no future for their offspring.

Never mind that people in democratic countries have no clear picture of their own future — our modern 'priests' find it necessary to present democracy in its present form as the only acceptable order for the structuring of human society. Why? Because the conditions of democracy as we know it make it the easiest system to control. It is all too easy to hide behind freedom of speech, freedom of business, freedom of choice and meanwhile throw the public a black lie. And this is done not by happenstance, but deliberately and with considerable forethought. Whatever image you latch on to, you yourself will become.

These political technologists know what will happen next with the whole population. It's not a difficult task to determine who's behind the disasters happening in Russia. All one has to do is track where the country's precious human and financial resources are being siphoned off to each time.

The huge flood of emigration which fled Russia following the 1917 revolution took with it not only a significant amount of capital along with historical treasures and traditions, but, most importantly, human resources.

After the collapse of the Soviet empire, a combination of reforms and a tempting image of prosperous, civilised countries siphoned off (and continues to siphon off) our financial and intellectual resources.

The saddest part is that the latest image of our state is being summoned in the interests of annihilating the whole country and the peoples living therein. No military intervention is

required at all. A more significant force than military weaponry is at work here. An *image* is at work. A combination of factors already perceptible to analysts has been put into operation. Quite a simple combination at that. Let's try to reason it through.

What are we building today? Where are we heading to? The political technologists tell us they are building a democratic state on the Western model. And so, once it is built, we shall all be rich and happy.

"But," millions of our fellow-citizens quite reasonably argue, "if there already exist on the Earth developed states that are both democratic and happy, then wouldn't it be easier simply to go and live there now?" And millions *have* left — and continue to leave — for Germany, Israel and America, putting their intellectual and financial capital at the disposal of these countries. And they become slaves there. The image is working!

But what about those left behind in Russia? What are they to do?

"Build a developed democratic state and become rich," says the image. But what can a traffic cop, say, do to build such a state? Or a sales clerk in a store? Or a civil servant in an administrative office? That's not clear to many people. Neither is it clear how one is supposed to become rich on a salary of three to five thousand roubles a month.⁸ But quite a number, after all, have somehow managed to wangle their way through. They drive around in expensive cars, build themselves luxury mansions and holiday at fancy resorts. Somehow they've wangled their way through...

And now the whole country is beginning to follow their example. Sales clerks and customers, traffic cops and office

⁸In 2005 (when this book was written) this represented approximately US\$100–175, respectively, at the then current exchange rate — or US\$200–350 in buying power.

administrators, army officers and private soldiers, teachers and students. But those who know the science of imagery merely scoff at such efforts.

“Come on,” they say, “catch a few scapegoats among the officers’ ranks. Then you can create a security service within the security service.”

Here we are fighting not against causes, but against effects. The image has already done its work. It is capable of entering unhindered into the minds of politicians and generals, high-ranking government officials and ordinary people. Because it is *image*, it knows neither border guards nor closed office doors. It lures young girls from isolated Russian villages to far-away lands with its promises of a happy life, and then forces them to work as prostitutes in Cyprus, Israel or New York.

For the sake of this promise of a happy life, officials are ready to take bribes and policemen to go into cahoots with criminals. This image has tremendous energy. In the meantime, all our politicians can do is keep mouthing over and over hackneyed phrases like *developed democratic countries, the civilised West*, thereby serving to reinforce the image that is so destructive to our country.

People are aware there’s something wrong with the country, and so they understand when you, Vladimir Vladimirovich,⁹ attempt to impose order, but how to accomplish this? Just consolidating your hold on power is not enough. In doing this you are strengthening not just your own power, but the power of the images too.

Thousands of government officials now have more power, but being under the influence of the image, they will unwittingly act in the interests of the image, i.e., in the interests of the image’s creators. But the creators have already decided that Russia’s fate is sealed. Their actions have become

⁹*Vladimir Vladimirovich* — President Putin’s first name and patronymic.

unbridled and brazenly bold. Specially trained personnel have been sent to Russia for the purpose of strengthening the creators' power by supporting an image which can only destroy the country. I can officially state that right at this moment specially trained people are operating on Russian territory — people whose job it is to keep track of, and correct where necessary, the ideological component of the state. I have a feeling you, Mr President, are aware of this, too.

Let us give some thought as to why there have been so few positive images over the past few years in our nation's literature, film and TV programmes — images capable of inspiring people, setting a pattern to follow and helping build a marvellous future for their children. *We* still remember and live by those images, but our children?

We are assured that this is the demand of the majority, that everybody wants to watch only Hollywood starlets, gangster showdowns and sensational reports on bloody happenings. Nonsense! That's not what people want! We are told: if you don't want it, then don't watch — if you don't like it, don't listen. That is called freedom of choice. But that's not quite the way it is. Or, rather, that's not the way it is at all. There *is* no choice here! Not for children, not for adults and certainly not for senior citizens. And unless you happen to be cold-hearted, cynical and soulless, you'll discover the road to the promised prosperity is blocked. And there is no other road. Isn't that the case all around you? Or all around us?

All this depravity is being deliberately foisted upon us. Special covert selection mechanisms were put in place long ago. Any poets, innovative educators, writers and directors who have dared create positive images for Russia are cruelly persecuted. Everything is simply closed to them.

This is partly the work, too, of Western spy agencies that claim to be fighting sectarianism. You can hear such declarations coming from the mouths not just of Russian

special-service agents, but from social and political activists as well, including the highest officials of the Russian President's administration — your administration. For example, Mr Surkov,¹⁰ your Deputy Chief of Staff, said during a newspaper interview:

A secret war is being waged against Russia by circles in America, Europe and the Orient, who still regard our country as a potential enemy. They consider themselves to have rendered a service in fostering the virtually bloodless collapse of the Soviet Union, and now they are attempting to capitalise on their success. Their goal is none other than the destruction of Russia and the filling of its vast spaces with a multitude of petty quasi-states.

Such a statement is entirely plausible, even if just because the forces that overthrew the USSR still exist and, quite naturally, not satisfied with having achieved victory at one stage, they will definitely continue with a stepped-up offensive.

And it is especially important here not just to state facts but to understand the mechanism by which the destructive influence operates.

We already know that the collapse of the USSR was brought about not through armed invasion but as the result of an ideological manipulation of our people. Ideology — that is the principal means of either annihilating or reinforcing any nation-state. But any ideology can be used to influence masses of people if it has a well-built and efficient operating structure. It exists and it is not ours. It is not *our* images that are

¹⁰*Vladislav Yurevich Surkov* (1964–) — the Russian President's Deputy Chief of Staff since 1999. During the previous decade and a half Surkov held executive positions with various Russian financial institutions and media organisations.

acting through it. But where has our own structure disappeared to? *We destroyed it!*

In the USSR, apart from its ideological institutions and broadcast centres, the ideological departments of the Communist Party's Central Committee, the Ministry of Culture and the press, there was a huge network including so-called 'Palaces of Culture' and 'Houses of Culture',¹¹ along with urban and rural district activity clubs.

Such institutions afforded the opportunity for millions of young Soviet citizens to engage in amateur artistic and performance circles, including the holding of lectures and meetings, as well as the opportunity for the accepted state ideology to get through and be explained to the masses.

At the beginning of *perestroika*, when the ideology changed, this network of institutions was liquidated — their financing was cut off.

It is difficult to imagine that a driver motoring along the highway who suddenly realises he is heading in the wrong direction, instead of turning around and heading the right way, begins to dismantle his car on the spot. But something like that is what has happened in our country. When the decision was taken in society (not without the aid of certain forces, of course) that we were heading in the wrong direction, instead of turning around and using existing institutions, they were simply dismantled. And what was there to take their place?

It was proposed to hand over the basic task of spiritually educating the population, especially the youth, to Russia's Orthodox Church. However, more and more testimonies are indicating that, first and foremost, it is necessary to educate the majority of the clergy itself.

¹¹*Palaces of Culture, Houses of Culture* (Russian: *Dvortsy kul'tury, Domá kul'tury*) — These functioned along the lines of community centres, including concert halls and recreation centres, to provide ideologically approved entertainment and recreational facilities for the public in Soviet times.

As an institution of spirituality, Russia's Orthodox Church was catastrophic in its failure to justify the hopes placed in it. Why? Simply because, through the help of the State, it only took a few years to open twenty thousand churches, while it requires centuries and a host of strict conditions to educate twenty thousand highly spiritual clerics who are truly capable of comforting and educating other people.

And not the kind of conditions as when the state pours forth grants and favours, which only corrupt and attract opportunists and vagabonds. In that scenario the winners are not those pastors who are rich in spirit but those who are more devious and position themselves closer to the trough. It is not the congregation led by a spiritually minded prior that comes out on top, but the one that manages to obtain financing.

After all, the process of attracting parishioners and raising their level of spirituality is a lengthy one — it can drag on for years. So the village priest is obliged to mend his own frock, unable to afford a new one, while his urban counterpart drives around in an expensive foreign car.

This acquisitiveness and covetousness already plaguing the clerics of Russia's Orthodox Church was brought up during a speech at the annual meeting of the Moscow Diocese in the Cathedral Church of Christ the Saviour¹² on 15 December 2004 by Alexei II,¹³ the Holy Patriarch of Moscow and all the Russias, when he said:

¹² *Cathedral Church of Christ the Saviour* (Russian: *Katedral'nyj sobornyj khram Khrista Spasitelja*) — the seat of the Moscow Patriarchate of the Russian Orthodox Church. The original church, built in the early part of the nineteenth century to commemorate deliverance from Napoleon's armies during the War of 1812, was blown up on Stalin's orders in 1931. After World War II the site was used to construct the world's largest swimming pool. The cathedral was reconstructed on the site in the mid-1990s, following the collapse of the communist régime.

Today we are obliged to confront a series of negative phenomena — including the general static state of the church's activity, the absence of dynamics in congregational life, the low attendance by worshippers at temple services and the lack of interest in religion on the part of the rising generation.

The growing commercialisation of many aspects of congregational life is an alarming indicator of the dying out of the Orthodox consciousness, spiritual blindness and the disparagement of ecclesiasticism. Material self-interest all too often comes to the fore, overshadowing and stamping out everything living and spiritual. All too often temples deal in 'church services' as though they were commercial firms.

Nothing pushes people away from the faith as much as the selfishness of priests and others who serve in the temples. It is with good reason that covetousness is termed a hateful, murderous passion and the only treason in respect to God — in other words, a hellish sin.

The Patriarch outlawed taking payment for performing church sacraments — the rituals of communion, marriage, last rites and burial services — as well as commercialising the 'services' of the Church. But will clerics heed the ban imposed by the supreme church hierarchy, if they already transgress a higher law — the commandments of God?



¹³*Alexei II* (also spelt in English: Alexius II) — the spiritual head of the Russian Orthodox Church. Born Alexei Mikhailovich Ridiger in 1929 in Estonia, in 1990 Alexei II was chosen *Patriarch of Moscow and of All the Russias* (*Patriarkh Moskovsky i vseya Rusi*).

Russia's Orthodox Church — but is it Russia's?

Apart from everything else, Western spy agencies have exerted what may be the strongest and most destructive influence on Russia's Orthodox Church (ROC).¹⁴ And this could have been foreseen, of course, if someone had only been assigned to foresee it. We know that major shifts in our country are always preceded by an ideological makeover. Could the departments of Western spy agencies responsible for the transformations in Russia required by their masters leave untouched such an important institution as ROC? Of course not! Otherwise their work would not be professional. Besides, the conditions in Russia at the time offered more than fertile ground for ideological diversion. Occupied with their own reorganisation, *our* spy agencies, to put it mildly, were busy with their internal 'settling of accounts', which I believe is still going on.

It is impossible to know about every single operation perpetrated by a Western spy agency through ROC structures. But one in particular has struck a chord in society as a whole. Millions of Russia's citizens, including the Church's own clerics, have felt and continue to feel its destructive consequences. I'm talking here about the agency formed under the ægis of ROC which labels as 'sects' a wide range of secular and religious organisations, thus provoking negative reactions to ROC on their part.

¹⁴*Russia's Orthodox Church* (Russian: *Rossiiskaya Pravoslavnaya Tserkov'*) — traditionally known as the Russian (*Russkaya*) Orthodox Church. Note that the author deliberately uses the word *Rossiiskaya* in this phrase, emphasising its association with Russia (*Rossiya*) or the Russian Federation (*Rossiiskaya Federatsiya*) as a political entity, rather than *Russkaya*, which is used more in reference to the Russian people, language and culture. See also Book 7, especially footnote 11 in Chapter 15: "Opposition", as well as footnote 3 in Chapter 20: "Pagans".

These 'anti-sectarians' have been acting in the name of the Church and even, as they claim, with the blessing of Patriarch Alexei II. In response to their actions people who formerly maintained a tolerant attitude toward the Church or even attended services as baptised members, have now simply torn off the crosses they used to wear around their necks.

One more ploy of the 'anti-sectarians': in working to expose their straw-man 'sects', they virtually criticised and brought shame upon Russia's Orthodox Church itself, dealing it a serious blow. After that, they decided to take control of the higher organs of state power in the Russian Federation.

Having accepted the idea of a marvellous future for Russia (as shown in these books) with their heart and soul, people in various parts of Russia have turned (and continue to turn) to local administrations, asking them to grant them plots of land for the setting up of family domains. And, what is truly amazing, people for the first time are not asking for favours, or salary or pension supplements, but simply a small piece of their country's natural landscape where they can create their own living (and not just survival) conditions.

It would seem that this impulse which has arisen among the public is something that ought to be welcomed with open arms. And this impulse is no fly-by-night whim, but a lasting, well-thought-through desire, as the past four years will attest. This idea has encompassed various segments of the population: school pupils, scholars and entrepreneurs, teachers, doctors and pensioners, soldiers and politicians, artists, poets and writers — including academicians,¹⁵ governors and the wives of presidents of former Soviet republics.

These people can help not only in solving many of the socio-economic problems our country is facing, but also in

¹⁵ *academicians* — members of the Russian Academy of Sciences (a very high rank indeed).

making drastic improvements in our country's demographic situation, unemployment rate and national health, as well as in securing safe food supplies. But the main thing is to harness the mighty force of the people themselves, who, in creating their own Space, will strengthen their beloved country and nation-state which has afforded them the opportunity to do so.

Evidently, however, there is someone who is greatly displeased by these positive aspirations which have emerged in the Russian people.



Occupiers in action

Certain government agencies at the regional (and sometimes even local) level have been advised to treat the readers of my books as sectarians and terrorists, and, consequently, to counteract any initiative they may undertake, especially those wishing to set up their own family domains in rural areas. The mass media were ordered, under threat of sacking journalists, not to report on these initiatives. Or if there were any reference, it had to describe them as part of the 'loony fringe', calling everybody to go to the forest, back into the past etc. People working in the cultural sector were called upon to take countermeasures against anything connected with the books or the ideas set forth therein.

Communications from readers clearly point to the activities of some sort of organisation operating on our national territory through agents in state and ecclesiastical structures

and carrying out destructive policies. And don't just take *my* word for it. This is confirmed by professional researchers who have familiarised themselves with a significant body of collected materials.

A special term has even surfaced: 'the Anastasia cult'. And to whom or to what does this term specifically refer? To me as a writer? To my *Anastasia* book? To the book's heroine, whose name is Anastasia? To the millions of readers of these books? Or to their efforts to implement Anastasia's idea about a marvellous and prosperous Russia? As it turns out, all of the above.

It is a sad sight indeed to see both foreign and home-grown clerics — who are definitely not of any Christian faith — occupying the Orthodox Church and exerting their influence on state officials. Christianity for them is only a convenient cover. Their actions show clearly that they are far removed from any Christian morality. Their methods are 'old hat' — the same methods of falsehood and violence that were used to destroy the culture of Ancient Rus' in favour of a new ideology foreign to the people. I have written about this in my books.¹⁶

Right off they began accusing me of paganism. But what kind of an 'accusation' is that? It's tantamount to accusing me of the desire to know the history of my country and the culture of my forebears.

There is, however, some very happy, encouraging news. Life has begun more and more often to come out with situations where their unseemly actions are exposed as if by an invisible ray of light. It puts them, one might say, in a rather funny predicament. Judge for yourselves.

¹⁶See, for example, Book 7, Chapter 20: "Pagans", especially footnotes 3 & 4.

CHAPTER TEN



The Book of Kin and A Family Chronicle

In 2002 Dilya Publishers¹ issued the next book in the Ringing Cedars Series entitled *Rodovaya kniga* (The Book of Kin), in which it advised its readers:

Our publishing house has taken the idea of a 'Book of Kin' to heart. As we were getting this book ready for press, we decided to set at once about publishing a blank 'Book of Kin' for you to fill in and thereby keep a record of your own family chronicle.

Not long after Dilya published this *Family Chronicle*, in 2003 the Russky Dom² publishing house put out a book under the title *Semeinaya letopis* (A family chronicle). One of its compilers was Archimandrite Tikhon Shevkunov.³

At the front of the book were featured guest forewords by Russian President Vladimir Putin and Alexei II,⁴ Patriarch of Moscow and of All the Russias.

¹*Dilya Publishers* — the current publishers of the Russian edition of the Ringing Cedars Series, located in St. Petersburg and Moscow. The quotation cited did not appear in the English edition of *The Book of Kin*.

²*Russky Dom* (lit. 'Russian House') — the name of (a) a publishing-house in Moscow related to the Russian Orthodox Church and (b) a monthly magazine it publishes. Archimandrite Tikhon sits on the magazine's editorial board.

³*Archimandrite Tikhon Shevkunov* — Archimandrite (Father Superior) of the Sretensky Monastery in Moscow, sometimes described as a spiritual advisor to President Putin.

A family chronicle is not just a simple story about a few human destinies, or even about a whole family. It tells the story of a whole nation. The destiny of Russia is the history of families over successive generations.

Such knowledge is indispensable for each citizen of Russia to become aware of his roots and his role in the history of our great Motherland.

— Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin, President of Russia

The atmosphere of the family and home, relations with one's relations, memories of one's forebears and the raising of one's descendants — all this has tremendous implications for the moral strengthening of the individual and, consequently, of the nation. It is no coincidence that it is said among many different peoples that love for one's Motherland begins at home.

— Alexei II, Patriarch of Moscow and of All the Russias

The first one to put forward this idea was Anastasia:⁵

Just a few days will go by, and millions of fathers and mothers in many a land will be writing their Book of Kin, filling in its pages with their own hand. There will be a vast multitude of them — these Books of Kin. And all of them will contain the truths which begin in the heart, for their children. There will be no room in these books for artifice or guise. Before them all the lies of history will fall.

— Anastasia

We shan't go into details as to how Russky Dom followed the example of Dilya or who was responsible. The important

⁴*Alexei II* — see footnote 13 in Chapter 9: "A fine state of affairs!" above.

⁵Quoted from Book 6, Chapter 10: "The Book of Kin".

thing is the implementation of the idea itself. Now we can see that this idea has the support of the President, the Patriarch and the Chairman of the State Duma,⁶ who presented copies of *A Family Chronicle* to schoolchildren on Knowledge Day.⁷

Now what are the poor slanderers to do? Include the President, the Patriarch and the Chairman of the State Duma in their list of sectarians? Along with the former President of Ukraine, who signed a decree regarding family farms, granting Ukrainians not one, but two hectares of land each?

And we must not forget Governor Ayatskov,⁸ who during an interview on NTV⁹ said of Anastasia's followers: "The future of the country lies with them." He has also encouraged his civil service staff to acquire land and set up their own family domains.

Nor Governor Tuleev¹⁰ of the Kemerovo Region, who has granted land for a settlement. Nor the Supreme Mufti of Russia, Talgat Tajuddin,¹¹ who responded to a question by a

⁶*State Duma* (pron. DOO-ma) — the lower chamber of the Russian national parliament, corresponding to the House of Commons in the United Kingdom and Canada or the House of Representatives in America, Australia, and New Zealand.

⁷*Knowledge Day* (Russian: *Den' znaniy*) — 1 September, the traditional start of the Russian school year.

⁸*Dmitry Fedorovich Ayatskov* (1950–) — Governor of the Saratov Region on the middle reaches of the Volga River.

⁹*NTV* — abbreviation for *Nezavisimoe televidenie* (lit. 'Independent Television'), a national private TV network created in 1993, which on its Internet site boasts more than 120 million viewers.

¹⁰*Aman-Gel'dy Moldagazyevich Tuleev* (1944–) — Governor of the Kemerovo Region in Siberia, on the Tom' River (a tributary of the Ob) just to the east of Novosibirsk.

¹¹*Talgat Safich Tajuddin* (1948–) — Supreme Mufti (spiritual leader) of Russia's Muslims, formally known as the Chairman of the Central Spiritual Directorate of Muslims of Russia and the European Nations of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

Sotvorenje Studios correspondent — as to what he thought of the Ringing Cedars Series — as follows:

I love these books. I read them and get a great deal out of them. I feel that reading these books helps strengthen Man's faith in God. After all, we need to nourish our faith in God day by day. But for that it is not only our eyes that must be open — more importantly, our heart must be open. Besides, our heart has been given to us for to love, and Vladimir Nikolaevich Megré's books help us love God. He conveys this truth to people through the words of Anastasia.

Perhaps theologians may have some reservations. Perhaps someone will call it just a hypothesis, but faith in God — and especially love for God — is something that starts growing bit by bit, and afterward becomes immeasurable. And long before we get to the next world, right here in this world Man can become happy. And the Ringing Cedars Series helps us do this.

On the eve of these events, evidently under pressure of the machinations and fear-mongering of these same 'anti-sectarians', one Orthodox archbishop (I shall not give his name, so as not to immortalise him) signed a letter threatening to excommunicate from the Church anyone who reads or distributes the Ringing Cedars books.

This would mean that the archbishop would 'excommunicate' the Patriarch himself, who has supported the idea in creating *A Family Chronicle*, containing his and the President's signed forewords. Even if the Patriarch has never even held any of my books in his hands, that's not the point — it's not the paper with the printed text of the books, after all, that's important, but the ideas set forth in them. Now that one of the ideas has been approved, I am convinced that it won't be

long before others will be granted official State support. But in the meantime...

So perhaps it is time we drew the attention of our law-enforcement agencies to just who these so-called 'anti-sectarians' really are. By what methods or machinations do they operate, hiding so conveniently beneath the vaulted ceilings of Russia's Orthodox Church? Evidently, they're not there for prayers! The fomenting of interreligious discord, the discrediting of government agencies — that's what they're really up to.

And it would be foolish to even suppose that some group of 'anti-sectarians' is that strongly concerned about my personal spiritual development. Their actions, rather, are testimony to their carrying out orders to stop any positive transformations from taking place in Russia. An illustration of their ideologically based diversionary tactics may be seen in the following example as well.



The Jewish question

Recently, for the umpteenth time already over the past millennium, passions have been inflamed over the 'Jewish question'.

There has been more and more talk about the spread in both Europe and Russia of extremist views, including anti-Semitism. The European Jewish Congress has linked this situation with the growth of Muslim populations in European countries, which are, they say, aggressively anti-Jewish. But

there are many concrete historical examples testifying to the fact that aggression can be deliberately provoked. And this is now actively being pursued by certain circles. The provokers may even come from the ranks of the Jews themselves.

One has the impression that some kind of order has been received regarding the organisation of pogroms. Jewish pogroms are very profitable to someone, and I'm talking about financial profit. Extremist organisations do not derive any financial benefit from pogroms — rather, they suffer losses. But these pogroms offer a palpable benefit to countries where Jewish members of the financial oligarchy flee to legalise their multibillion-dollar incomes and obtain international immunity from prosecution.

And for the sake of such financial benefit they are ready to subject to abuse ordinary and utterly harmless Jews living on Russian territory. This has happened over and over again in the annals of the long-suffering Jewish people.

What's the point of a pogrom? The logic is simple. Public opinion is turning against the oligarchs, the financial magnates, as never before. According to government statistics, approximately 70% of Russia's population believe that they should be immediately censured and dispossessed. Acting on the basis of law, the President, the Government and the Russian Prosecutor's Office are attempting to investigate the activity of a number of oligarchs. They have declared war on corruption and it appears as though over the next four years the oligarchs may indeed be obliged to forfeit their financial holdings. Given the situation, they are naturally trying to get out of the country.

But then there is the problem of how to legalise their transfer of capital to the West. The surest way is to provoke a kind of pogrom that will shock the world community. It's easy to see what happens next. The financial magnates simply turn up in one of the Western countries while these pogroms are

going on and declare themselves political refugees. Naturally this provides them with not only political asylum but also a legalisation of their financial holdings, even while they may still maintain at least partial control over resources and factories back home through dummy CEOs or trusted associates.

And herein lies an important message for all Russian citizens, especially those organisations which call themselves patriotic. Don't ever give in to provocation or stoop to the level of organising pogroms against synagogues. You will only be acting out somebody else's script.

It would be wrong to accuse all Jews of machinations and unseemly acts. Just like Russians, Belarusians and Ukrainians, Jews come in all stripes and colours. I offer the following as proof. I was once the featured speaker at a readers' conference in Kazan,¹² where the audience was comprised of different nationalities, including many Muslims. During my remarks I read a chapter from a book by the Jewish writer and poet Efim Kushner¹³ entitled *Beskrovnaya revoliutsiya* (A bloodless revolution). Before reading from it, I said that this was a Jewish writer living in Israel but writing about Russia, about her future. When I had finished reading the chapter, the hall broke into thunderous applause.

Muslims, too, applauded this Jewish writer and poet. Why? How did it happen that supposedly aggressive Muslims offered their sincere applause to a Jewish writer?

¹²*Kazan* — capital of the Republic of Tatarstan (within the Russian Federation), about 1,000 km east of Moscow. The Republic has a predominantly Muslim population.

¹³*Efim Kushner* (1940–) — Jewish poet and writer, who emigrated to Israel in 1990. The book mentioned was published in 2003 (it appeared in a Bulgarian translation in 2006) and includes favourable comments on the ideas set forth in the Ringing Cedars Series. Another reference to Kushner may be found in footnote 14 in Book 4, Translator's and Editor's Afterword: "Hope for the world".

It happened because in his book he speaks about the marvellous future of Russia, linking it to the ideas outlined in the Ringing Cedars Series. He calls upon the Russian government to adopt a programme based on these ideas.

I can tell you right off that he is not the only Jew who accepts and supports Anastasia's concept set forth in the books. In Israel there is a whole club of readers who have been drawn to the books about this Siberian recluse. Israelis are composing songs in both Russian and Hebrew about the characters in the series. I have the distinct impression that in the final analysis, it will be the Jews who take the lead in putting the ideas into practice, and will draw peoples of many lands along in their wake.

I can at least tell you that I have been informed that right there in Israel significant funds have been set aside for the construction of environmentally clean settlements.

"Oh, those connivers!" people will say later on. "See, they're stealing the Russian idea out from under us!"

Pardon me, but they are not stealing anything from us. In fact, they are saving this idea! Will you kindly tell me who is preventing the Russian authorities from implementing the ideas in the books? After all, for the past five years, practically, it is these same authorities that have been targeted with a large number of individual and collective letters by Russians living in the Commonwealth of Independent States and elsewhere in the world.

It is truly a comical situation that has developed. A host of researchers keep talking about the birth of a 'national idea' among the Russian people. But the way things are turning out here, it looks as though it will have its first implementation in Israel! Who's to blame?

Overall, every discussion on the Jewish question so far, at least those in the publications I have access to, seems pretty primitive. Almost all of them boil down to a routine statement

of the facts: “Jews have taken over the press in various countries.” “Pretty much all the TV networks are in Jewish hands.” “Most cash flow is controlled by Jews.”

All this is no doubt true, including here in Russia today. But this is simply a statement of fact and nothing more. It is far more important to explain *why* situations like this have developed in various countries, with an enviable consistency, over a period of centuries.

I can tell you the following right off. It is simply that the Jews are obliged to do this, and we are obliged to fall into line with them, including on the legislative level.

Judge for yourselves: the State Duma of the Russian Federation adopted a law recognising four ‘basic’ religions, two of which are Christianity and Judaism.

According to Christianity, the Christian is the ‘slave’¹⁴ of God. Wealth is not welcomed. In St. Petersburg, where I am writing these lines, I can see from my hotel window the huge Orthodox Cathedral of the Blessed Virgin of Vladimir, on the façade of which is written in large, gold lettering: *Hear, Our Lady, the prayer of thy slave*.¹⁵

According to Judaism, the Jew is the chosen one of God; to him belong wealth and lands, and usury¹⁶ is welcomed.

¹⁴Note that Russia’s Orthodox Church traditionally refers to every human individual as ‘slave of God’ (*rab Bozhii*). It is reflected even in the contemporary Russian word for ‘worker’ (*rabochii*), which literally means ‘Father’s slave’. The term is generally translated ‘servant’ in the Authorised Version of the English Bible.

¹⁵Compare the wording of Daniel 9: 17: “O our God, hear the prayer of thy servant...” Note, too, that in this citation the Russian term corresponding to *Our Lady* is *vladychitsa*, which has the connotation of ‘empress’ or ‘high ruler’. The Russian term corresponding to *the Blessed Virgin of Vladimir* is *Vladimirskoi Bozhei Materi*, lit. ‘the Vladimir Mother of God’.

¹⁶See, for example, Deut. 23: 20: “Unto a stranger thou mayest lend upon usury” (*Authorised King James Version*), rendered in the *New English Bible* as: “You may charge interest on a loan to a foreigner”.

Everybody knows what a huge influence religions exercise on Man's mentality, character development and way of life.

So let us be consistent in the logic of our actions. The highest legislative organ of our land has accepted these two concepts, at the same time designating who is to be slave and who is to be ruler.

And, being the law-abiding citizens that we are, let us not keep deceiving each other, but let us accept as a given, according to the law adopted by our government, that the Jews have authority over us.

Now there are some that will not be satisfied with such a position. Some will even consider such a statement absurd. But let us not close our eyes to the actualities of life. Let us see clearly the causes of what is going on, or we shall keep on tasting the consequences with an unyielding regularity.

If someone is unhappy over the current situation, then by all means let us work together to find an alternative.

The solution might be an idea acceptable with equal enthusiasm to Muslims, Christians, Jews and members of other faiths.

Such an idea exists. Not only will it fix the situation, but it holds the future in its hands. There are specific facts and life situations that attest to this.



Let's create

In an address to the Federal Assembly,¹⁷ the President of the Russian Federation set a goal of doubling the country's Gross

Domestic Product (GDP) within ten years. Well, a goal is a goal. And measures must be taken to reach it. The first step is to inspire the people with a vision. It is the people, after all, who must work to double GDP indicators. And what has been happening since this goal was set by the highest official in the current government?

Incredible events began to take place.

Instead of at least making an attempt at realising the goal, some highly placed officials began talking about how unfeasible its implementation was, while others insisted it still must be attained. And that's it! Nothing more. These discussions have wasted precious time: the year 2004 ended miserably, with a GDP growth of a mere 6.4%.

Right from the start this fascinating subtext as to whether the goal was feasible or not ran throughout the whole treatment of the subject by the press. But, again, with not even a single attempt at implementation.

This situation points to the fact that the Russian authorities are heading for a state of utter helplessness. And it makes no difference here whether the officials in question are elected or unelected, they will find any excuse they can not to carry out the directive.

Imagine how it would be if a commander-in-chief gave the order to *prepare to attack*, and his generals and colonels, instead of working out the plan of attack, began to discuss whether an attack was feasible or not. In that case defeat would be an inevitability. Which is exactly what has happened.

But could it be possible that the goal set by the President was really preposterous? We can't judge until we try to figure

¹⁷*Federal Assembly* (Russian: *Federal'noe sobranie*) — the name given to the bicameral Russian Parliament as a whole, which comprises the State Duma (or lower chamber) and the Federation Council (upper chamber), as established by the 1993 Constitution of the Russian Federation.

it out for ourselves. However, I'll jump ahead of myself and say: *it is feasible!*

I can just see my readers' dumbfounded reaction: what's all this about Russia's Orthodox Church, 'anti-sectarians', Western intelligence services and the goal set by the President for doubling Russia's GDP? Be patient. There is a very close mutual connection here.

Think who would benefit by a doubling of Russia's GDP. Russia herself, of course. Who would lose by it? Naturally, the West, which looks upon Russia merely as an overflow market for its substandard merchandise.

And Western intelligence services, it seems, have once again had the upper hand (as usual), putting down the Russian President and his officials, ridiculing them even as the aforementioned goal was being set. But let's go step by step.

In order to double the overall GDP, it is necessary to first identify those economic sectors where an increase in output is essential, as well as those where such an increase would be undesirable — the production of tobacco, wine and spirits, for example (Russia's already drowning in her own booze and choking on her own tobacco smoke). You wouldn't want to double the output of armaments, or build new casinos, or double the outflow of raw materials from the country.

Which means that the remaining sectors of the economy are faced with the task of not just doubling but tripling or even quadrupling their output. These sectors have not yet been identified and, consequently, no specific goal has ever been suggested to them.

Well, some may object, if we're not sure we can double our GDP or not, how can we even think in terms of quadrupling? An impossible task!

But I say *it is possible!* It is possible, and not only that, but it requires no additional capital investment.

Take agriculture, for example, where production has been cutting back year after year, to the point where it has already begun to threaten national security. It is the talk of politicians, Duma deputies and a number of government officials.

But they're not talking in the wind. In the case of some food categories, imports already account for up to 40% of the market. This is already a threat to our national security. And what awaits us after that? I'll tell you.

By 2005 our country's rural population is expected to shrink by 25%, which will exacerbate the problem even further. More specifically, it will make the country completely dependent on external sources — and then the government will be forced to pay for food not just with natural resources, but through sales of missiles, just to avoid being utterly torn to pieces by the population at large.

This means a sea-change is required in the whole agriculture industry: it must double or even triple its production. However, this will never happen using traditional methods, where all proposals simply come down to nothing more than a requirement for additional subsidies. And it is not clear just who these subsidies are to be directed to, given that the able-bodied rural population keeps significantly decreasing in numbers. And if that be the case, not even the most state-of-the-art equipment or super-technology is going to help. There will simply be nobody left to work with it.

Which means that our goal is first and foremost to have able-bodied people showing up in the countryside. Millions of them. Tens of millions. Not only that, but they must be people with a desire to reach out and touch the ground with love. If *they* don't show up, there's no point in talking about anything else.

To hear some officials tell it, however, getting people to show up like that would be nothing short of a miracle. It is not something they believe in. They haven't believed in it even when it's happened.

Yes, ladies and gentlemen, the miracle *has* happened!

All thanks to one individual — the Siberian recluse named Anastasia.

Maybe her words seem incredible and fantasaical to some, but they are right on. They have given birth to an enduring impulsion in people's hearts and souls.

Tens of thousands of people in various parts of the country have been wanting to chart their life-course in a rural setting — to set up their domains there and move in. The numbers of applicants are rising with each passing year.

They are setting up their own regional action groups and demanding: *GIVE US LAND! We are ready to take care of it.*

These people have united in a non-governmental organisation, which was founded at a conference in the city of Vladimir on 5 June 2004 — an event which showed, for the first time in post-Soviet Russia, the rise of a popular force unparalleled in modern times. The hall was filled to capacity, as many came who were not registered delegates but simply wanted to listen and tune in to what was happening.

By a vote taken at the conference, a people's movement was set up under the name *Ringling Cedars of Russia*, with the basic aim of supporting the idea of kin's domains. It was truly a people's movement, opposed to neither the government nor any political party. Rather, it aimed to reach out to all with the simple message: *Let's create.*

Thus a people's movement was born with a clear and distinct programme, easily comprehensible to and solidly supported by the public.

What benefit would accrue to the State of Russia by carrying out just one platform of this programme? Outwardly, it is a very simple platform, focusing on a single hectare of land, but envisaging the following wide-ranging results:

- a significant improvement in the environmental situation;

- restoration of soil fertility;
- a solution to the question of providing high-quality produce for the country's population;
- a significant (twofold or threefold) increase in wages across all sectors of the economy without risk of inflation;
- an immediate improvement in the demographic situation and in the general health of the population, including its rejuvenation;
- a solution to the question of the nation's defence preparedness;
- the termination of capital outflow along with, by contrast, a capital inflow into Russia; the return of her intellectual resources;
- a significant reduction in (over the next few years) and eventual extirpation of: bribery, corruption, gangsterism and terrorism;
- a coming together of neighbouring countries¹⁸ along with those of the former Warsaw Pact (Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Bulgaria and the three Baltic states) into a single powerful union;
- cessation of the arms race and close co-operation among Russia, the USA and Eastern Moslem states.

These points have been worked out not just by me, but also by a number of students in their graduating essays — e.g., the essay by the budding jurist Tatiana Borodina.¹⁹ They are also talked about in scholarly publications (e.g., by Professor Viktor

¹⁸ *neighbouring countries* — primarily those of the Commonwealth of Independent States, made up of most of the republics of the former Soviet Union (Ukraine, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan etc.).

¹⁹ Ms Borodina's graduating essay is entitled: "The legal status of Kin's Domains in Ukraine: developmental perspectives", and has been made available on a number of Russian websites.

Yakovlevich Medikov,²⁰ a three-term deputy of the legislative assembly who holds a doctorate in economics). There are a number of privately published brochures on the topic, written by professional researchers as well as ordinary people.

I shall attempt to jot down a few words of explanation in justification of some of these points.

So, let us suppose that our country has decided to implement the programme proposed by Anastasia:

Every willing family is offered free of charge one hectare of land for lifetime use with the right of inheritance for the purposes of establishing on it their own kin's domain. The produce grown on the domain, as well as the domain itself, is not subject to any form of taxation.

The adoption of this programme will lead to the following results:

- *A significant improvement in the environmental situation.*

Practice has shown that people who have received land for a kin's domain first of all set about planting wild-growing trees, at an average of up to 200 trees per family, along with an average of 2,000 shrubs, hedges and berry bushes and 50 fruit-bearing trees.

Even using the most conservative estimates, researchers predict that the adoption of such a programme on a national level, if correctly implemented, will lead, right in its earliest

²⁰ *Viktor Yakovlevich Medikov* — a metallurgist and professor of economics, former Vice-Rector of the Siberian Metallurgical Institute, who served as a deputy both in the Communist 'Supreme Soviet' and in the first two terms of the post-Communist Duma. He gave the opening address at the June 2004 conference. For other references to Dr Medikov, please see the Editor's Afterword to Book 1 and Book 7, Chapter 28: "To the readers of the Ringing Cedars Series".

stages, to about ten million Russian families setting up their own kin's domains.

This means that even in the first year or two following the adoption of the programme, and without any additional subsidies, two billion wild-growing trees will have been planted, 20 billion shrubs and approximately 500 million fruit-bearing trees. And that is just the beginning.

• *Restoration of soil fertility.* As can be seen from practice, the first thing people do when they are granted land, not on a short-term lease but for their lifetime use, is to put their efforts into soil restoration. Not only that, but they are doing this not just by the application of organic fertilisers, but also by a more natural method, namely, the sowing of soil-building crops during the early years.

• *A solution to the question of providing high-quality produce for the country's population.* You may remember the 'struggle for the harvest'²¹ back in Soviet times — how schoolchildren, students and industrial employees were transported out to collective and state-owned farms²² to help bring in the harvest.

²¹ *struggle for the harvest* (Russ. *bor'ba za urozhai*) — a term used in Soviet propaganda in reference to harvest time. Since collective farms were inherently inefficient, authorities were compelled to mount a campaign each year, urging vast numbers of people — from schoolchildren and students to industrial workers and soldiers — to help with the harvesting and 'save the crops' before they rotted in the field. People were generally expected to carry out this work either with payment in kind or without any remuneration at all.

²² *collective and state-owned farms* — two systems of agricultural management during the Soviet era. On a collective farm (*kolkhoz*, pron. *kall-HOSS*), it was claimed that workers as a collective owned their farm, sold their produce to the State and shared in the profits from the sale, while on a state-owned farm (*sovkhöz*, pron. *sahf-HOSS*), farm workers were paid a salary, just as in a factory. In reality, however, in both cases the quantities and prices were dictated by the state.

I myself took part in these large-scale operations, weeding fields and gathering onions at a suburban state-owned farm.

However, there was still no abundance of high-quality produce in the country. Today's older generations, of course, remember how the potatoes sold in stores would be half-rotted, not to mention the most undesirable-looking vegetables.

Then came the *dacha* movement.²³ They began to allot people 600 square metres of land. And a miracle happened. Everyone is aware of the statistics. Ordinary people — all by themselves, without any support from government ministries or agencies — have provided 80% of the vegetables produced in Russia. (Unfortunately, all sorts of complications are being introduced these days, including higher travel fares, taxes on land plots, increased electricity rates.) And all this on just 600 square metres, where it is impossible to create any kind of economically viable enterprise or to plant tall trees which enrich the soil, or to put in water ponds and so forth. And all this carried out by people without sufficient knowledge or experience, working just on weekends and holidays.

A hectare of land will allow the setting up of a more economically viable enterprise. With the right kind of organisation, there will be a thirtyfold decrease in the workload per square metre. Not all at once, mind you, but I do emphasise:

²³The term *dacha* (originally from the verb *davat'* = to give/grant), dates back to at least the eleventh century. It has had a variety of meanings, including country residences of the Russian cultural and political élite. From the 1940s on, with the emergence and rapid growth of food gardening by the urban population, the term has been used more and more to denote a country garden plot belonging to a city-dweller, usually together with a small cottage. The *dacha movement* referred to here arose during the Second World War, when the Soviet government began to allot small plots of land for food production to combat war-time food shortages, and has since grown to include approximately 20 million families. For further information, please see Book 1 (especially the Translator's Preface) and Book 2 (notably Chapter 9: "Dachnik Day and an All-Earth holiday!").

it has to be set up properly. That given, both existing practice and theoretical calculations confirm that implementing the proposed programme will fully guarantee the country a sufficient food supply for all its citizens bar none.

Now a word about *quality*. It goes without saying that someone growing agricultural produce to be used by his own family will not add any poisonous chemicals or chemical fertilisers to the soil. He will not grow any mutant produce. All this crap is being imported into our country and bought up by the public for no other reason than insufficient production here at home. Once a sufficient quantity level is reached, *quality* becomes the number one concern. I hope I've made myself clear?

• *A significant (twofold or threefold) increase in wages across all sectors of the economy without risk of inflation and a reduction of prices within the country on all forms of merchandise, leading to a reduction in social tension.* Someone may wonder what possible link there could be between the implementation of the 'Kin's domains' programme and a wage increase — let's say, for a salesman, a trolleybus driver, a nurse or a teacher. But there is! And a direct causal link at that.

Think about it. Most enterprises today are in private hands. People we call oligarchs enjoy fabulous profits — but at whose expense? Basically, at the expense of minimum wage-earners. And what's the point of increasing their wages, let's say, from five thousand to twenty thousand roubles a month,²⁴ when there are still people queuing up just to get a job? There's simply nowhere for them to go.

²⁴At the time this book was written (2005), the average wage in Russia was 8,500 roubles per month — approximately equivalent to US\$300 at the official exchange rate (or to US\$600 in buying power). Wages vary greatly from one region to another, and full income amounts are often unreported (meaning the actual average is higher than that calculated by government agencies).

It's an entirely different situation with a family whose work on their own domain earns them an average of ten thousand roubles a month (which has been proved entirely feasible in practice) with a minimal cost of living. No utility bills or daily commuting expenses, or the cost of buying meals at city cafés. To attract domain dwellers to work in a factory or other private enterprise, one would have to offer them a salary at least one-and-a-half or two times the income they would earn from working on the domain, and cover travel and meal expenses besides.

Today an oligarch who has privatised a factory or oil-drilling company can afford to live in a castle in London (that really happens) and earn up to a million dollars a month, while the workers slaving away to provide that income for him receive less than a tenth of one percent of what he makes.

This scenario can be played out *ad infinitum*. Inevitably it leads to revolution, stripping the property-owner of his enterprises and the overthrow of the government permitting such inequities. The only way to prevent such a result from occurring is to reach an equitable sharing arrangement with the workers. Oligarchs will not come to this point voluntarily but, under pressure of circumstances, will give in.

We mentioned the relationship between a domain dweller and the owner of an industrial enterprise. But those left living in city flats will also see their wages rise, to keep them at their jobs. They too, after all, are given a choice: stay working and living in urban conditions, or start building themselves a whole new way of life in the country.

And one more question on this point: *Why will this not lead to inflation or price rises?*

Inflation is always the outcome of certain concrete procedures, specially engineered. Price rises are simply a by-product. The cause is always Man's estrangement from a natural way of life. It is an easy matter to increase prices on fuel and

foodstuffs when people don't have any of either to call their own, meaning that they are completely dependent on external suppliers. But try raising apple prices for someone who has his own orchard. Absurd! And what about fuel? But even here there's a limit. Today's fuel prices are so high that it is actually more profitable to till a couple of hectares of land using horses — which, by the way, supply a first-class fertiliser for the soil.

• *An immediate improvement in the demographic situation and in the general health of the population, including its rejuvenation.* It is no secret that the current demographics in our country are catastrophic. And even *this* word isn't strong enough to describe it fully. If a country's peacetime population decreases by almost a million souls annually, that's monstrous! The leaders of such a country, I should think, would want to hide their identity from the public, as well as from their descendants. Discussions on the need to change the current situation amount to nothing more than pathetic babble. They don't change anything. Not even increasing financial support for birthing mothers, as necessary as that may be, will lead to any substantial improvement.

The history of many millennia shows that women cease giving birth when they see no prospective future for their children. It is necessary first to determine clearly and precisely the future development of society as a whole, as well as of each family making up that society.

The Anastasia Foundation in Vladimir²⁵ conducted a survey of families planning on setting up their own kin's domains. Of the more than two thousand polled, 1,995 responded that

²⁵The *Anastasia Foundation for Culture and Assistance to Creativity* — a non-profit organisation based in the city of Vladimir. See Book 5, Chapter 15: "Making it come true".

they would be having children. Some wanted three or even more. Those who for health reasons were unable to have children of their own were planning to adopt them from orphanages. How to explain this phenomenon? It is simply that a Man who has built a marvellous living oasis is aware that he is building something lasting, and wants his children to enjoy life, too.

As to rejuvenation and revitalisation of health, let us turn once more to practice. Look at how much livelier and younger your grandfathers and grandmothers behave once they get out to their dachas in the springtime. And it goes without saying that a pregnant woman who eats only environmentally clean produce, drinks clean water and breathes clean air cannot help but bear healthy children — significantly healthier than today's examples.

• *A solution to the question of the nation's defence preparedness. A significant reduction in weapons and, over the next few years, the eventual complete extirpation of bribery, corruption, gangsterism and terrorism.* The military preparedness and morale of our armed forces today, including the nation's law-enforcement officers, has slipped below the zero-mark and is heading deep into the minus side. It is no secret how challenging it is for local conscription offices to call up young recruits to military service. Refusal of military obligations is no longer considered shameful among today's youth — on the contrary, it has become a mark of bravery. Those whose families are slightly better off attempt to buy their way out of serving; those not so well off try to 'cut out' any way they can, even to the point of self-mutilation.²⁶

²⁶By law, military service is compulsory for all male Russian citizens upon reaching the age of 18.

So it turns out that, by hook or by crook, the army drags in conscripts from the poorest segments of the population. Such an army is in no position to defend anyone or anything against a major enemy. Not only that, but it is potentially dangerous to the very country it is supposed to serve.

Let's take a close look at just *whom* the soldiers of the Russian army are called upon to protect. *The Motherland*, comes the standard response. But today the concept of *Motherland* has been seriously eroded, and it is a challenge to grasp hold of just what *is* one's Motherland. It wasn't that long ago that Russian officers and soldiers swore an oath of allegiance to the USSR, which was also considered their Motherland. Then all at once the borders changed and whole parts of the territory they were defending turned out to be 'foreign soil'. The troops deployed in these parts were suddenly treated as invaders. They were left to defend the people on the part of the territory that was still known as Russia. But what kind of people were they really protecting? Oligarchs and bribe-taking government officials? Their own families? But if a soldier or an officer came from a poor family, who was he supposed to protect them from?

For the past ten years now, government propaganda has proclaimed that we are building "a civilised, democratic state on the Western model". But just think: how could today's Russian soldiers do battle against the forces of NATO or the USA if they have already been brainwashed into thinking that their enemy is civilised and developed, which must mean that 'we', by contrast, are 'uncivilised' and 'undeveloped'? Quite absurd. Is this some sort of psychobabble, or a deliberately invented tactic? An all-professional army has been touted as a panacea for getting out of this manufactured dead-end situation, but that is even more absurd. A professional army, as is known, is made up of mercenaries who take up arms for money and shoot at whoever they are

told is the target. They carry out the orders of whoever pays the most.

History is full of examples of governments afraid to bring their armies of mercenaries home. That's how it was in Ancient Rome, and a similar danger exists in the USA. It is already happening in parts of Russia as well.

A professional army must be kept busy in continual fighting, preferably not on the territory of the nation it is supposed to be serving. When an army returns to its home country, it will inevitably be in demand by forces opposed to the existing authority, or it will disintegrate into a large number of splinter groups, some of which may even be transformed into criminal gangs. For the most part, there is no such thing as *unemployed armed mercenaries*. If they are not given work, they will find it on their own, and in their chosen profession. Besides, an army consisting of people serving only for money can be very easily bought off by a higher bidder.

Just imagine a foreign military base located, say, in Georgia, Turkmenistan or Ukraine, whose soldiers are paid three thousand dollars a month, while ours get only five hundred a month. In fact, you don't need to imagine this. There are already concrete examples right here in Russia. Just look at how many highly qualified and professionally trained officers of the former KGB are now working as security guards for commercial organisations, including foreign banks.

So, what's the solution? There is just one — one and only one. We must make sure that our Russian soldiers, officers and generals have something left to protect.

• *Every Russian army or law-enforcement officer, upon receiving the rank of lieutenant, is to be awarded not only a little star on his ep-aulette, but at the same time the right to receive a hectare of land on which to set up his kin's domain.* The land grants shouldn't be for 'back lot' waste lands, but for elite lands specially allocated by

the government for settlement purposes. An officer should be able to choose his own particular hectare within these territories. And, when home on leave, he should be free to plant, either alone or together with his parents, a new garden, or dig a pond, or designate a spot on which to build a house.

And if he is frequently re-posted to various parts of the country or even abroad, during the time he is billeted in officers' quarters, barracks or a field tent, every officer of the Russian Army should be able to rest secure in the knowledge that back there, in a spot of his own choosing, the garden of his little Motherland — his own garden — is flourishing in the springtime. And the girl who has fallen in love with him will know from the little star on his epaulettes that her beloved has a future, has a Motherland, and a family nest for their future children.

And even if, for the time being, she has to share with her beloved in the challenging conditions of an officer's life, all the same, at least once a year they will visit their little Motherland and share their dreams and plans for the future domain. They will decide where the pond is to be dug and where the house is to be built.

And even if they are obliged to spend their month's leave on their own land in a tent, still they will be able to experience an incomparable sense of joy at beholding the marvelous future that lies ahead for the generations of their family to come.

And even if the little trees of their future garden are still young and the green hedge they have planted around their domain is scarcely noticeable, these are still there, and they will grow and flourish, waiting for them, their creators.

• If an officer's wife becomes pregnant, within three months' time, the State should build on the designated spot a modest home according to the plans selected by the parents-to-be, with all the amenities

afforded by modern technology. And the wife of a Russian officer will be able to spend the remaining months of her pregnancy in her own little house. Perhaps her home will be shared by her parents, or perhaps she will be alone there, keeping in touch with friendly neighbours. But, most importantly, she will be surrounded and filled by the positive emotions she so badly needs. After all, she will be completely surrounded by the space of her little Motherland, belonging jointly to her and her beloved.

And she won't go off to have her baby overseas or even in one of those incubators we are accustomed to calling, for some reason, *maternity homes*. The officer's wife will have her baby in her own domain, as many women are already doing. Possibly it will be under a doctor's supervision, but it will be at home, in familiar, favourable and sympathetic surroundings — not in some maternity chair which has heard the moans and cries of hundreds of birthing mothers.

• *The child of a Russian officer should be born only in his own family domain.* Even if at the moment of birth the young lieutenant is somewhere far away, he will hear — he will most certainly hear — his child's first joyful cry. And he will let no foe encroach upon his grand Motherland. He, this young lieutenant, a Russian officer, will not let a foe get past him, since at the heart of his vast Motherland is his own little Motherland — one he feels is very dear and close to him, one where his beloved walks in a flourishing garden, holding his wee son by the hand as he takes his own first baby steps in life.

Society! Our society! The society comprising our nation is already today capable of seeing to it that a young mother — the wife of a Russian officer — need not worry about how to get food for her baby. She should be provided for. Maybe not in the style the oligarchs' wives are accustomed to, nor has she any use for the shallow fad of owning a supposedly expensive

car. She will have far more than that — love and a future. Her main achievement is the restoration of her Motherland. This is her principal work, her principal task in life.

And society should pay her a salary equal to that of her husband. That's not much, of course, in return for her grand co-creation, but such a step will at least be an initial good-will gesture on the part of society and the State.

Such a possibility already exists right now. Only one shouldn't confuse things by bringing in higher-level economic considerations.

Currently the oil pipeline is showering Russia with a rain of American dollars. And why is not a single drop of this rain falling on any Russian officer, his wife or child, or his little Motherland?

Who thought up such arrangements, concealing themselves behind that supposed panacea for all ills — democracy?

Is it 'democratic' when poorly-paid soldiers or officers of the Russian Army are obliged to defend wealthy oligarchs, their fancy detached houses along the Rublevskoe Highway²⁷ and their numerous counterparts in other regions of the country? That's not democracy, that's *drivelocracy*!

And if such drivel doesn't change, we shan't have any defence or protection at all. There will be no protection for the average citizen, nor even for the president, let alone the petty and major oligarchs.

The extermination of this drivel will spell an end to corruption, drug trafficking, and the notorious bribe-taking from drivers on the part of traffic cops.

²⁷*Rublevskoe* (pron. *roob-LYOF-ska-ya*) *Highway* (named for the former village of Rublevo) — an area in the western part of Moscow where many of Russia's *nouveaux-riches* have built or bought expensive apartments or (what used to be a rarity in Moscow) detached single-family homes.

Now tell me: why should a copper have to stand in the street and breathe into his lungs all the roadway dust and the exhaust fumes of all the expensive and not-so-expensive cars passing by? As though they were the cat's pyjamas and he were nothing but a nincompoop. He stands there watching out for their safety, for which he is paid a mere pittance. Indeed, if he didn't take bribes from these cars' owners, he would be ridiculed by his relatives who would think it utterly abnormal; his wife would tear into him and his children would turn away from a father who couldn't even afford to buy them a pair of last season's jeans.

And he is not at all terrified of the police's anti-corruption squads. So what if he's sacked from his job? That's no great loss. It's not a job that will guarantee a living for his family in return for honest labour. It simply means he has to look for another. But what kind of job? What kind of job can he find where he can maintain his integrity and still provide for his family?

And so he stands there in the dust and exhaust fumes and takes his bribes. And for this, society hardly condemns him, but pays him. *So what?* — *we're all becoming like this*, society thinks. Now *that's* terrifying! The fact that we're getting used to it! We cease dreaming about other possible scenarios. We get accustomed to seeing the crowds of prostitutes, homeless children and street thugs. We get accustomed to the stage shows we call *elections*. Or is someone, in fact, accustoming us to these?

After all, up until recently the most terrifying thing for an inhabitant of a Russian village was social disdain on the part of his fellow-villagers, observing: *She's a slut! He hasn't kept his property up!*

And so, it's time to bring back those days. The time will most certainly come when the most pleasant thing for a Russian citizen to hear will be society's approval in the form of: *He's a good man! He has sensitive and properly behaved children!*

He has a splendid domain! Then there won't be any more crime, corruption or drug trafficking. It will surely come, that time.



On a bench in a shady garden sits a greying, elderly man, tenderly stroking the chestnut-coloured hair of his three-year-old granddaughter, her head nuzzled against his chest, while his eleven-year-old grandson takes the general's greatcoat hanging on the back of the bench and tries it on. Two large general's stars adorn the epaulettes of the greatcoat, which once featured two small lieutenant's stars.

But that's not the most important thing, the grey-headed general thinks, looking at his grandchildren. The most important thing is that he created and saved for his grandchildren this garden, this pond and the whole marvellous Space in his kin's domain, his little Motherland in the heart of Russia. He has saved Russia! And She is flourishing! His Motherland! A fresh cool breeze wafts the fragrance of *Her* gardens around the whole world. And interplanetary winds announce the flourishing of the Earth to other worlds. And the stars in the heavens burn with just a touch of envy, and dream of meeting visitors from the Earth, the wise and bright sons and daughters of God.

It will come to pass! But in the meantime... Do you hear, lieutenants, how the heart of the Russian Land is beating, sounding the alarm?! How it is begging for you to take her, little by little, to yourself and plant gardens? She promises to return to each of you your Spaces of Paradise and give you the gift of eternity!

Do you hear? You must hear!

• *The termination of capital outflow and a new inflow of capital into Russia; the return of her intellectual resources.* I can theoretically prove that this will happen with the adoption of Anastasia's programme in full. This has also been shown theoretically by famous scholarly researchers, as well as by students working on their graduating essays.

There are arguments on both sides here. Only practice can offer incontrovertible proof. And that it has done.

People of the Russian diaspora have been flocking from near and far to communities still under construction — communities which as yet do not have a solid legal footing. I know, for example, just in one community near the city of Vladimir, of a teacher from Turkmenistan and a young couple from America. A similar trend can be observed in many other communities now being built on the territory of Russia and Ukraine. People who can't wait for a law on land grants are buying up land, endeavouring to work within existing legislation. They are buying back their Motherland. It is the duty of society and the State to refund their money. Otherwise there will be a curse hanging over the head of anyone who has seen fit to take money from someone for starting to settle on the land where he was born.

In any event, people are coming back, even if it is just one or two at a time for now. You can judge for yourselves what will happen under a favourable coincidence of circumstances — i.e., the adoption of a law granting every willing family a plot of land on which to set up a kin's domain.



Letter to the Russian President from Germany

ANASTASIA, reg. society
Schützlerbergerstr. 43
D-67468 Frankeneck
Tel. +49 (6325) 955-99-39
Fax +49 (6325) 18-38-59
www.anastasia-de.com
E-mail: info@anastasia-de.com
ANASTASIA, reg. society

Administrative Office,
President of the Russian Federation
Staraya ploshchad', 4, Moscow 102132

Dear President of Russia, Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin!

This is a letter from former citizens of a country which no longer exists — the USSR. For various reasons many of us find ourselves living abroad. Germany has become a refuge for more than three million former Soviet citizens. While flocking over the border and discovering the Western 'civilised Paradise', many of us have recognised that at the same time we have lost our Motherland, without which no one can ever be happy in the fullest sense.

Today in Russia a brand new idea has made its appearance, guaranteeing Man's physical and mental health, an idea already appealing to many people of various nationalities, including those living in Western Europe. Thanks to this idea, we realise that right now it is Russia that possesses the spiritual potential needed for the re-birth of harmonious Man and the restoration of a harmonious State.

Detailed information about this idea is available in the Ringing Cedars Series by Vladimir Megré, which to date has sold almost six million copies overall. It is Megré's books that have given Russians living in the Commonwealth of Independent States and other countries a new and marvellous hope of re-birth, which is a vital need for every Man, family and State.

The substance of the idea can be summed up as follows:

Every family or citizen should have the right to receive, free of charge, one hectare of land on which to set up their little Motherland, their family domain, which can be passed down by inheritance from generation to generation. Man was born on the land and should have his own specific piece of his Motherland, created and cultivated with his own hands — and the hands of several generations of his family.

In one of your speeches you stated that Russia was born and long lived in the countryside, on the land, and that that is its destined path. We agree! Having tasted the pleasures of Western civilisation, we are acutely aware that drug trafficking, prostitution, the plight of homeless children, thievery and murder, are all the fruits of this same celebrated civilisation. We are not even mentioning the most painful European problems — namely, the environment and demographics. Russia, too, has been experiencing these same problems in trying to reinvent itself on the Western model. Today it is becoming clear to many in the West that the path being followed by their democratic states is leading to a dead end, if not utter self-destruction.

Russia has gone through difficult trials over the many centuries of its history, all of which have served to nurture a special spirit among its people. It is thanks to this spirit that, at times of the most despairing spiritual and

environmental crises, its citizens will be able to stand on the edge of the abyss and, in spite of everything, not only give birth to a new national idea — grow new life — but also to head off the catastrophe of self-destruction which threatens all mankind.

We, as former citizens of the USSR, are fully aware of what is meant by the simple concept of *Motherland*. Whether we have taken out foreign citizenship or not, many of us have realised that our hearts and souls remain in the places we lived for most of our lives.

We would like to return to Russia and start creating our family domains, establishing new-style communities. The activity of setting up a family domain will lead to an improvement in the quality of life for the whole commonwealth of people. We realise that a lot depends on us, on our labours, our capabilities, our experience. Many of us have taken on new professions in Europe, we have studied foreign languages, some of us have started our own businesses. There are quite a few of us who have begun studying the experience of Western eco-villages and non-traditional methods of farming.

In our communities we shall build our own schools, clubs and hospitals. There may not be a need for special government subsidies, as our numbers include all sorts of experts, and we are prepared and able to seek out our own financing and opportunities.

This kind of activity will lead to a fundamental improvement in the lives of the great commonwealth of people. Lands that have been unused, abandoned or have lain waste up 'til now, will become fruitful orchards, and on them will be born new generations of Russians with a new consciousness, with a new feeling for and outlook on the world.

Moreover, we all desire to assist our relatives and family members now living in Russia or the Commonwealth

of Independent States. This will also help solve the problems faced by youth, the jobless and the homeless. We are prepared, right this moment, to muster the forces of several generations of our families, and also put all our capabilities, experience, knowledge and financial resources toward the goal of co-creating a proud, majestic and mighty Motherland of Russia.

To implement this idea we ask your consideration of the following questions:

1. Every willing family or individual citizen should be granted the right to receive, at no charge, one hectare of land for lifetime use with the right of inheritance (but with no right to sell), whereon to create a family domain.
2. Simplification of the procedures to obtain Russian citizenship on the part of those who wish to create their own little Motherland and a vast Russia, who were born on the territory of the RSFSR²⁸ or of other erstwhile Soviet republics and who formerly held citizenship in the USSR.

Faithfully and respectfully,

Future Citizens of Russia.

Germany, 160 signatures.



²⁸RSFSR — abbreviation for *Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic*, i.e., the part of the USSR that after its formal disintegration became known as the Russian Federation.

This letter, unfortunately, met no reply at all from Russia. Not even a simple pro-forma memo from some kind of official was received in response. The Russian-speaking community in Germany has in their possession a postal confirmation to the effect that the Administrative Office of the Russian President indeed received their letter.

You know, this lack of response is already becoming a pattern. It's not just you, but we who are living here in Russia too, we aren't getting any reply either. On the Internet site [of the Anastasia Foundation] there is a whole section full of letters, some of them written in English, including letters addressed to the President of Russia. For five years now people have been writing on one and the same topic — kin's domains — but to date there has not been a single reply, either to individually or collectively written letters.²⁹

As you will soon realise, it couldn't be any other way, since here in Russia there are forces which have pegged themselves higher than the President or the Government. They believe themselves to be higher than the people, too, only I think this is an ill-founded belief. Of course one can rise higher than a drunken people. But there is not and cannot be any power

²⁹Even more tellingly, during President Putin's major Internet conference on 6 July 2006, over 10,000 conference participants asked or voted for questions specifically dealing with the allocation of land for kin's domains. The seven most popular questions on the topic of agriculture (which the government declares to be a high priority) were *all* about the allocation of land for kin's domains. President Putin chose to answer a wide variety of questions (including, for example, "At what age did you first have sexual intercourse?") but not a single question on kin's domains. Four days later, Russia's leading business journal *Expert* commented that this particular Internet conference served as a good indication of the most burning issues in Russian society today, and observed that allocation of land for kin's domains was among them.

higher than a people in whose hearts lives not only a dream of the future but a burning desire to put such a dream into practice.

It behooves me to respond to you, dear former fellow-citizens, on behalf of our government officials, on behalf of the President.

First of all I must thank you people, you who now live in Germany, America, Israel, Poland, the Czech Republic and Slovakia, Italy and France, Georgia, Belarus and Kazakhstan, even in Mongolia. It is thanks to your efforts that the books about Anastasia have been translated and published in the countries where you are currently residing. I didn't know you personally, and so was unable to ask you to do this. But there is something I do know. I know how your hearts have been touched and how you went about approaching publishers and translators, and when you did not find a reciprocal understanding, you set about translating and publishing my books yourselves. This happened, for example, in the Czech Republic and Slovakia, Canada and America.

And finally you found some understanding! I felt this for the first time in Germany when I addressed readers' conferences in Berlin and Stuttgart.

Sitting together in the overflowing auditorium were Russian-speakers who had emigrated to Germany from Russia and native German-speakers who had no knowledge of Russian, in roughly equal numbers. I knew the two groups didn't get along all that well. But here they were sitting side by side and good-naturedly trying to explain to one another the translation from Russian, which was, I'm sure, not always understandable.

I used to consider Germans pedantic and not a strongly emotional people. But life has shown me otherwise. It was none other than a German farmer who, after reading about Anastasia, got into his car and drove all the way to Siberia.

He went knowing neither the language nor the Russian road system, neither the Russian traffic police nor the weather. He got there. He returned home with Russian souvenirs for his friends.

My great gratitude naturally goes out to all those who at their own initiative, and sometimes at their own expense, have translated and published the books abroad. But the books, after all, are not the most important thing. Something else is. Thank you all for your understanding and support of the ideas and dream that have come out of Siberian Russia. Now this dream is no longer just a Russian dream. Now it is yours as well, and in equal measure. May you succeed in preserving it, putting it into practice and passing it on to be perfected by your children.

It is hard to tell who has performed the most significant service — Anastasia, with her impassioned sayings, the books themselves, or all those who have seized upon the idea and carried the torch forward?

Anastasia has said:

“I give the whole of my soul to people. In people I shall prevail through my soul. Prepare yourself, all wickedness and evil-mindedness, to leave the Earth...”³⁰

I thought these were just simple words. However, life has shown me that they are not simple at all.

Anastasia’s dream has been lit with tiny sparks in the hearts of millions of people scattered across the globe — people of many different nationalities and faiths. This dream is no longer just *her* dream. It belongs to many people and will not fade. It is now the dream of the ages and of eternity!

³⁰Quoted from Book 3, Chapter 24: “Who are you, Anastasia?”.

CHAPTER ELEVEN



One hectare — a piece of Planet Earth

I'm often told: "Why do you make such a fuss over one hectare? — there are more important things." But in my view there is nothing more important in our life right now than to return the Earth to its original flourishing state.

And that is why I keep talking about a hectare of family land — behind it, after all, there is something immeasurably more significant. I don't always have the reasoning and intellectual capacity — nor, perhaps, the temperament — to explain this, but when there's even just a little breakthrough and people understand, well, I consider that a victory.

One occasion in particular stands out. The year was 2003. Switzerland. Zürich. An international forum. I was invited by the organisers and allotted a time to speak. I began talking about an idea that saw its birth in Russia, but the audience didn't appear all that receptive.

Then there was a question from the floor:

"How do you tie in this hectare of land with Man's spiritual development? Perhaps the problem of land tillage is important enough for Russia, but these questions have long been resolved in Europe. We're here to talk about spirituality."

A little nervous, I began my reply this way:

I'm talking about a hectare of land and setting up one's family domain on it, and some people might think that's a rather primitive notion. We have to talk about the great teachings on spirituality, they say, because that is the topic of this

prestigious European forum. I know — I was told by the organisers — that sitting before me in this auditorium are well-known innovative educators, philosophers and writers on spirituality from all over Europe, along with other thinkers on this topic who are no less important. But it is precisely because I am mindful of the composition of this audience here before me that I am specifically talking about a hectare of land.

Ladies and gentlemen, I am convinced that concepts such as love and spirituality must necessarily have a material embodiment.

The hectare of land I have in mind, the hectare Anastasia speaks about, is much more than a mere hectare of land. It is a Space through which you may be connected to the Cosmos. All the planets of the Universe will react to this Space and, consequently, to you. They will be your friends, assistants and co-creators.

In terms of the laws of Nature, look what happens to an ordinary flower — a daisy, for example. The daisy is inseparably connected with the Cosmos, the planets and the Sun. The flower opens its petals when the Sun comes up, and closes them when the Sun goes down. They are at one with each other, in harmony with each other. Not even trillions of kilometres or light-years could break the connection. They are bonded together — the great Sun and the little earthly flower. They know that only together can they be creators of a great universal harmony.

But every single blade of grass on the Earth reacts not only to the Sun. It also reacts to other planets. It reacts to Man, to the energy of his feelings.

Scientists conducted an experiment in which sensors were attached to an ordinary flowering house-plant, and polygraph indicators registered even the minutest energy impulses coming from the flower. Several people were sent into the room

in turn. One of them simply walked past the flower, a second went over and gave it some water, while a third went in and cut off one of the leaves. According to the data registered by the polygraph, whenever the person who tore off a leaf entered the room, the plant would get agitated and cause the indicator to jump.¹

A related phenomenon can also be often noticed: flowers fade when their owner goes away. The upshot is, that all plants react to Man. They may like a particular Man or they may not. Consequently, they may transmit to their planets a message of either love or absence of love.

And now imagine that you have some kind of Space — say, a hectare of land. This isn't just any run-of-the-mill hectare of land where potatoes are grown for sale, but a hectare of land on which you have begun to create, based on a particular level of consciousness or spirituality.

You have your own territory on which there are a whole lot of plants cultivated not by hired workers, but directly by you yourself. Every plant, every blade of grass will react to you with love, and these plants, as living beings, are capable of collecting for you all the best energies of the Universe. They collect them and offer them to you. Plants feed on more than just the energy of the soil. After all, you are aware that there are some plants that can grow even without soil.

Five thousand years ago in Ancient Egypt there lived priests who created a variety of religions. And these priests were in control of whole nations. These priests were the richest people in the world of that time. The basements of their palaces

¹This is apparently a reference to the research conducted by the American polygraph scientist Cleve Backster (1924–). For further information see Cleve Backster's *Primary perception: Biocommunication with plants, living foods, and human cells* (Anza, California: White Rose Millennium Press, 2003) or Peter Tompkins and Christopher Bird's *The secret life of plants* (New York: Harper & Row, 1973), esp. Chapter 1: "Plants and ESP".

were filled with trunks of gold and precious gems. They were acquainted with a whole range of secret sciences. The pharaoh turned to them for advice and money.

But each of these highly placed priests had his own hectare of land, on which he permitted no slaves to work. These were the richest people of their day, with a knowledge of a great many sciences. They knew the secrets of a hectare of land. On the walls of the ancient temples of Egypt, the priests' temples, was inscribed the warning: *Do not accept food from a slave*. This is Example One.

Example Two. In Ancient Rome the senators issued a decree that if a slave was capable of working on the land and had been given land, then that slave could be sold to another master only if the land were sold with him, so as not to let any outsiders into contact with what was growing on that land. And why did the Roman senators give land to some of their slaves? And why did they give them money on top of that to build themselves a house? For one reason only: to obtain ten percent of a harvest which had been cultivated and nurtured with love and care by the Man growing it. It was only produce like this that could be at all beneficial.

The Egyptian priests and the senators of Ancient Rome knew what kind of food was beneficial to Man. The produce we eat today is in no way fit for human consumption — it's 'dead produce'. There is a vast difference between berries one picks from a bush to eat on the spot and berries sold in a supermarket. It's not just that they've already started to decay, but there's no energy left in them. They are incapable of feeding Man's soul. And I'm not even mentioning the mutant plants created by our technological world.

So, if you don't have your own hectare of land, there's nowhere that you're going to find food worthy of human consumption. You can take a little money and buy some sort of vegetables. But you must realise that those vegetables were

not grown for you. They weren't grown for any Man at all. They were grown for money.

There is not a disease which cannot be cured by the Space of Love — a Space you have created with your own hands and your own soul.

People are the children of God. The world of animals and plants, the air and the Space around us — these are also God's creations. And everything taken together is nothing less than the materially embodied spirit of God. If someone calls himself a highly spiritual person, let him show the material embodiment of his spirituality.

Imagine God looking down on you from above right now. And He sees someone driving a tram, another one of His children constructing buildings, another standing in a store and selling things from behind a counter. These aren't the professions God created. They're professions for slaves. God didn't want his children to be slaves. And He created a marvellous world and gave it in stewardship to His children. Take care of it and use it! But to do that, you must understand this world. Understand what the Moon is, what the herb known as the yarrow is...

And what is a hectare of land? Is it a place where Man must work by the sweat of his brow? *No!* It is a place where Man shouldn't work at all. It is a place through which Man ought to control the world. Tell me, who gives greater pleasure to God — a Man driving a tram or a Man who might have only a small piece of land but has transformed it into a Paradise? The latter, of course.

Can people today open up a road to the Cosmos? Or can they be taught how to settle the Moon or Mars? Of course not! Because they'll put weapons and pollution there, and end up having the same wars there as on the Earth. Yet Man, after all, has been created to populate other worlds. And this will come about only when Man understands and beautifies

his own Earth. The way to settle the planets of the Universe isn't technical at all, it is psychotelepathic.

Man needs to become consciously aware of what constitutes the true beauty of the Universe.

Your city of Zürich is considered beautiful. We can say a thousand times how beautiful it is. But what, specifically, is beautiful about it? Yes, it is very clean here. Yes, it looks as though there are many well-to-do people living here. But is land covered with asphalt truly beautiful? Is it really good to have little green islands popping up just in certain places? Is it good that there's a dying tree — a majestic cedar — right in the centre of your city? It's suffocating from the smog. It's suffocating from exhaust fumes. And it's not the only thing that's dying and suffocating. The people walking along the city streets are suffocating from these fumes too.

We should give some thought to all that we have managed to contrive on this Earth. And it's best to talk about it in very simple terms. Let each one of us take a small plot of his land, pull his whole mind and whole spirituality together and create a very small but concrete Paradise. He will transform his little piece of land on our large planet into a flourishing garden, giving a material embodiment to his spirituality, following God's example. If millions of people do this in a whole lot of countries, then the whole Earth will become a flourishing garden, and there won't be any wars, because millions of people will be completely engaged in a grand co-creation. And if Russians should then descend upon Switzerland or Germany, it will only be to delight in the contemplation of beautiful living oases, to learn from their experience in embodying true spirituality.

Russia, unfortunately, is currently trying with all its might to be like the West. Russia's politicians are peppering their speeches with references to Western countries as *developed* or *civilised*. They are urging their people to catch up to them

in 'development' and 'being civilised'. Our politicians still don't know that we have the opportunity not only to catch up quickly, but to significantly overtake them. But this can come to pass only if Russia does a complete about-face and starts heading in the opposite direction.

This is in no way to suggest I am trying to denigrate or insult your Western civilisation. But we're talking here, after all, about spirituality, and we need to be honest and sincere in what we say to one another. Spirituality cannot be measured simply by material wealth and technological achievements. Such a one-sided, technocratic approach to mankind's development will invariably lead to an abyss. No doubt those of you gathered here today will admit this, but then you must also admit that you are running out in front, with us right behind you. Try to stop and figure out what's happened to our world. If you do manage to figure it out, call out to those running behind you: *Hey, you'd better stop, chaps! Stop running! There's an abyss ahead, and we're already on the edge of it. Find another way.*

If we really listen to our hearts, together, we ought to go from simply talking about spirituality to its material embodiment. One hectare is but a tiny dot on the face of our planet Earth. But millions of these dots will transform the whole planet into a flourishing garden. Trillions of flower petals, along with the happy smiles of children and oldsters will tell the Universe that the people of the Earth are ready for a grand co-creation.

And the planets of the Universe will respond:

"We're waiting for you, Man. We're waiting for you, worthy son of God!"

Our millennium has ushered in a great transformation on the Earth. Tens of thousands of Russian families have already aspired to obtain their own hectare of land. A father and mother who are actually creating a Space of Love for their

children are more spiritual than the most celebrated wise-men who only *talk* about spirituality.

Let the spirit of each Man spring up from the ground as a beautiful flower, a tree with fragrant fruit, and let this take place on every single hectare of our planet.

After these words, for some time absolute silence reigned in the hall. This was followed by thunderous applause.

I spoke in Zürich on the following day, too. Once again, to a full house. A number of our former compatriots were present here, too.

I don't think I came across too coherently, especially since I was speaking through an interpreter. But people stayed, they listened, because it wasn't just me that was talking with this audience — a higher power was speaking. A very simple, specific, yet at the same time extraordinary, power, one that has been preserved for millennia in the depths of the human soul — a nostalgia for the true way of life for Man as Creator.

And then I thought: *Do I really need to explain to anyone that all Russia's sons and daughters that have been blown away by an ill wind will most definitely return? Of course they'll come back!* You will remember Anastasia's words:²

Mother Russia will greet crowds of guests on that day! They are all of the Earth as Atlanteans born! As prodigal sons they shall return. Let all the bards everywhere play on their guitars. And the old shall write letters to their children. And children to their parents. Both you and I shall become very young, and people will feel young for the very first time.

²Quoted (approximately) from Book 2, Chapter 9: "Dachnik Day and an All-Earth holiday!".

CHAPTER TWELVE



People power

There is one additional question I would like to bring to my readers' attention.

At the moment you are engaged in the process of creating a people's strategy for the future development of the Russian State. Part of this strategy has been published in issues of the almanac,¹ part appears on the Anastasia site on the Internet. As I see it, the overwhelming majority of the materials is extremely interesting. However there is one question — about power and authority — that has not yet been sufficiently illuminated. Yet it is a most important question. I invite you to join me in contemplating it. For starters, I'd like to share my own reasonings with you.

Power often changes. Just over the past hundred years, people have lived under the Tsar, the Communists and a series of democratic rulers. Power gets changed, but life does not get rearranged for the better. Why? Do bad people always come to power? Hardly. It is more likely that the current system makes any politicians who get elected to power ineffective pen-pushers when it comes to solving the problems involved in any real betterment of people's lives.

Take our legislative assemblies over the most recent parliamentary terms. It seems that we vote for normal, family-type people, and then once they're in power they come up with, to put it mildly, some rather strange legislation. Why? Perhaps,

¹*the almanac* — see footnote 1 in Book 7, Chapter 28: "To the readers of the Ringing Cedars Series".

in the process of coming to power, they fall into another world — a world isolated from the people? An apartment in the parliamentary living quarters, a car equipped with its own flashing light on top, a private office where the public is denied entry, along with all sorts of special perks and “vanity of vanities”.

Anastasia’s Grandfather suggested an interesting piece of draft legislation concerning deputies of the State Duma. They should each be granted a piece of land and definitely live in a community built on that land, right out among the people. A law faculty graduate in Ukraine named Tatiana Borodina,² has drafted a bill to this effect, and I think it is worth reproducing its major clauses here in this book, so that my readers can pass on the proposal to their own elected representatives in legislative assemblies at all levels.

Moreover, I call upon my readers to be sure to take part in regional and federal elections, but to vote in only those candidates who live in their own kin’s domains.

But is it merely a passport stamp that defines someone as a Russian citizen? In many cases, a candidate on the ballot has Russian citizenship and a Moscow residence permit, but has a fashionable domain located in another country. Is he going to be mindful of the needs of ordinary Russian people? Most probably his thoughts will be oriented in a completely different direction.

If a candidate has his own little Motherland — his family domain in Russia — and lives there among Russian citizens, his work can be expected to bring benefit to those citizens and to the Motherland as a whole.

This much is becoming clear to many people. Students are even beginning to draft laws to assist the legislators.

²Tatiana Borodina — see reference in Chapter 10 (“*The Book of Kin and A Family Chronicle*”) above, especially footnote 19.



A law of Russia on Family Communities created by Russian People's Deputies on all levels (draft)

The law defines the legal, social and economic provisions for the creation and maintenance of Family Communities and Family Domains on the part of Russian People's Deputies,³ thereby guaranteeing the right of Russian citizens — as proclaimed in Russia's Constitution — to hold land as the foundation for the wealth of the nation.

The law is aimed at the creation of favourable working conditions for Russian People's Deputies, conducive to the development, drafting and adoption of federal legislation, as well as guaranteeing their maximum contact with voters.

Article 1. Basic terms and concepts used in the Law

Certain specific terms used in the Law are defined as follows:

- *Family Domain* — a plot of land from 1 to 1.3 hectares in size, granted to age-of-majority Russian citizens for their lifetime use, with the right of inheritance, with no tax obligations in respect to the land or its produce;
- *Family Community* — a centre of population organised on the principles of local self-government, consisting of Family Domains as well as socio-cultural and community facilities;
- *lifetime use* — unconditional ownership and use of a plot of land, free of charge and in perpetuity;

³*Russian People's Deputies* (Russian: *Narodnye deputaty Rossii*) — formal title of elected political representatives (members of parliament or a governing council) at the federal, regional and local levels.

• *living fence* — a hedge consisting of trees and shrubs planted around the perimeter of a Family Domain or a Family Community.

Article 2. Legislation on Family Domains and Family Communities

The procedures involved in granting a Russian People's Deputy an allotment of land for the creation of a Family Community, as well as the definition of the legal status of Family Domains and Family Communities and their functions, are all governed by the Russian Constitution, the Russian Land Code, this Law, the Russian Law on Family Domains and Family Communities, as well as other applicable laws.

Article 3. Basic principles of legislation governing Family Communities

The creation of Family Communities by Russian People's Deputies is subject to the following basic principles:

- (a) compliance with the law;
- (b) the setting of conditions for the implementation by all Russian citizens of their right to hold land as the foundation for the wealth of the nation;
- (c) the principle that ownership and use of the plot of land granted for the creation of a Family Domain shall be free of charge, unconditional and in perpetuity;
- (d) exemption of the owner of a Family Domain from payment of taxes on the sale of produce grown or goods produced on said Family Domain;
- (e) the creation of one Family Community by one Russian People's Deputy of the current parliamentary term;
- (f) other applicable principles.

Article 4. Purview of the Law

The purview of this Law covers Russian People's Deputies at all levels of government who are elected in accordance with

electoral laws, as well as age-of-majority Russian citizens who have expressed a desire to live in a Family Community organised on the principles set forth in this Law.

Article 5. Granting an allotment of land to a Russian People's Deputy for the creation of a Family Community

1. Each Russian People's Deputy serving a current or future term, within a year from the date of his election, shall be granted an allotment of land at least 150 ha in size whereon to establish a Family Community (hereinafter: *land allotment*).

2. Upon election as a Russian People's Deputy under the proportional system from a political party's or a party-alliance's candidates' list in a nation-wide election, the successful candidate shall be granted a land allotment in a region of Russia of his choosing.

Upon election as a Russian People's Deputy by a majority of voters in a single-representative electoral district, the successful candidate shall be granted a land allotment on the territory of the district where he is elected.

3. A single Family Community shall not be created by two or more Russian People's Deputies, neither shall two or more Russian People's Deputies be permitted to live in the same Family Community during the same term of office.

4. The land allotment is granted as a single parcel of land (including any water resources thereon) from properties belonging to the State or already held communally. Land may also be expropriated from people making full-time use of it and transferred to a Russian People's Deputy for the creation of a Family Community.

5. If required, land may be purchased from property owners for community needs, in which case the property owner must be given a minimum of a year's notice in writing by the respective decision-making body, and must also give his own consent to the sale. The purchase price is to be determined

by an expert's assessment of the land's monetary value, which is to be carried out in accordance with the methodology established by the federal Cabinet.

6. A plot of land recommended for inclusion in the land allotment for the creation of a Family Community by a Russian People's Deputy, but which is in the possession of a physical or legal person, may, with the agreement of the property owner, be exchanged for another plot of land of equal value — either in the same region or in another region of Russia, depending on the property owner's preference.

7. Russian citizens who own plots of land or shares in 'real' (individually registered) plots of land adjacent to the territory of a proposed Family Community, have the right to reassign their properties, without monetary payment, for the purposes of creating a Family Community by a Russian People's Deputy, and receive in return a plot of land within said Community, whereon to create a Family Domain for their lifetime use.

8. A Russian citizen who owns 'virtual' shares in communal (not individually registered) plots of land, has the right to transfer his shares, either wholly or in part (no less than 1 ha in size) for the purposes of creating a Family Community by a Russian People's Deputy, and receive in return a plot of land within said Community, whereon to create a Family Domain for his lifetime use.

Article 6. Land composition in Family Communities

1. The land in a Family Community is comprised of the following types of plots:

- land plots for the creation of a Family Domain;
- land plots for the creation of Family Domains on the part of children of a Russian People's Deputy (no more than two plots per Community).

2. Land plots reserved for socio-cultural and community purposes are designated in accordance with the overall plan

of the Family Community. The aggregate of such plots is not to exceed 7% of the total area of the Community. The said plots are under the jurisdiction of the Local Council of the said Family Community.

3. The remaining portion of the land allotment is to be divided into plots of land for the creation of Family Domains of no less than 1 ha each. The size may be extended to 1.3 ha depending on the peculiarities of the terrain and other pertinent factors.

4. Between all land plots walkways must be created, no less than 3 or 4 metres wide. Each plot owner has the right to plant a living fence around the perimeter of his Family Domain.

5. On plots of land designated for the creation of a Family Domain, Russian citizens have the right to plant trees and shrubs (including those of the forest variety), to create artificial reservoirs, construct houses and outbuildings and erect ancillary structures and other facilities, provided principles of good-neighbourliness are observed.

Article 7. Order of distribution of land plots designated for the creation of Family Domains among Russian citizens

1. In the proposed Family Communities the Russian People's Deputies have the right to be the first to select for themselves one land plot for the creation of a Family Domain for their lifetime use with right of inheritance.

2. Each child of a Russian People's Deputy with a family of his own has the right to receive a land plot for the creation of a Family Domain for his lifetime use.

3. It is mandatory that one or two land plots in the Family Community be granted to refugees or to children from orphanages.

4. Russian People's Deputies, at their discretion, have the right to grant to Russian citizens of their choosing up to 30% of the remaining land plots, whereon said citizens are to create their own Family Domains.

5. The remaining land plots should be given to Russian citizens belonging to a variety of social classes (entrepreneurs, social workers, pensioners, representatives of the creative intelligentsia, military personnel etc.). Land plots are to be distributed among Russian citizens on the basis of a lottery conducted openly at a general meeting of future residents of each Family Community.

Article 8. Local Councils of Family Communities

1. The Local Council of each Family Community comprises those living in said Community, united by the fact of their permanent residence within the boundaries of said Community, which constitutes a self-contained administrative-territorial entity.

2. The Local Council of the Family Community has the right to create a representative organ of local self-government, namely, the Family Community Council, whose members are drawn exclusively from among the residents of the said Community.

3. Russian People's Deputies are prohibited from standing for election or being elected to the Family Community Council. In cases where a Russian People's Deputy is elected to a Family Community Council, their election shall be declared null and void.

4. The procedures for setting up local self-government are regulated by the By-laws of the Local Council of the Family Community (hereinafter: *By-laws*), which said Council has the right to adopt at one of its meetings or by a local referendum. The By-laws must be registered with the district office of the Ministry of Justice.

Article 9. Status of land plots in respect to creating a Family Domain

1. Plots of land designated for the creation of Family Domains are granted — for lifetime use with the right of inheritance —

only to citizens of Russia. It is forbidden to grant land plots for Family Domains to citizens of foreign countries or to stateless persons, except those who have been granted legal refugee status (but no more than two such families are permitted per Family Community created by a Russian People's Deputy).*



I don't know how much time I had spent walking around while Anastasia's grandfather familiarised himself with the contents of the documents I had brought with me⁴ when all of a sudden I heard a loud and raucous outburst of laughter, which sounded not at all like that of an old man. He was still laughing when I dashed over to him.

"That's rich!... Oho, that really makes me laugh!... Thank you... Thank you, Vladimir! And to think I didn't want to get into these at first!"

"But now that you are into them, what's so funny? After all, this is a most serious situation! And an extremely complicated one!"

"Extremely complicated for whom?" Grandfather asked.

"For me and for my readers wishing to build the domains Anastasia talked about."

* A detailed draft and commentary will be published in a forthcoming regular issue of the *Ringling Cedars of Russia* almanac, which you will be able to purchase. It would be a good idea for readers to bring this to the attention of Russian People's Deputies at all levels of government. — *Footnote from the original Russian edition.*

⁴See the beginning of Chapter 9 above.

Quite possibly in uttering these words I might have sounded irritated and hurt. Grandfather stopped laughing, looked at me intently and replied quietly and seriously:

"To this day I cannot understand why my granddaughter would have anything to do with you, let alone bear children with you. Only don't be mad at this old man, Vladimir. Maybe I don't get it, which means others too may not get it, but it's possible that in this 'not getting it' lies a great truth. And so I don't have any bad feelings toward you. And I don't condemn my granddaughter. On the contrary, I'm very excited about what's been achieved."

"But is there anything specific you have to say about the contents of these documents?"

"I've already said it — I'm excited about what's been achieved."

"By whom?"

"By my granddaughter."

"But I was asking you about what I'd written."

Grandfather looked first at the packet of documents and then, silently and intently, at me, before replying.

"I really can't say, Vladimir, just how necessary your appeal to the public really is. Maybe it is indeed important for them. As I see it, what I read simply confirms that even back ten years ago my granddaughter foresaw all these ups and downs, and long ago everything that seems to be working against you she's turned into something beneficial."

"How can you call offending my readers and me *beneficial*?"

"Did you realise *who's* been offending you and your readers?"

"Some kind of entity that's set itself up under the cover of Russia's Orthodox Church."

"And it provoked a feeling in you of being offended?"

"Yeah."

“Well, that’s good! Now it’s not just with your mind, but with the feelings that you and many of your readers have experienced, that you can understand how your forebears were defamed in the eyes of their descendants — how they were called pagans and for centuries were blamed for all sorts of misdeeds they never committed. You’re not the only one who’s tried to write about this. There have been quite a few historians over the centuries who have tried to refute this slander — but in vain.

“What’s happening now is that the same tactics are being used all over again to discredit people who really want to reach out and touch God’s creations. There are quite a few of these people now, and they can feel by their own experience how their forebears were smeared like that. The souls of their distant ancestors are finding renewed strength through those being slandered in our time. Their forebears of yesterday will act like guardian angels, protecting their descendants of today.

“Believe me, there can be no kinder and brighter force — no way — than that which is emerging in the world right now. If this is coming about for people today — if some invisible thread is capable of joining today’s son together with his parent who lived two thousand years ago — and if the thread that joins them together can be extended, then today’s Man will be joined together with God, his original Parent.”

Grandfather was clearly trying to restrain his excitement as he told me this. But I felt I needed further clarification.

“Maybe what you say is very important,” I observed. “But, you see, there’s been quite a bit of delay with the creation of family domains.”

“But, just maybe, such a delay is necessary to give people the opportunity to figure things out and co-create a design for the future?”

“Maybe. It’s all turning out rather unexpectedly. As though the first book began with just simple actions, then with the

second came readers' clubs, and now, with *The Book of Kin* out, the *Family Chronicle* has come along."

These words made Grandfather laugh again, but he immediately cut himself short, and said with a kindly smile:

"My granddaughter was clearly having a fun time with that *Family Chronicle*! Maybe it was to comfort you and your readers somehow. But hey, look how she arranged it so that Russia's supreme rulers and the Patriarch of the Church supported her idea! Even if it's just *one* of her ideas. No mention of her philosophy, or maybe they simply didn't understand it. Their names will not go down in the annals of old — they're too wishy-washy, not very bold.

"People will be eternally remembered in the annals of old who are right now, at least in their thoughts, creating their own God-pleasing domains. Whether they themselves chose the idea or whether it chose them, that doesn't matter any more. Eternity awaits those who are co-creating a future for their children — and not just for their children but for themselves too. For the first time on the Earth, Man who is born for eternity will come back to eternity.

"Vladimir, I'm just beginning to understand my granddaughter's achievements. It is possible that many secrets of life have been revealed to her. But there is one which even the high priests were not fully aware of. All they ever knew before was that human life *could* be eternal. Part of this knowledge allowed them, for example, to be reincarnated over and over. But this reincarnation was never complete. And this is why their achievements did not bring joy either to themselves or to mankind.

"Now I am confident — and believe me — that Anastasia has full knowledge of the creations needed to attain eternity. You might ask her about this and try to understand. And if she can come up with words that a great many people will understand, worlds worthy of a god-Man will be unfurled to their thought.

“Take a walk over to my granddaughter, Vladimir, and have a talk with her. At the moment she is sitting under the cedar, down by the lakeshore. There may be significant revealings in the world all around when the words of eternity are found which are comprehensible to both mind and feelings. The aspirations of the great awakened civilisation will whirl upward. The whole galaxy will feel these great aspirations and will await with shivers of anticipation the touch of those capable of giving to the planets a new and marvellous life. Go, and be not slow.”

I had already taken several steps when I was stopped by Anastasia’s grandfather crying out:

“Vladimir, it’s high time that you and Anastasia’s followers started your own Motherland party.”

“A party? What kind of party?”

“I’m telling you! That’s what you should call it — the *Motherland Party!*”⁵

⁵ *Motherland Party* (Russian: *Rodnaya Partiya*) — Following the publication of this appeal, several groups of inspired readers and sponsors did set about establishing the proposed ‘Motherland Party’. However, since Vladimir Megré subsequently changed his mind and decided to align himself with the *Edinaya Rossiya* (One Russia) Party, loyal to the existing régime of Vladimir Putin (and invited his followers to follow suit), the proposed party never got off the ground, and Megré’s move caused some dissension among his followers.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN



A new civilisation

Anastasia was sitting beneath the cedar tree, wearing a light grey flaxen dress. With her arms around her knees and her head slightly lowered, she was gazing out at the smooth surface of the lake. I didn't go up to her right away. For a while I stood at a distance, observing this recluse quietly sitting there by the lakeshore. No — that description really doesn't fit Anastasia. The word *recluse* is better suited to the people who live in modern apartments.

People live in these apartments and don't even know their neighbours sharing the same floor.¹ They walk along the street and couldn't care less about the people they meet. And their attitude is entirely reciprocal.

So, while there's nothing frightening in someone living alone, it's a lot more frightening when they're alone amongst people like themselves.

And so, even though Anastasia was sitting here alone on the shore of this taiga lake, her heart was beating in unison with millions of human hearts all over the world. Some call her their friend, some their sister, feeling like they're related to her.

¹In contrast with North American practice, Russian apartment blocks, even the ones that appear massive from the outside, are usually divided into vertical sections, each with its own exterior entrance, stairs and lift (elevator). A given section might have four to six flats per floor around the stairwell and lift shaft. Hence there would not be very many "neighbours sharing the same floor".

In the meantime, her soft-spoken words wing their way through the endless flow of information thundering and dundering from TV screens and a host of other media. Her words waft by and people pick them up. And people who catch them may respond with guitar strings and songs, and often with actions. They retune their life anew.

And Grandfather... I saw for the first time how fervently he expressed himself as he asked me to have a word with Anastasia about eternity.

I sat down beside her and she turned her head toward me. I felt a calming sense from the tender gaze of her greyish-blue eyes. For a time we simply sat and looked at each other.

I couldn't help myself, but took her hand, gave it a quick kiss and then replaced it on her knees. Her cheeks were aflush with a soft glow, her eyelashes all aflutter. And without rhyme or reason a sense of unease came over me. How strange to feel uneasy over a woman one has known for ten years! And how delightful!

And in an attempt to overcome my sense of awkwardness and unease, I broke the silence first.

"I was talking with your grandfather just now, Anastasia. For some reason he quite unexpectedly and rather excitedly started saying something about humanity's need for words on eternity. He said these words should be the kind people can grasp not just with their mind or intellect, but with their feelings. Are these words really that important?"

"Yes, they are important, Vladimir. But it is not the words that are important, but, rather, people's conscious awareness. Words, of course, are necessary to bring it forth. A conscious awareness of eternal life will help perfect Man's way of life."²

²As noted earlier (footnote 7 in Chapter 9: "A fine state of affairs!"), the Russian phrase for 'way of life' is literally: 'image of life' (*obraz zhizni*).

“But what connection is there between our way of life and becoming consciously aware of eternity?”

“A direct connection. People today believe that they have only a few decades to live, after which they must leave life behind and disappear into oblivion. Yet all along, Man’s life can be eternal. This must be brought out, so that everyone, or, at least, most people, may understand.”

“But you talked about that already. And I’ve included your words on this subject in several of my books.”

“Yes, I did, but, evidently, what I said has not been understood, or the frailty of human existence has been drummed into people’s consciousness too strongly over the millennia. New words and arguments must be found.”

“So, can you try to find them?”

“I shall try. We need to look for them, apparently, along with those who will understand.”

“But tell me in your own words first.”

“Fine. Perhaps we should put it this way...

“Most people living on the Earth believe that they plan out their own life. They choose a profession, start a family, have children or, alternatively, decline to have children. But in many respects their decisions are not their own. A great influence is exercised upon them by somebody else’s will, acting through public opinion.

“For example, you have an object called a *clothes hanger*. At one point somebody decided to perfect this object by using Man himself as a clothes hanger. This gave rise to the profession you call *modelling*, from the word *model*. It is not an enviable profession, it is not part of Man’s destiny.

“But somebody decided to make it one of the most attractive professions of all, and did so. They began to show off live models in a variety of colour magazine photos and TV shows, and to describe their supposedly happy lives — to tell about all the money they make and how rich people want to marry

them. Millions of young girls began to dream of becoming the world's next top model and thereby attaining happiness.

"Millions of young girls all over the world began resorting to all sorts of measures in an effort to achieve this illusory glory. One in a million made it as a famous model, essentially becoming a walking clothes hanger. The others experienced deep disappointment in their lives, as their dream was not fulfilled.

"And this was due to their failure to determine their own destiny — they had begun structuring their lives under the influence of somebody else's will.

"There are many other examples that could be cited of men and women, and even children, chasing illusory values, neglecting their own purpose and destiny.

"Tell me what you think, Vladimir — if human society is made up of people like that, where can it be heading?"

"It's heading nowhere, that kind of human society. Out there, in our country — Russia — not a single political party nor the state as a whole has put forth any kind of programme for building the future. From what you have told me, Anastasia, I'm particularly interested in the definition of Man's purpose and destiny. What does it consist of? How can people discover it?"

"Let your thought, Vladimir, as well as other people's thoughts, try to grasp hold of God's creations, His programme, His dream."

"But is that really possible — grasping hold of God's dream, I mean?"

"It *is* possible. After all, He has hid nothing, and still hides nothing from people — from children who are His very own. He has written no scholarly tomes — everything by example He has shown. And the first thing everyone needs to understand and feel is which of Man's deeds to eternity lead. Think for yourself, Vladimir, why did not God, who created the

living and multifaceted world, not create things like the car, the TV and the space ship in their present form?"

"Perhaps He simply wasn't up to the job, whereas Man is?"

"God created everything Man needs — Man has within himself a means of transportation as well as imagination through which he can see far better pictures than are shown on TV. Man is also capable of effecting the mastery of other planets of the Universe without the aid of primitive artificial projectiles.

"It was God who determined Man's purpose and destiny, as well as the programme of development for all life in the Universe. To attain the required understanding, Man needs to refrain from destroying His programme and to study for all he's worth and ascertain the purpose of everything on the Earth."



Immortality

"God created Man immortal. To witness this, only three conditions are required to be observed:

"First: create a living Space which will attract Man to itself and to which Man has aspired.

"Second: there should be, somewhere on the Earth, at least one person who thinks of you with kindness and love.

"Third: never even admit the thought that you can be overtaken by death — and this is extremely important. Even if you suggest to someone who is simply falling asleep that he is dying and he believes it, then he will die, in obedience to his

thought. But even if an elderly man (in Earth terms) wears out his body and is lying at death's door, but does not think about death, but pictures his life in the living Space he has been creating, he will be born anew — such is the law of the Universe. The Universe will not stand by and allow a life-creating thought to die.

“You have a concept in your world known as *natural selection*. Even now God's programme is selecting the best of everything for a re-embodiment. Before, however, there was not much to choose from. Now it is showing a multifold increase. Whoever builds a domain with love will be reincarnated again and again.

“Whatever interferes with them will disappear from the Earth for ever, giving way to the birth of a new civilisation.”

“But why a new civilisation,” I asked, “if the people are going to be the same, with the same vegetation and the same planet?”

“The new civilisation, Vladimir, will be characterised by a new conscious awareness as well as by new perceptions of the surrounding world. This great principle, that has been given birth in people today, will remain invisible to ordinary sight until the appearance of the planet known as the Earth has changed. It will affect life in the Universe as a whole.”

“But how can the Universe change as a result of the Earth's appearance?”

“It can, Vladimir. Even though our planet is but a small particle, it is in close interaction with other parts of the Universe. Even if one small particle should change, its changes can influence the whole spectrum of the Universe.”

“Most interesting. But couldn't you show me, Anastasia, a scene from the future as to how the Universe might change?”

“I can indeed. Take a look.”



Love creating worlds

Spring was in full bloom on the planet Arreta.³ Herbs very similar to those on the Earth, along with flowers on trees and bushes, were giving off their sweet scent. A young man named Vladislav⁴ was walking along a pathway amidst the springtime splendour, on his way to a symposium. He was to give a talk on the origins of life on the planet Arreta. His debating opponent would be his childhood friend Radomir.⁵

At nineteen years old, Vladislav had an adequate store of data to defend his theory before scholars at any level. But the knowledge possessed by his friend Radomir was no less in scope. Radomir and his team would pounce on any weak points or unsupported reasoning in Vladislav's arguments regarding events in the past.

Liudmila⁶ would be there, too. Liudmila... As it happened, both lads had been in love with this girl right from childhood. They loved her, but never admitted it either to each other or to the girl. Instead, they were waiting for Liudmila herself to give some kind of indication as to whom she preferred.

³*Arreta* — The Russian name here is actually *Yalmeza*, derived from the word *Zemlya* (Earth), spelt backwards.

⁴*Vladislav* — a common Russian masculine name, originally meaning '[born] in love and glory' (although often associated with the meaning 'ruler of praise'). The subsequent variant *Vadichek* is an endearing form of this name.

⁵*Radomir* — a Russian masculine name, derived from the words *rad* ('joyful') and *mir* ('peace').

⁶*Liudmila* — a common Russian feminine name, derived from the roots *liud* ('people') and *mil* ('dear').

Vladislav had deliberately chosen a roundabout route to where the symposium was being held, in order to give more thought to his presentation. But something was interfering with his concentration. He had the impression that somebody was watching him. Upon hearing a rustle behind him, he did a sharp about-face. Someone darted from the path into the bushes and was lying still in the tall grasses. Vladislav took a few steps back the way he had come and caught sight of a figure hiding in the grasses under a bush. It was his four-year-old sister Katya.⁷

"So, Katerinka, you've latched onto me again, eh?" Vladislav tenderly addressed his sister. "I've got an important presentation coming up. Maybe you don't realise it, but you're getting in the way. Or maybe you do realise it — otherwise you wouldn't be hiding there in the grasses."

"I'm not hiding, I'm just lying here," replied Katya. "I'm looking at this flower, and all the different little bugs." And she made it look as though she really were interested in a particular little flower.

"Well, now! Then you can just go on lying there looking at them. I'm off."

Katya jumped up at once and ran over to Vladislav.

"Go ahead, Vadichek," she started rattling off. "I'll follow you ever so quietly, so's not to interfere with your thinking. When we get to the place where all the people are, you take me by the hand so that everyone can see what a handsome and clever big brother I have!"

"Okay. Don't try to sweet-talk me. Here, give me your hand. Only remember, when I or somebody else is presenting, don't even think of criticising what the grown-ups say, like last time."

⁷*Katya* — an endearing form of the feminine name *Yekaterina*, derived from the Greek word *katharós* ('pure'); related to 'Catherine' in English. The subsequent variant *Katerinka* conveys a hint of brotherly condescension.

Katerinka, now satisfied, grasped hold of Vladislav's hand and promised:

"I shall try with all my might not to criticise."



Representatives of the different regions of the planet Arreta, both young and old, filled the natural amphitheatre. Nobody carried pens, notepads or any kind of writing materials. Their natural memory allowed them to memorise what they heard down to the minutest detail. Vladislav carried no exhibits with him as he walked out on stage. With just the power of his thought he would be able to create holograms in space to show any scenes from the past he wished, or reproduce household objects or even feelings.

With just a hint of uneasiness, Vladislav began his presentation:

The planet on which we live is called Arreta. It is more than ninety sextillion years old. But life began here no more than three hundred years ago. For originating life here we are indebted to our forebears, two inhabitants of the planet Earth. To put it more specifically, the originating of life on the planet Arreta was due to the influence of the energy of love and the dream of two inhabitants of the planet Earth. For this reason I offer you some historical information about life on the planet Earth.

The earliest period of people's life on Earth was quite possibly similar to our own. They had a good knowledge and feeling of their planet and the purpose of the Universe.

Earth-dwellers determined the purpose of all the living organisms of their planet, and made efficient use of them.

But one day a disaster occurred. The consciousness of one of the Earth's inhabitants was invaded by a virus which soon spread intensively among the other inhabitants of the planet. Our scientists have termed this virus *death*.

The outward signs of this virus, as indicated by historical records, are characterised as follows. The people infected by it start to destroy their own perfect variety of life on the planet, creating in its place a primitive, artificial world. This period of life Earth-dwellers themselves referred to as the *technocratic age*.

The people infected by the death virus began mutating from rational beings into anti-rational beings. They gathered together in large numbers on small plots of land and built themselves dwellings that looked like stone tombs, piled one on top of another.

Picture to yourselves a stone mountain with a whole lot of burrows hollowed out in it. It was something quite similar to these stone mountains that people built with their hands and called *apartment blocks*. The tomb-burrows in this artificial mountain were called *apartments*. A massive concentration of these artificial stone mountains with their burrows, piled up one beside the other, was called a *city*.

These so-called cities were filled with air unfit to breathe and water unfit to drink, along with stale food. Even during Earth-dwellers' lifetime, various organs of the human anatomy would begin to decay and decompose. Of course it is difficult to imagine human bodies walking around containing decaying and decomposing organs. But that's exactly how it was.

Historical sources indicate that people of the technocratic age even had a science they called *medicine*. They

considered one of the big achievements of this science to be the ability to replace their internal organs. People did not understand that the very existence of such a science proved the inadequacy of their consciousness.

It was not only people's flesh that was subject to decomposition. There was an intensive degradation of their mind and consciousness too. Their thought slowed down, they even lost the ability to compute sums and invented a *calculator*. They lost their ability to create holograms in space and invented a device they called a *television* — a primitive mechanism displaying something like a hologram.

They lost the ability to move themselves through space and began building artificial devices known as *cars*, *aeroplanes* and *spaceships*.

From time to time certain groups of people would attack other groups and they would kill each other. But, most incredible of all, the death virus gave people the notion that they were not eternal, but existed only temporarily in the space they could mentally grasp hold of.

More and more, the actions of people of the technocratic age transformed the planet Earth into a foul-smelling, smoke-stenched corner of the Universe. But the Mind of the Universe kept waiting for something, and refrained from destroying this deleterious place in the galaxy.

"Stop, please, for a moment!" Vladislav's presentation was interrupted by a voice coming from the group of his debating opponents, headed by his friend Radomir. "It's senseless to continue with your talk. It would have been impossible for something like that to happen on the Earth."

"All right, I shall break off my presentation, if you can really prove the improbability of what I have said."

From among the group of opponents one young man stood up and argued as follows:

“We have reliable reports about the existence of *religion* in Earth society. Religious treatises talked about the Earth and everything growing thereon as being created by the Mind of the Universe, which they called *God*. They worshipped him and performed many rituals in his honour. I trust, my dear presenter, that you will not deny that fact?”

“No, I shan’t deny it,” replied Vladislav.

“Then tell me, how could they perform rituals in honour of their god and at the same time destroy his creations? It would be impossible to do both at the same time. Consequently, these densely populated cities you speak of could not have existed on the Earth. And people could not have fouled the water created for them by the God they worshipped. In any case, the Mind of the Universe could not have countenanced such chaos, or he himself could not have been termed a ‘mind’. On the contrary, it would call into question any speck of rationality in what he created — Man first and foremost. What have you to say to this, my honourable presenter?”

“I say that the existence of a Mind, especially of the Universe, is the union of two great principles — Mind and Anti-Mind.

“The age of the Anti-Mind was necessary for the people of the planet Earth. And if you will permit me, in the next part of my presentation I shall prove the existence of two great principles in Man.”

“Fine, then, carry on!” the young man agreed, and sat down. Vladislav continued his presentation, now more confidently:

The world of the Universe is the union of opposites. Man also reflects this union of opposites within himself. Amidst the incredible chaos that has taken over Earth-dwellers’ consciousness, all at once there appeared people capable of understanding... These people changed their attitude toward Earth’s creations, but not with words and not through

the aid of religious treatises. *They began to change their way of life.* While not yet fully comprehending the scope of their creation, they referred to their actions simply as ‘the building of a family domain’.

They did not yet know that by approaching the Earth with a new conscious awareness, they were beginning to revitalise the planets of the Universe. They did not yet know that for them death would no longer exist, or that the children they gave birth to would be called gods by their descendants. They were simply building their family domains on the planet Earth.

In the meantime the Mind of the Universe followed their activities with trembling anticipation. And eventually the day came when all the people of the Earth began to live in their marvellous domains. And the day came when... Look, I shall show you a hologram — it has two people in it.

In the space in front of the assembly appeared a three-dimensional earthly landscape. Two elderly people, a man and a woman, were walking hand-in-hand along a pathway leading from their domain to a nearby forest. They were clearly more than a hundred years old. Evening was coming on, and the sky was filled with still barely noticeable stars. The couple walked up to a cedar tree, and the elderly woman leant her back against it.

“Here I am a grandmother now, and a great-grandmother, too,” the woman tenderly remarked to her companion, “and you’re still after me to go for a night-time walk under a starry sky, just like we did when we were young.”

“But isn’t that what you want, too?”

“Of course I do, my beloved.”

He quickly grabbed her by the shoulders, gave her an impetuous hug and kissed her on the lips. Then he pushed the

strap of her dress to one side, baring her shoulder. The now bright moonlight clearly revealed three birthmarks all in a row on the woman's left shoulder. The man kissed each of these in turn.

"You are just the same as you were before, my beloved, you are. I never want to part from you."

"And part we shall not. We shall die and be born anew."

"We can't afford to be born anew," she said sadly. "Just look, there's hardly any free land left on the Earth — it's all gardens and domains, everywhere you look. And it's possible our grandchildren won't have enough room. Probably the Creator failed to take this into account when He created the Earth."

"I don't think so. There is some kind of solution, but we don't know yet what it is. But I am confident that our love cannot be interrupted. You and I shall die to be born again."

"But where?"

"Look, my beloved — on that star out there! Let our thought create life anew on that planet, similar to life on the Earth. Think about it — why else would God have thought to create so many planets? It can't be just a coincidence. Our thought has a material form — it will create life for us on that lifeless planet. We shall be re-embodied again and again. Our love will be forever the same..."

"I thank you for this marvellous dream, my beloved, indeed I do. With you... I shall help you create life on that planet new."

"What shall we call it, my beloved, this planet of our new life?"

"Arreta, that's what it'll be called."

"Wait for us, Arreta! In the meantime you can blossom out in gardens and spread yourself with herbs, the way I desire," said the man, fervently and confidently.

"Me too," responded the woman.

The hologram disappeared. Vladislav bowed to the assembly and stepped off to one side, making way for his friend and opponent, Radomir.

Radomir stood in Vladislav's place, glanced around at the gathering and began to speak.

"I beg to disagree with my friend. I shall say right off: in his version of events there is a great deal that is unprovable and even contradictory. Like my friends here, I cannot believe in the existence of a period in people's history which is so utterly absurd.

"The hologram he showed, as we all realise, is only a whim of his thought and imagination and is lacking in confirmation. Though this hologram gave me a kind of strange sensation. It seemed as though my learned friend had taken it from a story already known — I just can't recall what source it is from."

A hushed whisper spread through the amphitheatre, and cries of "Plagiarism!" could be heard.

"Could it be plagiarism? Unheard of! But perhaps the presenter didn't know..."

"Plagiarism... Yes, there is a distinct impression of something we've seen before here."

Vladislav stood to one side and hung his head. He shuddered upon hearing a child's cry from one of the back rows.

"A-a-a-ah! A-a-a-ah!" his sister Katerinka kept calling out, refusing to be silenced.

At least she's just calling out, and not criticising the proceedings, thought Vladislav. But he was wrong.

After waiting for the inevitable silence to ensue, Katerinka declared in a loud voice:

"Don't even think of arguing with my big brother! 'Cause he's very, very clever and sensitive too."

"Now *there's* a weighty argument," someone said, as snickering could be heard all round.

"Quite true, very weighty indeed," little Katerinka went on. "And you, my Radomirchik, don't you go fancying Liudmila. Just don't go fancying her, and that's it!"

"Katya, keep quiet!" Vladislav cried out.

"I shan't keep quiet! Liudmila loves you, and you love her — I know that for certain."

"Katya!" Vladislav cried out again, and headed over to where his sister was standing.

"Liudmila, what are you sitting there for?" exclaimed Katya. "Stop him. He won't let me have my say! He'll drag me away! By force!"

A brown-haired girl rose from the back row, headed toward Vladislav and stood in his way. Liudmila's cheeks had broken out in a soft blush. With head lowered, she whispered:

"Your sister's right, Vladislav."

Her whisper could be heard through the hushed amphitheatre. All heads turned toward little Katerinka, people smiled and applauded her. Inspired by the audience's support, the little girl ran down to Radomir, who was still standing on stage. She took up a position right beside him and held up her hands to signal the gathering to quiet down.

When all were silent, she started speaking again, this time to Radomir.

"You know, Radomirchik, you almost played the traitor there. You musn't criticise my big brother. He showed everything fair and square. He's your friend. You're his friend. So don't you criticise."

Radomir glanced down condescendingly at the little girl beside him, and with equal condescension began speaking to her, as well as to the people in the amphitheatre:

"I'm not criticising. I'm simply stating a fact. There's not enough pieces of evidence in the hologram he showed. In fact, there's none."

"There is one. Or maybe two," Katerinka firmly declared.

"And where might it be — or where might *they* be, if there's two?"

"One of them is me. And the other is *you*, Radomirchik!" the little girl confidently stated.

With these words she undid two buttons on her dress and bared her shoulder. On Katerinka's left shoulder Radomir glimpsed three birthmarks, exactly the same as they had seen on the elderly Earth-woman in the hologram. Radomir examined the birthmarks on the little girl's shoulder, and his blood began rushing through his veins. He concentrated on trying to recall something. Then appeared before him a hologram which only he could see.

A country scene on the Earth. There he is, kissing the three birthmarks on his beloved's shoulder. Then she gives him a hug. She laughs and rumples his hair and kisses the end of his nose, still laughing, as usual.

The hologram disappeared.

Radomir looked for a while longer at the little girl standing in front of him, her shoulder still bared as before. Then he suddenly bent over, took Katerinka in his arms and held her close. Embracing him, she rumped his hair and gave him a quick kiss on the end of his nose. He kept holding little Katerinka in his arms, and she whispered in his ear:

"Either you were in a hurry to be born, Radomirchik, or I was born later than I should have been. Now you must wait while I grow up. Wait fourteen years. You won't be happy with anyone else — I'm your better half!"

"I shall wait 'til you grow up, my dear," the lad responded quietly.

Exhausted by all the excitement, Katerinka now felt calmed down. She put her little head on Radomir's shoulder and fell into a sound sleep. He stood there silently before the hushed amphitheatre, carefully holding in his arms his bride-to-be.

With his mind, he began drawing letters of the alphabet in space. Those assembled read the text of the hologram he created:

THERE IS PROOF. IT IS IN EACH ONE OF US!
LOVE IS INFINITE AND ETERNAL IN THE UNIVERSE.

Then, slowly and carefully, so as not to awaken the little girl asleep on his shoulder, Radomir headed for the exit.

But he had forgotten to turn off the spatial expression of his thought, and so the hologram continued to sprout more letters. The audience realised that these words were not addressed to them, but they could not help reading them:

YOU RAN BAREFOOT THROUGH STARS, NOT LOOKING FOR LOVE,
AND IN NO WAY SELF-SERVING, NO NEVER.
THROUGHOUT INFINITE SPACE YOU ALONE DID PRESERVE
WHAT WE SHOULD BE PRESERVING TOGETHER.

These words were intended for a little girl of the planet Arreta, as well as for the Earth-woman — the goddess who had given life to their planet.

The little goddess slept sweetly on Radomir's shoulder. Perhaps she too was hearing in her sleep the words of her beloved.



“That’s terrific, Anastasia! That means that when people follow the Divine programme and give the whole Earth a

makeover, they will also have the opportunity to resettle on other planets?"

"Of course. Otherwise the very existence of other planets in the Universe would be meaningless. But He has infused everything with great meaning. The love between two people — a dream, born in love — is capable of breathing life into any planet."

"And again, Anastasia, as I understood it, the people who are now building their domains will *not* die. They will only change bodies and be reincarnated in life on the spot."

"Of course. Their actions on the Earth are more needed than anyone else's. They please God. And even people who have never managed to touch the earth with their hands, but have mentally begun to build their own future living corner of Paradise, are many times more needful to the Divine programme than hundreds of wise men sitting behind stone walls — men who have cut themselves off from God's creations, simply talking about God and spirituality.

"Their words are blasphemous and sad. Death without reincarnation awaits them. They can look forward to a fearful fate, but far from being God's punishment, this is what they have chosen as their own destiny!

"God has shone forth in the Universe with a new thought — it is not only a great energy, but a judge as well. Much has been said in treatises and legends about God's judgement. It is now coming softly and invisibly, God's judgement. It touches all the people now living on the planet. And every Man will be his own judge.

"Whoever chooses life and creates living life will be eternal and resemble the grand Creator of the Universe.

"Whoever visualises death in his imagination is doomed to death by his own thought."

It seemed as though these words of hers, spoken with a soft and confident tone on the bank of the River Ob, were taken up by the Space like an echo over the Earth. Over the past ten years I have not been the only one who has learnt how Anastasia is able to create the future through her thoughts and words.



As my boat took me further and further up the river, I could see her still standing on the shore. The Space around picked up her words on eternal life and repeated them over and over. From what galaxies, or from what worlds of the Universe, I all at once began to wonder, did Anastasia appear in her earthly likeness and impart a conscious awareness of *eternity* to the planet Earth? She is not one to lightly toss out words at random turns. And this has been confirmed in real life.

And that being the case, my dear readers, I must offer you my heartiest congratulations! On your conscious awareness! We shall live for ever, co-creating life in the Universe.

'Til our next joyful meeting, dear friends!

End of Part One

For Notes

For Notes

For Notes

For Notes

For Notes

For Notes

THE RINGING CEDARS SERIES AT A GLANCE

Anastasia, the first book of the Ringing Cedars Series, tells the story of entrepreneur Vladimir Megré's trade trip to the Siberian taiga in 1995, where he witnessed incredible spiritual phenomena connected with sacred 'ringing cedar' trees. He spent three days with a woman named Anastasia who shared with him her unique outlook on subjects as diverse as gardening, child-rearing, healing, Nature, sexuality, religion and more. This wilderness experience transformed Vladimir so deeply that he abandoned his commercial plans and, penniless, went to Moscow to fulfil Anastasia's request and write a book about the spiritual insights she so generously shared with him. True to her promise this life-changing book, once written, has become an international bestseller and has touched hearts of millions of people world-wide.

The Ringing Cedars of Russia, the second book of the Series, in addition to providing a fascinating behind-the-scenes look at the story of how *Anastasia* came to be published, offers a deeper exploration of the universal concepts so dramatically revealed in Book 1. It takes the reader on an adventure through the vast expanses of space, time and spirit — from the Paradise-like glade in the Siberian taiga to the rough urban depths of Russia's capital city, from the ancient mysteries of our forebears to a vision of humanity's radiant future.

The Space of Love, the third book of the Series, describes author's second visit to Anastasia. Rich with new revelations on natural child-rearing and alternative education, on the spiritual significance of breast-feeding and the meaning of ancient megaliths, it shows how each person's thoughts can influence the destiny of the entire Earth and describes practical ways of putting Anastasia's vision of happiness into practice. Megré shares his new outlook on education and children's real creative potential after a visit to a school where pupils build their own campus and cover the ten-year Russian school programme in just two years. Complete with an account of an armed intrusion into Anastasia's habitat, the book highlights the limitless power of Love and non-violence.

Co-creation, the fourth book and centrepiece of the Series, paints a dramatic living image of the creation of the Universe and humanity's place in this creation, making this primordial mystery relevant to our everyday living today. Deeply metaphysical yet at the same time down-to-Earth practical, this poetic heart-felt volume helps us uncover answers to the most significant questions about the essence and meaning of the Universe and the nature and purpose of our existence. It also shows how and why the knowledge of these answers, innate in every human being, has become obscured and forgotten, and points the way toward reclaiming this wisdom and — in partnership with Nature — manifesting the energy of Love through our lives.

Who are we? — Book Five of the Series — describes the author's search for real-life 'proofs' of Anastasia's vision presented in the previous volumes. Finding these proofs and taking stock of ongoing global environmental destruction, Vladimir Megré describes further practical steps for putting Anastasia's vision into practice. Full of beautiful realistic images of a new way of living in co-operation with the Earth and each other, this book also highlights the role of children in making us aware of the precariousness of the present situation and in leading the global transition toward a happy, violence-free society.

The book of kin, the sixth book of the Series, describes another visit by the author to Anastasia's glade in the Siberian taiga and his conversations with his growing son, which cause him to take a new look at education, science, history, family and Nature. Through parables and revelatory dialogues and stories Anastasia then leads Vladimir Megré and the reader on a shocking re-discovery of the pages of humanity's history that have been distorted or kept secret for thousands of years. This knowledge sheds light on the causes of war, oppression and violence in the modern world and guides us in preserving the wisdom of our ancestors and passing it over to future generations.

The energy of life, Book Seven of the Series, re-asserts the power of human thought and the influence of our thinking on our lives

and the destiny of the entire planet and the Universe. It also brings forth a practical understanding of ways to consciously control and build up the power of our creative thought. The book sheds still further light on the forgotten pages of humanity's history, on religion, on the roots of inter-racial and inter-religious conflict, on ideal nutrition, and shows how a new way of thinking and a lifestyle in true harmony with Nature can lead to happiness and solve the personal and societal problems of crime, corruption, misery, conflict, war and violence.

The new civilisation, the eighth book of the Series, is not yet complete. The first part of the book, already published as a separate volume, describes yet another visit by Vladimir Megré to Anastasia and their son, and offers new insights into practical co-operation with Nature, showing in ever greater detail how Anastasia's lifestyle applies to our lives. Describing how the visions presented in previous volumes have already taken beautiful form in real life and produced massive changes in Russia and beyond, the author discerns the birth of a new civilisation. The book also paints a vivid image of America's radiant future, in which the conflict between the powerful and the helpless, the rich and the poor, the city and the country, can be transcended and thereby lead to transformations in both the individual and society.

Rites of Love — Book 8, Part 2 (published as a separate volume) — contrasts today's mainstream attitudes to sex, family, childbirth and education with our forebears' lifestyle, which reflected their deep spiritual understanding of the significance of conception, pregnancy, homebirth and upbringing of the young in an atmosphere of love. In powerful poetic prose Megré describes their ancient way of life, grounded in love and non-violence, and shows the practicality of this same approach today. Through the life-story of one family, he portrays the radiant world of the ancient Russian Vedic civilisation, the drama of its destruction and its re-birth millennia later — in our present time.

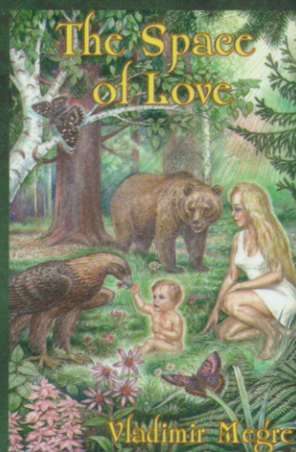
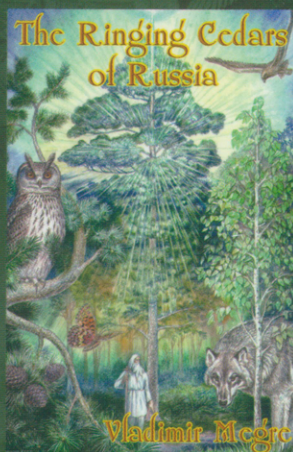
To be continued...

The New Civilisation by V. Megré

Book 8 of The Ringing Cedars Series

Spirituality /
Nature

The New Civilisation paints a vivid image of America's radiant future, in which the conflict between the powerful and the helpless, the rich and the poor, the city and the country can be transcended and lead to transformations in both the individual and society. Vladimir Megré describes a new visit to Anastasia and their son, and offers new insights into practical co-operation with Nature, showing in ever greater detail how Anastasia's lifestyle applies to our lives and how her words already produce massive changes in Russia and beyond.



RINGING CEDARS PRESS

www.RingingCedars.com

1-888-DOLMENS

US\$14.95 CAN\$19.95 AU\$24.95

ISBN 978-0-9763333-8-8



9 780976 333388

5 1 4 9 5



Rites of Love



Vladimir Megre

Vladimir Megré

rites of love

The Ringing Cedars Series
Book 8, part 2

Translated from the Russian by
John Woodsworth

Edited by
Leonid Sharashkin



Ringing Cedars Press
Paia, Hawaii, USA

Rites of Love by
Vladimir Megré

Translation, Translator's Afterword and footnotes by
John Woodsworth

Editing, Editor's Afterword, footnotes, design and layout by
Leonid Sharashkin

Cover art by
Alexander Razboinikov

Copyright © 2006 Vladimir Megré
Copyright © 2008 Leonid Sharashkin, translation
Copyright © 2008 Leonid Sharashkin, afterwords
Copyright © 2008 Leonid Sharashkin, footnotes
Copyright © 2008 Leonid Sharashkin, cover art
Copyright © 2008 Leonid Sharashkin, design and layout

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, except for the inclusion of brief quotations in a review, without permission in writing from the publisher.

Library of Congress Control Number: 2007934233

ISBN: 978-0-9763333-9-5

Published by
Ringling Cedars Press

www.RinglingCedars.com



Contents

1. Love — the essence of the Cosmos.....	I
2. Do our lives correspond to the Divine programme?	12
3. Why does love come and go?	16
<i>Should we seek out our 'other half'?</i>	18
<i>False images</i>	20
4. Wedding rites.....	25
5. Conception involves more than flesh.....	33
6. Into the depths of history.....	42
<i>Arkaim — Academy of the wise-men</i>	42
<i>What is the message of Sungir?</i>	51
<i>A family-centred society</i>	64
<i>A mysterious manoeuvre</i>	68
<i>Love and the State's military preparedness</i>	84
7. Russia erased.....	87
8. The elders' mistake.....	94
<i>From a hired hand to a prince</i>	94
<i>A mistake not to be repeated</i>	97
9. The Creator's greatest gift.....	101
<i>Childhood love</i>	101
<i>Love as a fully fledged member of the family</i>	109
<i>True love will most certainly be reciprocated</i>	115

<i>Love, too, was teaching in the Vedruss school</i>	119
10. Pre-wedding festivities.....	129
<i>'Rucheyok'</i>	129
<i>'Chastushka-govorushka'</i>	130
11. The wedding rite.....	135
12. Conception.....	148
13. Telegony can be overcome.....	155
14. The psychology of Man's genesis and appearance in the world.....	159
<i>When a man brings a child into the world</i>	164
15. A rite for a woman giving birth without a husband.....	173
16. Where should we have our babies?.....	179
17. The Vedruss birth.....	182
18. Not Radomir's last battle.....	189
19. From the stars will they return to the Earth.....	196
20. Even in chaos there is a purpose.....	208
21. 'Soulmate gatherings'.....	212
22. A nuptial rite for women with children.....	220
23. High-society ladies.....	227
24. Millennial encounter.....	239
25. Anastasia's wedding.....	247
A voyage of self-discovery. Translator's Afterword.....	253
The Book of Happiness. Editor's Afterword.....	275

CHAPTER ONE



Love — the essence of the Cosmos

All of a sudden a figure appeared on the roadway ahead. He was standing practically smack dab in the middle of the travel lane with his back to my oncoming jeep. I began braking at once, so as to carefully go around this strange-looking grey-headed figure.

When I got within ten metres of him, the old fellow quietly turned around and I instinctively pressed the brake pedal to the floor.

There in front of me on the roadway stood none other than Anastasia's grandfather. I recognised him at once. His grey hair and beard were a complete contradiction to his incredibly young, sparkling eyes — a discrepancy which immediately set him apart from many of his peers. And the long grey raincoat of indeterminate cut from goodness-knows-what material was also something I was able to recognise all too easily.

Still, I had a hard time believing my eyes. After all, how could this oldster from the Siberian taiga turn up here in the heart of Russia, on a roadway leading from Vladimir to the city of Suzdal?¹ How, indeed? By coach and horses? How could this Siberian recluse hope to master all the intricacies of our transportation networks? Add to that a complete absence of any kind of identification documents.

¹*Vladimir* (pron. *vla-DEE-meer*), *Suzdal* (pron. *SOOZ-dal*) — two of Russia's oldest historic cities, located not far east of Moscow. For further information see footnote 1 in Book 5, Chapter 6: "A garden for eternity".

Money, of course, he could have laid his hands on, by selling dried mushrooms and cedar nuts,² as his granddaughter Anastasia had done. But with no identification...

Of course we have lots of homeless people without identification, and the police can't do anything about it. But Anastasia's grandfather is far from resembling your average homeless person. Sure, he was dressed in old shabby clothes, but they were always clean, and his appearance was well-groomed, his face was bright and a light blush adorned his cheeks.

I sat there, unable to move, behind the wheel of the jeep. He came over and I opened the half-door for him.

"Hi there, Vladimir!" the old fellow greeted me as though there were nothing unusual about the circumstances. "You heading to Suzdal? Can you give me a lift?"

"Yes, of course I can. Hop in! How did you end up here? How on earth did you manage to get here all the way from the taiga?"

"How I got here isn't important. The main thing is *why* I came."

"Well, why did you come?"

"To take a tour into real Russian history with you, and to dispel your resentment toward me. My granddaughter Anastasia told me to. She said to me: 'Grandpakins, you are to blame for his resentment.' So here I am, joining you on the tour. That's why you're going to Suzdal, isn't it?"

"Yes, I want to go see the museum. And I really did feel resentment, only it's gone now."

We rode for some time in silence. I recalled how frosty our parting had been back in the taiga. In fact, we didn't even say good-bye. It had happened like this:

²*cedar nuts* — referring to the fruit of the Siberian cedar (Siberian pine, *Pinus sibirica*), known in the West as 'pine nuts'. This tree is akin to the European stone pine — see footnote 4 in Book 1, Chapter 1: "The ringing cedar" (esp. the 2nd edition).

Anastasia's grandfather had recommended I set up a political party. He suggested calling it the *Motherland Party*.³

The idea of forming a party based on Anastasia's ideas had actually been noised about for some time, by various people. Many believed a political party was essential to make it easier for people to acquire land for the building of family domains and head off any kind of encroachment on the part of government officials, since none of the existing parties, regrettably, had even considered such questions in their platform.

In view of the fact that there are some sort of powers opposed to Anastasia's ideas and that all sorts of attempts have been made to discredit not only the ideas themselves but also people who have been attracted by them, as well as Anastasia and me, it was suggested to draft the party's constitution without any reference in its "Aims and objectives" section to creating favourable conditions for the setting up of kin's domains. Nor should there be any mention of Anastasia's ideas, or the Ringing Cedars Series.

The would-be organisers were trying to persuade me that this would be the only way to get the party officially registered. And so I decided to consult with Anastasia's grandfather on this question, as well as on the topic of the party's structure, its primary aims and objectives. I surmised that since he was well acquainted with the acts of the priests who were constantly setting up all sorts of societal structures and religions which had lasted millennia, he must surely know about the secret organisational tenets underlying such longevity.

Besides, he himself was a priest of some standing.⁴ Quite possibly, even stronger than the ones currently ruling the

³See Book 8, *The New Civilisation*, end of Chapter 12: "People power".

⁴Anastasia's grandfather inherited the priesthood when his own father, Moisey, passed on. The first reference to the family's priestly status comes in Book 7, Chapter 7: "A conversation with Anastasia's grandfather".

world. If so, then he must certainly be aware of the principles underlying the priesthood itself, which had turned out to be more resilient than religion.

Indeed, the priesthood was and is a suprareligious structure, since the priests took direct part in the creation of certain religions and secular institutions. This is clear from the history of Ancient Egypt and other countries.

It followed that Anastasia's grandfather would be able to set forth certain fundamentals for the Motherland Party, making it a most powerful, if not *the* most powerful, institution.

I sincerely wanted to hear what he had to say on this, and so I took advantage of what I thought was a moment when he was not immersed in his inner contemplations, and said:

"You were speaking about a party. My readers, too, have been talking about this for some time. But some of them are recommending that I don't include any mention in its constitution of Anastasia, or her ideas, or the books — so that the registration will go smoothly."

The grey-haired old fellow stood before me, leaning on his father's staff, without saying a word. It wasn't just that he kept his silence — he stared at me fixedly, as though seeing me for the first time. His eyes reflected more criticism than kindness.

And when he did start speaking again after a lengthy pause, his voice, too, betrayed notes of disdain.

"Registration, you say. So, you've come to ask my advice? To betray or not to betray?"

"What's this about betrayal? I came to consult with you on how to proceed so that the registration will go smoothly."

"Registration, after all, is not an end in itself, Vladimir. Even the party is not an end in itself. No ideas, you say, not even a mention? So how are readers going to realise that it's *their* Motherland Party, and not just some mercantile traitors' party? You've been asked to set up some kind of meaningless

organisation — without any basis, idea, or symbols which would already guarantee leadership for centuries to come. And now you've come to ask me whether you shouldn't follow their advice. Don't tell me you couldn't see through even this simple trick?"

I realised I had got myself into a rather sticky situation, and so I tried to get out of it by asking another question:

"I only wanted to see if there were some principles you could recommend including in the draft of the party's constitution, its aims and objectives?"

What happened next nearly drove me out of my mind. As it seemed to me back then, the old fellow was not only refusing to answer my questions, he had started making fun of me in a high-handed way. First he looked at me wide-eyed, then he gave a kind of irritated chuckle and turned away, even taking a step back from me. But then he turned around again and said:

"Don't you understand, Vladimir? All the answers to the questions you raise should be given birth within yourself, and within everyone who joins you in creating the party's structure. Sure, I can give you a hint. But tomorrow someone else will give you another hint, and then a third, and you won't *act* — all you'll do is focus your attention on the hints. Go right, go left, you'll all go forward and then backward again or keep going round in circles because of the laziness of your minds."

I strongly resented this latter phrase. Over the years since my first meeting with Anastasia I've been stretching my mind to the limit day and night. Maybe it's starting to overheat from the constant stress of the work. I've published eight books now and have often taken to contemplating what is written in them myself. Sometimes I've found myself pondering the accuracy of particular phrases time and again. And surely the old fellow must know all about this.

Even though my resentment was starting to become inflamed, I managed to restrain myself, explaining:

"Indeed, it seems as though everybody thinks and reflects, and various political systems are set up — communist, democratic, centrist. But as someone once said, no matter what party we aim to create, it all ends up looking like the Communist Party's Central Committee!"

"That's very true. That's what I've been telling you — you're going round in circles because of the laziness of your minds."

"What's 'laziness of mind' got to do with it? Maybe it's simply that not enough information is available?"

"So, there's not enough information out there and you've come to me to get it, eh? But if your mind is lazy, will you be able to make any sense of it?"

I could feel my resentment increasing, but I endeavoured to conceal my irritation and continued:

"Okay, I'll try to make my brain work harder."

"Then pay attention. The party should be structured along the lines of the Novgorod *vieche*⁵ — I mean, in its early period. You'll figure out the rest later."

This answer made me really angry. The oldster knew perfectly well that documents on pre-Christian Russia were nowhere to be found — they had all been destroyed. So nobody could ever tell how this Novgorod *vieche* worked, especially in

⁵*vieche* (also spelt: *veche*) — an ancient form of self-governance in which a circle of local residents collectively discussed and decided questions of importance by general consensus. In later times, the term *vieche* was used to describe an assembly of freemen which served as a governing council in a number of cities of Western Russia from the tenth to the fourteenth centuries, even longer in the city of Novgorod (about 100 km south of St. Petersburg). Not unlike the *Ting* in Scandinavian (esp. Icelandic) communities, these latter assemblies had the power (among other things) to enact local legislation, appoint and dismiss princes, wage war and conclude treaties with other territories.

its early period. That meant he was mocking me. But why? What had I done to make him—?

Trying to restrain myself out of respect for his age, I apologised:

“Excuse me for disturbing you. You were probably occupied in something important. I’ll leave you.”

And I turned around to go, but he called after me:

“But the aim or objective of the Motherland Party should be the creation of favourable conditions for the restoration of the energy of Love to families. It is essential to bring back the rites and celebrations which can help find one’s ‘other half’, one’s *soulmate*.”

“What?” I turned to face the old fellow again. “Love? Bring it back to families? I realise you don’t want to talk serious with me. But why are you making fun of me?”

“I’m not making fun of you, Vladimir. It is you who are not capable of understanding what it’s all about. If you don’t train yourself to contemplate, it can take years to figure out.”

“Figure out what? You have at least a rough idea what kinds of aims and objectives parties all over the world write into their constitutions?”

“I have a rough idea.”

“Then tell me, if you know that. Tell me!”

“They claim they will definitely raise the standard of living for everyone, and will offer people greater freedom.”

“Exactly. And in particular they promise industrial development, guaranteed housing and control over inflation.”

“Nonsense. Utter nonsense!” the oldster chortled.

“Nonsense??? Yes, it *will* be nonsense if I follow your advice and put in as a basic tenet of the party’s constitution: *The Party will work toward the goal of helping every individual find their soulmate.*

“And you can add: *The Party will restore to the people a way of life and rites capable of preserving love in families forever.*”

“What on earth are you talking about??!! You — you want to make a laughingstock of me in front of everybody? Questions like this — like searching for one’s soulmate — this is what marriage agencies do, on a commercial basis. If I include statements like that in the party’s platform, it’ll end up being not a party but a dating service! And as for love in families, well, that’s a personal matter for families, and nobody, no political party, has the right to interfere in family affairs. That’s none of the State’s business.”

“But don’t tell me your State isn’t made up of families! Aren’t *families* the basis of any State?”

“They are, they are! That’s why the State is obliged to raise the standard of living both for families and for individual citizens.”

“And what then?” the old fellow snapped. “By raising the standard of living in the country, will you then restore love to a great many families?”

“I don’t know. But it *is* accepted that states should care about the welfare of their citizens.”

“Vladimir, ponder for a moment what that word *welfare* means. Calm down and delve into its meaning. Now I’m going to say it just a little differently: *well-faring* or *faring well*, that is, a *state of well-being*. If you think about it, you’ll realise that love alone is capable of raising any Man’s well-being to the highest possible level — not money or palaces, but only the feeling given to Man⁶ by the Creator — the state of *love*.

“Love is the essence of the Cosmos. Living, thinking, with an advanced intellect. It is powerful, and it’s no wonder God

⁶ *Man* — Throughout the Ringing Cedars Series, the word *Man* with a capital *M* is used to refer to a human being of either gender. For details on the word’s usage and the important distinction between *Man* and *human being*, please see the Translator’s Preface to Book 1.

was so excited about it, giving its great energy as a gift to Man. It is imperative to try to understand love, and not be shy about paying attention to it even on the national level.

“And when the nation is comprised of a multitude of families giving birth to their children in love and creating a Space of Love, it will not suffer from lawlessness or inflation. Such a nation will have no need to fight against criminal tendencies; they will disappear from society. And all the prophets with their cunning philosophising will be silenced. Whether they foolishly neglected to mention it or whether it was simply beyond their comprehension is unimportant, but they led people away from the most important thing to a place where there is no love.

“The priests knew about this, and consequently humoured the prophets.

“For centuries mankind had been creating rites in aid of life and love. Whether these rites were suggested by the Creator or the people’s own wisdom had perfected them is unimportant. They, in fact, over the centuries, created a state of well-being and helped young people obtain love and joy in perpetuity. None of these rites was characterised by occult superstition, as today. Each one served as a school of higher learning, an examination by the Universe.

“Anastasia told you about the Vedruss⁷ wedding rite that dates back centuries. You mentioned it in just one of your books,⁸ but it deserves to be mentioned in every book. It is far from being fully comprehended by people living today, including you.

“If you remember, she also told you about ancient ways of searching for your one to love. But again, you today have not

⁷*Vedruss* — referring to a people prevalent in pre-Christian Russia, from which Anastasia is descended — see Book 6, Chapter 4: “A dormant civilisation”. *Ved* is a Slavic root signifying ‘awareness’ or ‘to know’.

⁸See Book 6, Chapter 5: “The history of mankind, as told by Anastasia”.

been able to make sense of them. My granddaughter said: 'I, apparently, have not created strong enough images.' She takes all the blame upon herself, but I claim that the laziness of your mind (or minds) is also to blame.

"Let the best learned men study the Vedruss wedding rite letter by letter. They won't — and you'd better believe me, Vladimir — they won't find a single occult or superstitious act. It is an act which is both rational and exactly suited to love's creation. Compared to it, you will see how absurd are today's wedding celebrations — traditions smacking of occultism and superstition.

"You must realise that Anastasia knows immeasurably more than she tells you. Her acts, her logic, her behaviour are not immediately understood even by the priests, who subsequently can only marvel at what my granddaughter has done.

"Enquire of her and inspire her with your question. Ask her what rite the Vedruss people had for childbirth.

"Don't count on her to bring the subject up. She takes care to talk to you only about what she thinks interests you. But you don't have the slightest idea of what tremendous hidden wisdom lies in the ancient rites. They are the creation of cosmic worlds.

"Any world that forgets the wisdom of its age-old forebears deserves derision. It makes no difference whether an individual has forgotten on his own or under the influence of the priests who have mastered the occult sciences.

"Enquire of my granddaughter and inspire her with your question. And summon your party to the creation of love. Until that happens, you are of little interest to me. You need to have the most obvious things explained to you at length. Show forgiveness to an old man. Go. I do not find it useful to talk and think of unpleasantries."

The old fellow turned and started slowly walking away. I stood there all alone in the taiga, feeling I had been spat

upon. The resentment I had felt right from the start of our conversation prevented me from making sense of everything he said. But subsequently, upon returning home, I mentally went back to our conversation in the taiga, pondering it and analysing it. I very much wanted to prove — perhaps not so much to Anastasia's grandfather as to myself — that I had not become completely lazy of mind.

I wanted to either disprove or confirm what he said — within myself.

Back in the taiga, the oldster had told me that as long as people are content merely to listen to hints and not begin to think about the essence of life for themselves, society will never be free from its cycle of social upheavals. And Man will never be happy.

I guess that's the way it is.

He also talked about the existence of some kind of programme created by God. Now, what might that be? To what extent does the life of Man today correspond with this programme?

CHAPTER TWO



Do our lives correspond to the Divine programme?

A Man was born in the operating room on the second floor of a hospital. The doctors were surprised to see an absolutely healthy baby.

Days and months flew by like seconds. The child attended kindergarten, then school, then university. 'Wise' educators, teachers and professors instilled in him some kind of programme of life.

The Man decided that the most important thing in life was to have lots of money, which would enable him to feed himself well, have an apartment, a car and clothing. And he began to work hard, sometimes even taking two shifts a day.

Still, the seconds dragged out into years, and when he reached retirement he had been able to earn enough for a modest two-room flat and a used car.

Long before retiring, he fell in love, got married, divorced and re-married. His first wife bore him a child, but after the divorce the child stayed with his mother. A child was born from the second marriage, but he went off to the Far North. They talked on the telephone once or twice a year. Seconds counted down the years of the Man's old age. He took ill and died.

Such is the sad fate of the majority of people living on the Earth today.

There is a minority who manage to become famous entertainers, politicians, presidents or millionaires. Life for this category of people is considered to be more happy, but that

is an illusion. Their cares are no fewer than anyone else's, and their end turns out exactly the same: old age, disease and death. Was such a fate included in the Divine programme for residents of the Earth? No!

The Creator could not predestine such a sad and cruel fate for His children. It was human society itself, under the influence of some kind of powers, that ignored the Divine programme and started down a path of self-torture and self-destruction.

Perhaps somebody doubts the existence of the Divine programme of human life? After all, it is not something our scholars or politicians talk about.

Religions propound God's design, but invariably through intermediaries and mostly in different ways. About the only thing they agree on is that God exists.

Philosophers and many scholars, too, believe in the existence of a higher, rational, intelligent being that has created the visible world and earthly life. It is impossible not to believe this. Everything comprising our world, after all, is too logically interconnected for it to be otherwise. Well, if that is the case, then a supremely rational being could create only in a meaningful way, create only that which is eternal, and predestine a joyful perspective for all living beings — first and foremost, His beloved Man, made in His likeness. Man, in other words, is offered a specific way of life on the Earth which allows him to become aware of himself and all creation — to learn about and continue to carry out the Divine programme, contributing his own marvellous creations thereto. God desires from His son, Man, conjoint creation and joy for all from its contemplation.¹

¹See Book 4, Chapter 2: "The beginning of creation".

There is no doubt that God's programme exists, and it is not just a select group that can become acquainted with this programme, but everyone who wishes to do so. The Divine programme is not set forth in letters or hieroglyphs on sheets of papyrus, but in living signs of Nature — Nature as God has created it— and which belong only to Him.

The minds and intellects of the people of the Ancient Russian period still allowed them to read the grand Book of the Divine. Out of the billions of such letter-signs, the majority of people living today are acquainted with but a few, and we must begin anew to study the Divine alphabet.

The book I am writing at the moment is not on a religious theme. It is not an attempt at sheer philosophising. This book is a call to research, to becoming aware of the Divine programme.

I am not about to teach anyone or preach anything. I only want to acquaint my readers with information on the culture of our forebears, through the rites perfected by the 'wise-men'² through careful calculation and designed to preserve family love, and to call upon everyone to disprove or confirm the arguments presented.

I was prompted to publish this material by the sayings and logical conclusions of the Siberian recluses, especially Anastasia.

Publication is needed in order to let the information seep through to the level of one's own feelings and, through collaborative efforts, to start to act according to the logic of life, as well as in the hope that our generation will begin to contemplate, and then accelerate the building of a new civilisation for themselves and their children.

²*wise-men* (Russian: *volkbvy*) — a reference to ancient 'scientists' with particular knowledge of the workings of Nature, often possessing exceptional powers. For further information, see footnote 13 in Book 7, Chapter 20: "Pagans".

It is possible that Anastasia has conceptually outlined just the first point in the programme of mankind's development, to wit:

Human society should study the Divine programme, using the materials God has provided, and transforming the whole planet into a marvellous Paradise oasis, thereby creating a harmoniously balanced society for all living beings. Man's attainment of this level of life will open up possibilities for the creation of life on other planets and in other galaxies.

Against the background of this grand concept, Anastasia first proposed the creation of family domains.

Let us too begin our research by examining commonly known and outwardly simple issues.

CHAPTER THREE



Why does love come and go?

Oh, how many poems and philosophical treatises have been devoted to this very feeling! In fact, it is hard to find a literary work where it is not touched upon to some extent. Nearly all religions talk about love. It is considered to be a great feeling imparted to Man by God.

The reality of our current human conditions, however, portrays the feeling of love as a most sadistic phenomenon.

Let's face the truth. Statistics show that sixty to seventy percent of marriages are doomed to failure. The failure comes after years of an uneasy coexistence on the part of two people who were once in love. Sometimes these years are marked by mutual insults, scandals and even face-smashing.

The original beautiful and inspired feeling vanishes, only to be replaced by years of anger, insults, hatred and, ultimately, unhappy children.

This is the sad result of what we call love today.

Could such a result be considered a gift from God! No way!

But perhaps it is we ourselves who turn aside from some kind of way of life inherent in Man, and that is why love vanishes, telling us, in effect: *I can't live in such conditions. Your way of life is killing me. And you yourselves are dying.*

Remembering my conversation in the taiga, I recalled how unusually the grey-haired recluse talked about love. "Love," he said, "is the greatest and most powerful energy in the Cosmos. It is never thoughtless. It has thoughts and its own feelings too. Love is a living, self-sufficient entity, a living being.

“By the will of God it is sent to the Earth, ready to bestow its great energy on every Earth-dweller and make their lives eternal in love. It comes to each one of them, endeavouring to tell them, through the language of feelings, about the Divine programme. If Man doesn’t listen, it is forced to leave, not by its own will, but by Man’s.”

Love! A mysterious feeling. And even though almost every Man who has ever lived on the Earth has managed to experience it, love remains largely uninvestigated.

On the one hand, the theme of love is touched upon in most works of prose and poetry, and in most artistic genres. On the other, all the information these contain merely establishes the existence of such a phenomenon. At best, it describes but the outward manifestations of love and variations in behaviour on the part of different people under the influence of the feeling as it has appeared in them.

But is it really necessary to *investigate* the feeling of love, which everybody knows?

The extraordinary and brand new information I received in the Siberian taiga confirms that investigation is extremely necessary. We need to learn to understand love.

I believe one of the most accurate answers to the question as to why love fades is simply that it vanishes when it finds no understanding.

People in the past understood love.

Judge for yourselves: more than ten thousand years ago the Vedruss people possessed knowledge enabling them to carry out actions which not only strengthened love but made it everlasting. One such action was the Ancient Vedic wedding rite. After the description was published in one of my books, many academic researchers came round to affirming that this particular rite was capable of transforming an initially flaring feeling into a permanent one. Comparing it with the rites of various peoples both past and present, I began more and more to draw

the conclusion that the Ancient Vedic wedding rite was a rational deed thought up by the wisdom of the people, which is capable even today of helping many family couples find lasting love. However, let's go through everything in order.

And let us begin with the most important thing.



Should we seek out our 'other half'?

'My other half' — 'my *soulmate*' — it's a popular expression. Let's see what it means, exactly. I think many people will accept the following definition: *a man or a woman close to you in spirit and their views on life, a pleasant communicator, someone you feel attracted to (including their appearance), someone capable of inspiring you to love.*

Should we seek out our soulmate, or let our 'other half' be found all on its own, through the will of destiny?

As many centuries of mankind's experience has shown, a determined search is essential. This is attested in multitudes of stories in which stout-hearted young men have set off on long quests in search of their intended.

There are a number of ancient rites which can aid this most important search of one's life.

There are ancient rites, too, which can help determine whether one has made the right choice. What if that 'other half' has come to you straight from the devil himself?

Some of these rites I have already described in my previous books. I did not touch upon well-known rituals, but mostly introduced rites that are not commonly known and have not

been encountered heretofore. The present book focuses on the wedding rite and, at the same time, the rite for determining whether one has made the right choice of partner, which I shall go over again in a different context.

“Then get on with it — show us these miraculous rites,” some of my readers may be thinking. “Why bother with all these expositions?” But the expositions are absolutely essential! We need a vision of our reality today, otherwise we shall not understand the tremendous signification of the wisdom of the people. Everything in the world is relative and, hence, comparisons are crucial.

So let’s now take a look and see which life situations in today’s world can facilitate a meeting and which may just get in the way.

Strange as it may seem, in our present so-called ‘information age’, situations favouring a meeting of two ‘halves’ are getting harder and harder to find.

People living in large, densely populated megacities are virtually cut off from each other by invisible barriers. Someone living in a modern multi-storeyed apartment block is often unacquainted with his next-door neighbour.¹ Passengers on public transport, even those standing jam-packed shoulder-to-shoulder in the aisles, are all absorbed in their own individual problems. Pedestrians walking along the same street have no reason to communicate with each other.

And in America, for example, you can’t even look closely at a woman without being suspected of sexual harassment.

And so, just sitting in your flat or travelling to work or studies, there’s practically no opportunity to find your soulmate.

Let’s say your work involves contact with a lot of different people. Let’s say you’re sitting at a cash register in a large

¹For a description of what this means in Russian apartment blocks, see footnote 1 in Book 8, Chapter 13: “A new civilisation”.

supermarket. But none of the customers passing by you every day thinks of striking up an acquaintance with you. It's more likely they see you merely as an adjunct to the cash register.

A college or university where a whole lot of young people congregate, though it indeed offers opportunities for conversation and coupling, is not a place for general selection of one's soulmate, since an educational institution is designed with a completely different function in mind.

Today the most acceptable locales for meeting people are generally bars, restaurants, discotheques and resorts. But encounters here, even those which end in marriages, do not, as a rule, result in a happy life in love and harmony. According to statistics, ninety percent of such marriages end in divorce.

The principal cause lies in a false image. And what might that be? Well, here's an example.



False images

Back before I met Anastasia I took a two-week cruise on the Mediterranean Sea.

Each day in the ship's dining room my mealtime companions were three young people — two women and a man — who worked in a design institute in Novosibirsk. Each day the girls appeared in new and stylish clothing, with intriguing hairdos. It was a delight to chat with them. Nadia and Valia,²

²*Nadia* — an informal variant of the name *Nadezhda* (the Russian word for 'hope'); *Valia* — an informal variant of *Valentina*.

as they were called, were always cheerful and outreaching. One time I found their male companion in his cabin, and I asked him:

“What pretty and pleasant girls we have at our table! Maybe we can make some time with them?”

To which he replied:

“I have no desire to make time with riff-raff like that.”

“Why ‘riff-raff’?”

“Cause I work with them in the same institute and I know what they’re really like.”

“And what are they really like?”

“In the first place, they’re rowdies. Secondly, they’re lazy and slovenly. It’s only here that they try to keep up appearances and make people think they’re nice and smart. It’s quite clear they’ve come here specially to find themselves husbands among the wealthier class. You’ve noticed how they play up to the Armenian men on board.”

I had an opportunity to see for myself the discrepancy he mentioned when I paid a subsequent late-afternoon visit to the design institute to see my table companions from the cruise ship. To put it mildly, they weren’t nearly as impressive as they had been on board, and all their former cheerfulness and pleasantness had somehow vanished.

Which means that back on the ship they were putting on a false image.

Many men and women in the world today try to find their ‘other half’ with the aid of an external image which doesn’t correspond with their real nature. Perhaps such a sad phenomenon is due to an obliviousness to other possible methods? In that case both parties end up being deceived.

A man will give flowers and expensive gifts to an image which has taken his fancy. He may go so far as to offer her his hand and his heart. Then, after marriage, all of a sudden he sees her real character, which doesn’t appeal to him at all. He

feels a sense of irritation and a yearning for the earlier image which has now vanished.

A woman all of a sudden sees that the suitor who only recently was so kind and attentive to her doesn't love or understand her at all. How did this happen? But he never did love *her* — he only loved the image.

The striking discrepancy between the artificial image and the real person is particularly evident in the case of entertainment celebrities, especially if you should happen to see them in their everyday lives.

A situation no less unfortunate arises from the fact that women often change their outward appearance after marriage.

When a man falls in love with a woman, especially at first sight, it is difficult to say what, specifically, has aroused the feeling of love in him. Perhaps it was the colour of her hair or the way she plaited her braid, or maybe her eyes. It is customary to think that the feeling of love is aroused by the whole gamut of external and internal traits. And when a woman changes her external appearance, she thereby takes away part of her appeal and weakens the love between them. Even if following a radical change of clothes, hairdo and make-up, everybody around tells her how beautiful and attractive she's become, and even if these compliments ring true, and even if her husband gets excited over his wife's new look, it may be only a matter of time before his love begins to fade or disappears altogether.

After all, he has glimpsed a great many beautiful women who are a lot more attractive than his wife at present. Still, he has fallen in love specifically with *her*, and with the appearance she had when they first met. And all of a sudden that previous image is no longer there. And you will, no doubt, agree that in falling in love with the new image, he thereby betrays the image she presented before.

Why were people in ancient times so cautious about changing their clothing? Perhaps they didn't have much in the way of a selection of fabrics? But they did. They imported silks from far across the seas, and they themselves knew how to weave cloth, either coarse or fine. They could do all sorts of designs on the cloth with different colouring agents, or embroider them.

Perhaps they were lacking in imagination or finances? They had plenty of imagination — an abundance, in fact. Practically every other person was a fine artist or designer. You only have to look at houses from those times — how they are all decorated with wood-carvings.

And every woman was a master of embroidery. As for finances, both people of modest means and even those well-off were very conservative when it came to changes of clothing or hairdos. They were extremely cautious about altering their own appearance, being careful to preserve their image.

The current fashion world, especially women, is wont to change their image like a kaleidoscope.

Such extreme fashion swings are extraordinarily profitable to the clothing manufacturing industry, when people throw out things that are still perfectly serviceable and buy new fashions in the hopes that they will bring something new in the way of a semblance of happiness. But no, it never comes. In its place appears only a new artificial image someone has created — an image people put on under the influence of aggressive propaganda.

In all the round of modern life I never have discovered any efficient system of measures designed to help people find a life-long companion. Not only that, but I have been getting more and more the impression that our modern living — indeed, our whole way of life — is designed in such a way that we shall never meet our true soulmate. Maybe this situation even works to somebody's advantage. A Man who is

dissatisfied with life, who has no goals or meaning in his life, can be a profitable catch for many a man out to make money. Not to mention profitable to the powers that be.

As to the question of whether or not we are actually seeking out our 'other half', I think the answer will be: no, we are not. We don't know how to. And there are no favourable conditions to facilitate the search.

I attempted to discover sagacious hints on finding one's soulmate in the rites of bygone centuries. I shall cite a few typical examples of wedding rites. Let us examine just how sagacious — or primitive — they are. I shall include my own commentaries as we go along, but if you don't happen to agree with them, you can always cross them out, or white them out and write in your own, right here in the book.

I find myself tapping more and more into the feeling that Anastasia's grandfather is right: if we don't start thinking for ourselves, we'll go on accepting any sort of crap as the wisdom of life.

I shan't even name modern weddings. Apart from drunkenness, tripping around in cars and laying flowers at the so-called 'eternal flame',³ there's precious little worth saying.

Let's take a closer look, then, at some earlier wedding rites.

³*laying flowers at the 'eternal flame'* (i.e., at tomb of the unknown soldier) — a common practice among Russian newlyweds which takes place shortly after the wedding ceremony.

CHAPTER FOUR



Wedding rites

I shall cite a typical rite from pre-revolutionary Russia with a view to examining it from the standpoint of social degradation in relation to love.

*Courting rituals in Perm.*¹ Weddings for the people of Perm involve a whole complex of preliminary operations. First, a father has to seek permission from the local authorities and from the parish priest before setting about courting a bride for his son. This kind of procedure invariably takes place without the participation of the groom, evidently according to ancient custom, and is limited to just the opinion of relatives and close friends called in to give advice. And these are the ones who will decide the fate of their closest relative's future well-being.

It happens that the groom first meets his intended only after the matchmaker has already reached an agreement with the bride's father, and sometimes not until the day of the wedding. Rarely does a young Permian have a chance to court his future bride on his own. The groom's father seeks out, on his son's behalf, a bride with a fair-sized dowry, a maiden of character and respectable moral standing.

Once the final decision had been made as to which girl is to be targeted, the courting itself begins, known as the *kora-siom*. This task is always entrusted to the family elder or, in

¹*Perm* — a major city in the Ural Mountains, founded in 1781, located about 1,000 km east of Moscow on the Kama River.

his absence, to the godfather or one of the older relations, or to someone who has had experience in such matters.

It is further explained how and what the go-betweens should say. But it seems to me the whole process is utterly absurd, since the primary principle is violated right from the start.

As we can see, there is not even a hint of the young people's love in carrying out this rite. Sad, too, is the fact that with this abusive attitude toward the energy of Love, they are implicating God.

In preparation for the groom's departure to bring back his bride, the groom's mother (or matron of the house) places on the tablecloth a loaf of bread intended for the blessing of the groom, along with salt, beer and *braga*,² and lights the candles in front of the icons.³ The groom prays and bows low at his mother's and father's feet, seeking their blessing. After reciting Jesus' prayer, he takes up a position at the table as all the wedding guests approach, reciting the same prayer. One after another they reach out with both hands to present the groom with the gifts and goodies they have brought: a cooked shoulder or cut of raw pork, always with bread, and each one chants: "Accept these precious gifts, young prince", followed by the prayer "Lord Jesus Christ" and so forth. At this the groom replies to each one individually: "Amen to your prayer", before accepting (also with both hands) the gifts of food, placing each one first on his head and then on the table, and honours each wedding guest

²*braga* — a mild, home-made brew.

³*icons* — sacred paintings on wood. Every Russian Orthodox church features a multitude of icons, but at least one icon stands or hangs in a corner of the living or dining room in practically every Orthodox household, often with candles in front.

with beer and braga (on rare occasions, wine) as he recites Jesus' prayer and intones: "Drink this to your health, (name of guest)." This naturally meets with a response from each wedding guest the groom addresses with the words "Amen to your prayer". Taking the glass from the groom, he bows to the groom and intones: "May the Lord grant you long life, great happiness, good living,⁴ may He grant you to attain happiness, cattle, a full stomach, and bread and salt,⁵ obtain a young princess, accompany the princess to the church as her swain, retain a standing position beneath the golden crowns and maintain the law of God!" And then the guest takes a drink.

And here is some more intriguing information.

Permian women rarely preserve their virginity, but their grooms pay no special attention to this and do not avoid such women, but rather accept them eagerly, even those who are pregnant, anticipating the speedy arrival of another worker in the family. It is said that the fathers in some families, considering their daughters to be blameless, will resent any attempt at matchmaking, will swear and even chase away the go-betweens, sometimes even beating them, saying: "What, you're telling me my daughter is *pen-na*?" — that is, *guilty* (from the word *penya*, meaning guilt).

⁴*good living* — the Russian term here is *zhit' da byt'* (literally: "to live and to be"). This ancient expression indicates a distinction between *life* (which is given not only to Man, but also to plants and animals) and *being* (in the sense of existing in a space of conscious awareness — accessible only to Man). The now largely forgotten meaning of this phrase is a wish not only for a 'good life' but also for spiritual fulfilment.

⁵*bread and salt* (Russian: *kbleb-sol'*) — a symbol of Russian hospitality (also found in other Slavic cultures), symbolising the earth (bread) and the Sun (salt).

So we end up not with a continuer of the family line, conceived in love, but a worker for the household.

There are, in fact, many characteristic features of wedding rites which portray our ancestors as wild barbarians. I should point out, however, that none of the rites we know of are traditionally Slavic, even though they're sometimes called 'traditional' in the literature on the subject. They stem from a period when the really traditional, wise rites were prohibited by the Church, with nothing rational offered in their place. So, for example:

Removing of boots. It happened (and in some places still happens), according to a native Russian custom, that a newly-wed woman is supposed to remove her husband's footwear. In ancient times this custom generally signified meekness, a servile attitude, even humiliation, since who would take off another's boots if she were not fully subordinate to the wearer of the boots? History teaches us that this custom existed at the time of Vladimir's reign,⁶ along with the fact that the prince of Polotsk's⁷ daughter was unwilling to remove her husband's footwear.

The same custom existed in Germany during Martin Luther's time: on their wedding night the young wife would take off her husband's boots and place them at the head of the bed as a sign of the husband's domination over the wife, the man over the (enslaved) woman.

Olearius and von Herberstein⁸ observed from their stays in Moscow that even princes' and noblemen's weddings

⁶*Vladimir I* (?–1015) — Prince of Kiev (980–1015), who accepted Christianity for *Rus'* in 988. See footnote 4 in Book 7, Chapter 20: "Pagans".

⁷*Polotsk* — an ancient city in what is now Belarus, formerly under Polish and Lithuanian control, before the territory was absorbed into the Russian empire in 1772. The Polotskian principedom lasted from the 10th to the 14th centuries.

included the rituals of footwear removal along with three strokes of the whip (the whip was then placed, together with baked goods, in a special box). This rite was continued in Lithuania before the Jagiellonian dynasty⁹ and is still preserved in peasant culture.

As we can see, the taking off of boots and honouring the bride's slave status is mistakenly passed off as a traditional Russian rite. But before the princes came along, Russia had no slavery at all. Hence this rite is not traditional for our people, but a transient custom not accepted by the people at large.

But there is one situation which strikes me as even more stupid, cruel and immoral — a situation typical of wedding rites among many peoples as late as the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries.

Directly the last food dish is placed on the table — i.e., the roast — the best man wraps up the dish, along with the bread and salt, in a tablecloth and takes it to a bed in the hayloft, to which the young couple are led immediately afterward. Whereupon the father of the bride, in handing over his newlywed daughter to her husband, stands in the doorway of the hayloft and offers her seemly advice

⁸ *Adam Olearius* (born *Adam Öblschläger*, 1603–1671) & *Siegmund Freiherr von Herberstein* (1486–1566) — Austrian and German diplomats, respectively, each of whom travelled to Russia in his time. Von Herberstein (sometimes spelt *von Herbenstein*), a German mathematician and geographer, visited Moscow in 1517 and again in 1526, setting forth his observations in a work entitled *Notes on Moscow affairs*; Olearius (also known as *Omaris*), a member of the Kaiser's council in Vienna, followed suit in the mid-1630s, and later published his *Description of my travels to Muscovy*.

⁹ *Jagiellonian dynasty* — a royal dynasty that began in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (1377–1392, 1440–1572) and spread to other East European countries, including Poland, Ukraine and even parts of Russia.

about marriage life. After the young couple have reached the bed, the wife of the master of ceremonies, wearing two coats at once (one in the normal fashion, the other turned inside out), showers them with grains, coins and hops, and feeds the young couple on their bed.

The next morning all the wedding guests show up at the hayloft and quickly remove the blanket so as to determine by well-known signs whether the newlywed girl has been chaste at the time of her marriage.

This part of the rite may be considered the most sinister and perverted, even if the newlyweds were in love with each other. In the sight of all the guests, the young people, having eaten and drunk their fill, were supposed to go to their room to consummate their marriage without fail, accompanied and encouraged by the lustful — one might even say, perverted — stares of the guests.

In the first place, after all the ups and downs of the pre-nuptial preparations, not to mention the wedding itself, the free-flowing libations of alcohol and the generous intake of food, it is best to hold off sexual intimacy for a period of time, so as to avoid the conceiving of a child in such a condition.

Secondly, why should newlyweds enter into intimate relations the same day and, on top of that, be called to account for their actions in front of the guests? What if the bride happens to be having her period on that day? All-in-all, it is something resembling the imposed mating of animals, or even worse.

Nobody in their right mind would think of bringing a bitch to a male dog — or a cow to a bull, or a ewe to a ram — when the female is not in heat. But the attitude here is: you'd better get on with it, or you'll be put to shame.

The following story was told me by a seventy-year-old man upon learning that I was investigating various rites:

I was living in the country when I got married. They fixed me up with the one I loved. She was oh so quiet, and kind. Her name was Ksiusha.¹⁰ She was nineteen then, I was twenty. We had been looking at each other for about six months, and were probably in love.

On the first night of our wedding, when everything was winding down, the two of us were sent to bed in a separate room. They placed a guard at the door, and the following morning they were supposed to hold up the sheet for all to see: was the blood of virginity there or not? The moment of decision for Ksiusha and me came. Maybe it was wedding jitters, or maybe something I ate, but I got the feeling nothing was going to happen between Ksiusha and me. She did this and that, and began awkwardly showing me her breasts, then she kissed me, and later got undressed completely.

Only there was no proper reaction in me to her caresses and undressing, and I got more and more embarrassed. I sat down on the bed, and turned my face to the wall. I felt Ksiusha's cheek press against my back, I could feel her trembling and her tears running down my spine. I too began weeping for sorrow. There we were both sitting on the bed, crying our hearts out. After that I told her:

"Don't worry, Ksiusha, I'll declare to everyone that it's my fault."

And she replied:

"Don't — they'll only make fun of you."

Before the dawn came, she did the piercing herself with her finger, and the blood came out. In the morning they showed off the sheet to the great amusement of the guests who were once more imbibing in an effort to counteract the effects of their hangover. They summoned us in their

¹⁰*Ksiusha* — an endearing variant of the name *Ksenia*.

half-drunk state, joking around and calling out *Gor'ko, gor'ko!*¹¹ before taking their next glass.

Ksiusha and I lived together for six months in the country, then moved to the city and divorced. Turned out I couldn't get anything to happen all those six months. I married again, and now I have four kids — three sons and a daughter — and grandchildren too. But that horrendous wedding I'll never forget my whole life long. And I still remember Ksiusha to this day.

¹¹ *Gor'ko, gor'ko!* (lit. 'Bitter, bitter!') — the traditional call at Russian wedding receptions for the bride and groom to kiss (and thereby sweeten the 'bitter' wine).

CHAPTER FIVE



Conception involves more than flesh

Those who have read my *Book of Kin* will remember that the Vedruss wedding rite I described ended with the loving couple, Liubomila and Radomir, conceiving a child.¹

But back then I wasn't about to ask Anastasia whether there were any particular aspects of the Vedruss civilisation concerning the conception of children, or whether or not it was worth paying special attention to this topic in any case. But, as though anticipating my question, she said:

"The Vedruss people had a deep understanding of what was involved in the conception of their children. But for the moment I do not know how to talk about it in a way you will be able to understand."

Later on, after my conversation with Anastasia's grandfather and my search for various peoples' rites capable of preserving love in families, I obtained some information on conception and realised that it had nothing to do with Anastasia — *I* was the one who had not been ready to comprehend what she said. Even now this question has not been sufficiently researched by modern science.

Scholars have been attempting to clone Man, but it seems that even if they succeed, they will end up with an entity only superficially resembling Man. You see, it is not just the sperm and the egg that are involved in the act of conception, but something else besides — something invisible, something not tangible as matter.

¹See the section entitled "A union of two — a wedding" in Book 6, Chapter 5: "The history of mankind, as told by Anastasia".

It is possible that any further exposition of the information I obtained will be shocking to some. I spent six months pondering whether it was something worth sharing with my readers or not. In the end, I decided that it was. Here is what it's all about:

Many families living on the Earth today are unknowingly raising children that are not their own in the fullest sense. This statement is supported by some weighty evidence.

The scientific world has a term *telegony*. In medicine it is called the *paternal impression phenomenon*. They try to talk as little as possible about 'telegony'. What's this all about?

The discovery began in England about a hundred and fifty years ago when Lord Morton decided to raise a new breed of horse with exceptionally resilient characteristics. At one point he crossed a thoroughbred mare with a zebra colt. But no offspring resulted, because of the genetic incompatibility of the two species.

Some time later this purebred English mare was crossed with a purebred English colt. Subsequently the mare gave birth to a foal, only... with marked traces of stripes, as with a zebra.

Lord Morton called this phenomenon *telegony*.²

²The 'zebra' was actually a quagga, an equine mammal of South Africa, with zebra-like stripes, which is now extinct. The experiment, conducted by a Scottish peer, the Right Honourable George Douglas, 16th Earl of Morton (1761–1827), was reported in a communication he wrote to the Royal Society of London in 1820 and described in many journal pieces of the past — for example, by J.C. Ewart of the University of Edinburgh in an 1899 article "Experimental contributions to the theory of heredity. A. Telephony" published in the *Proceedings of the Royal Society of London*, vol. 65 (1899), pp. 243–51; and later in Menia S. Tye's article "Pre-natal influences" in *The American Journal of Nursing*, vol. 7, n° 5 (February 1907), pp. 362–67 (see esp. p. 365; here, as in some other sources, the experimenter's titular name is misspelt *Marton*). Tye also mentions a female hybrid resulting from the first

Specialists in animal husbandry quite often encounter this phenomenon in their practice. Any dog-breeding club, for example, will dispose of even what was the most thoroughbred dam if it happened to mate with a mongrel. That particular dam would no longer produce thoroughbred pups, even if it were to be mated with the most thoroughbred sires.

Pigeon breeders will not hesitate to kill even the most precious purebred pigeon if it has been violated by a non-thoroughbred male pigeon. Practice has shown that it will never produce purebred offspring.

Scientists in various countries have done a great many studies showing that this phenomenon also extends to people. There have been instances where white parents have given birth to black children — where a black-skinned baby has come into the world as a result of a liaison between the grandmother or mother of the birthing woman and a black man. The cause of this phenomenon always turns out to be a previous relationship with a black man on the part of the girl or one of her direct progenitors.³

But these are clearly distinguishable cases. How many others are there that are not clearly distinguishable? After all,

union. And she subsequently observes (p. 366): “It would seem as though the Israelites had some knowledge of telegency, for in Deuteronomy we find when a man died leaving no issue, his wife was commanded to marry her husband’s brother, in order that he might ‘raise up seed to his brother’” (italics ours).

³While dozens of scientific articles on telegency were published in the 19th and the first two decades of the 20th century — by such luminaries, for example, as pioneer statistician Karl Pearson (1857–1936), subsequent acceptance of theories based on Gregor Johann Mendel’s (1822–1884) ‘laws of heredity’ brought the concept of *telegency* into disrepute and many considered it “disproved”. However, present-day genetics is far from being able to fully explain the mechanisms of heredity, and throughout the 20th century a great many prominent scholars have been conducting experiments and drawing conclusions quite at variance with the materialistic approaches of ‘official’ (‘orthodox’) science.

pre-marital relations are the 'in' thing today. That being the case, there's no point in blaming the woman if she is not a virgin when she marries. It is our society, our monstrous sex propaganda and sex industry that have made her that way.

In the West parents supply their school-age children with condoms, realising that they're no longer chaste. But what they don't know is that there is no condom that can counter the 'paternal impression phenomenon', or telegony. This is evidenced in concrete examples in the case of both people and animals.

Many ancient teachings and religions also speak about the phenomenon of telegony. Even though they may call it something else, the substance is the same. Both scientists and wise-men of old have determined that the first man in the life of a virgin leaves his imprint on her in spirit and in blood — a mental and physical portrait of her offspring to come. All other men who enter into intimate relations with her thereafter for child-bearing purposes have nothing to offer her but their semen and diseases of the flesh.

Isn't this what's behind the current massive lack of understanding of fathers and children? Not to mention the degradation of our whole human society of today?

A multitude of specific examples testifies to the involvement of some kind of energy in the conception of children. But if that is the case, then it is not just scientists but the public at large that should know about it.

It is probable that our recent forebears had some inkling of it. They tried to make sure that a girl entering into marriage was a virgin beyond the shadow of a doubt. It is possible that this is what lies behind the custom in many cultures of locking the newlyweds in a separate room, and subsequently hauling out and putting on display the blood-stained sheet in confirmation of the bride's virginity.

Earlier ancestors of ours, however, did not consider virginity in itself sufficient to qualify someone to be a continuer of

the line. They maintained that if a woman was engaged in intimate relations with one man while thinking about another, the resulting offspring would bear resemblance to the one she was thinking about.

Such statements indicate that people of old assumed — and quite possibly knew for certain — that the most important factor in conception was *thought*. Or, more specifically, the *energy of thought*.

The phenomenon of telephony also testifies to this. A woman, perhaps sub-consciously, retains information in her memory about the first man in her life. As a result, a child is born who either fully or partially resembles *him*.

At first I hesitated to write about this subject for fear of provoking unpleasant questions among parents and their children, and between spouses — let them be happy in their ignorance. However, such happiness has not been all that noticeable. And perhaps one of the reasons it is not particularly noticeable is a lack of knowledge as to the culture of conception.

The question of sex education courses for children in schools has been an issue for some time now. People argue over whether they should be introduced or not. If such courses touch only upon the use of condoms, there's no point in introducing the courses at all. If, however, children are told about the woman's chief purpose, about the correct approach to conceiving children, in that case the subject is absolutely essential. For that, however, the instructors must have a thorough grounding in the very essence of the question, and have appropriate literature available. It is a subject that *must* be discussed, even though the mass media, unfortunately, serves up nothing but sex propaganda.

There is a lot of talk in so-called democratic countries about human freedom. But can a Man be called truly free when important questions of life are hidden from him, and

in their place allegedly beneficial perversions are fobbed off on him through some kind of supposedly 'free' propaganda? In a situation like that it turns out that Man is 'liberated' only from a true and happy human life.

Still, I wouldn't have written about telegony if I hadn't learnt from Anastasia about how to correct this situation, even if the marriage-bound woman has already had a relationship with another man.

Not only that, but it turns out that the Vedruss people had a momentous rite through which 'stepchildren' could become one's own in blood and spirit.

Our pagan ancestors, the Vedruss all the more so, were very well acquainted with what is known in modern medicine as the 'paternal impression phenomenon'. And through the help of special rites they were able to protect their young people against it.

With the aid of particular acts or rites, wise-men, too, were able to erase the genetic code of the 'first sire' and make even girls who had been raped during enemy attacks absolutely clean. As proof of this, they were not afraid to let their sons take such women in marriage.

However, there is one 'but'. It is impossible to understand and reproduce pagan (and especially Vedruss) rites simply through a knowledge of their outward aspects. They must be experienced through *feeling*.

What's the use in just writing about it? It is essential to *love*, it is essential to prepare for the appearance of the child, it is important to give birth only at home, at the very place of conception.

"To preserve love in the family for ever, it is essential to combine — into one — three points, three feelings, three planes of being". But what's the point in simply re-stating the words? An intellectual understanding is far from sufficient — it must be felt. The philosophy of our forebears must be *felt*.

And the first essential act must be one of sheer repentance in respect to our forebears, who are now called pagans, who have been slandered and whom we have betrayed. We betrayed the traditional Slavic culture of our fathers and mothers — a culture that lasted for tens of thousands of years. Instead we started calling Christianity ‘traditional’ for Rus’.⁴ But in Rus’ it has been around for a mere thousand years. There’s no way it can be classified as ‘traditional’.

Why is *repentance* necessary? For the simple reason that if we go on thinking of our ancestors as wild, dull-witted barbarians (as we are urged to believe) but still adopt their rites, those rites will have no effect. After all, all such rites are founded on a knowledge of the Cosmos, of the designated purpose of the planets and on a knowledge of the power of mental energy, the power of thought.

Even if we try harnessing the tremendous energy of our thought with the aid of their rites, we shall not obtain any positive results, since our thought will be contradicted by another thought of ours — namely that the Vedruss people were ignorant.

Hence a paradox: you’re an ignorant fool, but your acts are marvellous. The one excludes — or, at least, contradicts — the other.

Perhaps the culture of our forebears is being deliberately concealed from us? After all, a bunch of ignorant and disoriented people cut off from their roots are easier to control. Perhaps this is God’s retribution to our civilisation? Popular wisdom says “What you sow, that shall you reap.”⁵ We have

⁴*Rus’* (pron. *ROOS*) — the name of the East Slavic state of the first millennium of the Common Era (A.D.). See footnote 5 in Book 7, Chapter 12: “The ultimate taboo”.

⁵Compare Galatians 6: 7: “whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap” (*Authorised King James Version*).

broken the ties with our forebears, and consequently the threads linking us with our children are also being broken.

We can get another glimpse of the elevated culture of our pagan forebears in the question of conception of children by examining the traditions that are even today preserved in modern China and especially Japan, where a man and woman about to enter into intimate relations for the purposes of conceiving a child undergo a special rite of purification. The beliefs of Ancient China, Japan, India and Ancient Greece — and these are traditionally ancient pagan countries — lay tremendous emphasis on the matter of conception.

So what, then, can anyone do who desires to bring forth good offspring? Should they first spend a lot of time studying the volumes of literature on this subject — besides spending a lot of time on studying treatises on choosing one's soulmate, and on the education of children?

I can tell you right off: there's absolutely no need to waste part of one's own life on such study. I myself spent several years — not *studying* such sources, but simply familiarising myself with them, and I came to the sudden realisation that the Vedruss people have condensed all their monumental works into a system of simple, cheerful and rational rites covering all events of one's life. It gives the impression that God Himself helped them in formulating these rites, as well as in understanding the essence of Man's existence.

Before attempting to apply the experience of our ancestors, we need to determine: which ancestors? I mean, how many years ago? And which territories of present-day Russia were settled by our forebears?

As is known, history textbooks, including those written in Russian, tell about people's lives in Egypt and Rome of five thousand years ago. These countries have carried out (and are still carrying out) archaeological excavations, which draw huge crowds of tourists every year. *Russian* history, on

the other hand, if we take the word of even our own history books, covers a mere thousand-year period.

That would mean our country's territory before that time was somehow home to a culturally backward people, or maybe there wasn't anybody there at all? Either that, or possibly somebody's been deliberately hiding our history from us? Indeed, they have. I have already written about this,⁶ but now I should like to present some archæological data.

I shall tell you about Arkaim, a place which has a direct connection with the question of telegony. According to Anastasia's grandfather, it was there that three and a half thousand years ago a remarkable discovery was made.

⁶See, for example, Book 6, Chapter 5: "The history of mankind, as told by Anastasia".

CHAPTER SIX



Into the depths of history

Arkaim — Academy of the wise-men

In 1952 satellites sent back to the Earth photographs of several unusual circles clearly delineated on the surface of the Southern Ural steppe. No one doubted that these circles had been artificially produced, though nobody could say exactly what they were.

A debate was raging in both scientific and occult circles of the time as to where one should look for the original Indo-European homeland. Not without some justification scientists posited that the many European peoples, as well as those of India, Persia and part of Asia, could be traced back to a single source — a mystery people known as *Proto-Indo-Europeans*.

Many researchers have dreamt of finding the remains of the land where once lived the legendary White Aryan race. Researchers have been attempting to reach the fringes of the lost ancient and precious knowledge which the ancient Aryans possessed.

When excavations began in the Arkaim Valley, archæologists announced to the academic world that an ancient city dating back more than forty centuries had been unearthed, and that it had been inhabited by people of the ancient Indo-European civilisation. The researchers started calling Arkaim¹ a city, a temple and an observatory, all at the same time.

Whoever is interested in the academics' hypotheses can read about them in specialised literature on the subject.

I shall pass on what Anastasia's grandfather told me about Arkaim. The logic of his thinking is much more accurate and intriguing than the logic underlying the scholars' scientific hypotheses.

He stated right off:

"Arkaim is not a city and not a temple. The part about the observatory is true, but that's not the main thing here. Arkaim is an *academy* — that's what it would be called today. It was in Arkaim that the teachers of the wise-men lived and worked. Here they engaged in research on the Universe; they also determined the interrelationship of celestial bodies and their influence on Man. Their tremendous discoveries were never recorded, nor did they make long speeches in public. Through their many years of research they worked out the rites, presented them to the people and subsequently kept track of how effective they were. They made corrections as required. They were able to sum up their lengthy researches in a brief word or two which signified the substance of their discovery.

"For example, there are some very early rites, such as the Saviour of the Honey² (14 July) and the Saviour of the Apple³

¹*Arkaim* (pron. *ar-ka-EEM*) — located in the Chelyabinsk Oblast of Russia, near the border of Kazakhstan. For further information on Arkaim, see: Genadii B. Zdanovich, "Arkaim Archæological Park: a cultural-ecological reserve in Russia", Chapter 20 in: Peter G. Stone & Philippe G. Planel, *The constructed past: experimental archaeology, education and the public* (Oxford & New York: Routledge, 1999), pp. 283–291.

²*Saviour of the Honey Feast Day* (Russian: *Miodovy Spas*) — a Russian Orthodox Church holiday (actually celebrated 14 August) to mark the beginning of the Assumption Fast. New gatherings of honey are brought to churches on that day for blessing before sharing with parishioners.

³*Saviour of the Apple Feast Day* (Russian: *Yablochny Spas*) — a Church holiday coinciding with Transfiguration Day, celebrated at the mid-point of the Assumption Fast (actually 19 August). On this day farmers take grapes to the churches — or, in their place, apples from the new crop.

(19 July). People did not use any new-crop apples until the Saviour of the Apple feast, or any new gatherings of honey until the Honey feast.

“Through their lengthy researches and observations the wise-men discovered that up until this date the apple does not give any significant benefit to Man, even if it is ripe. And this goes far beyond just the apple. Many berries, edible herbs and root vegetables beneficial to Man ripen before the Apple feast. If Man began to eat apples too soon, he would not have room left for the produce that was more beneficial to him at this very time.

“It was these wise-men who discovered that the particular sequence of fruit and vegetable ripening in Nature is no mere coincidence. It is this very sequence that constitutes Man’s divine dietary régime, which the science of the centuries to follow would be searching for in vain.

“Volumes of treatises could be written about how they conducted their research. The wise-men, however, never compiled any, and did not burden people with the task of reading them. They imparted their conclusions to people — in ready-made form — in just a few words. And people believed the wise-men. Their advice invariably proved true in life.

“Besides, there is no comparison between the Vedruss wise-men and their counterparts in Greece, the Egyptian priests or today’s acclaimed academic lights. The Vedruss wise-men never received any honours or rewards for their remarkable discoveries. They could not accumulate wealth or power that, say, the Egyptian priests enjoyed. And they were not given the kind of adoration showered upon many in church hierarchies today. The only thing a wise-man could expect upon arriving at a certain settlement was food and any replacement clothing or footwear he might need, as well as a place where he could lay his head, though some wise-men might decline the offer of shelter in favour of sleeping under the stars, in the open air.

“Beyond that he enjoyed the people’s sincere, unfeigned respect. Over the centuries such an arrangement ensured the selection of only the best teachers and thinkers among the people.

“The receptive populace also showed their gratitude by building, according to the wise-men’s own designs, complexes like Arkaim where the wise-men could retreat for meditation and a mutual sharing of thoughts. Here they would tell each other of their discoveries and describe the rites they had come up with based on their discoveries. It was something on the order of a supreme academic council.

“Most of the time ordinary people didn’t even know who was behind any given rite, or whom they had to thank for a particularly insightful and effective rite.

“There was one wise-man, for example — an acclaimed philosopher, astronomer and psychologist — who devoted ninety years to the study of how to combat the phenomenon we know today as telegony.

“He discovered a cure and offered people an effective remedy, consisting of a rite of only fifteen minutes in duration. True, the preparation for the rite took a lot longer. Why don’t you ask Anastasia, Vladimir — she might tell you about it.

“Only I’ll say right off: this rite can be felt only through an understanding of the *feelings of love* possessed by our distant ancestors, the philosophy of their love. The further back you manage to go with your thought, the more you’ll be able to make sense of the rite.”

To be more thoroughly persuaded of the truth of what Anastasia’s grandfather has said regarding Arkaim, let us take a look at its architecture.

Arkaim has the form of a circle with an exterior diameter of approximately 160 metres. As you can see, that’s rather small for a city. But I shall still call it a city, as scholars at the moment are doing.

It is surrounded by a two-metre-wide perimeter trench, outside a massive exterior wall. The wall was five and a half metres high and five metres thick. There were four entrances in the wall, the largest facing south-west; the other three were smaller, located on opposite sides.⁴

All the entrances led directly into the only ring road, about five metres wide, which separated the dwellings attached to the outer wall from the inner ring of walls.

This ring road was covered with logs, under which, for the whole length of the street, ran a dug-out two-metre-wide ditch, which connected with the perimeter trench. Thus the city had its own storm-drainage system: surplus water would seep through the logs into the ditch and eventually into the perimeter trench.

All the dwellings attached to the outer wall, like lemon sections, had doorways on the main street. No more than thirty-five dwellings were discovered around the outer circle. That's not much, even for a village.

Next we see the mysterious ring of the inner wall, which was even more massive than the outer one. Three metres thick, it reached a height of seven metres.

According to the excavation findings, there was no entrance through this wall except for a small passageway at the south-east point. Hence, another twenty-five interior dwellings, identical to those around the outer perimeter wall, were practically cut off from everything by the thick, high inner wall. In order to reach the little passageway to the inner ring, one had to travel the whole length of the ring road. This had a hidden significance. Anyone entering the city had to travel the same path as the Sun.

Finally, Arkaim was 'crowned' by a central plaza almost square in shape, approximately 25 by 27 metres.

⁴*opposite sides* — i.e., north-east, north-west and south-east.

Judging by the traces of fires spread out in a particular pattern, this plaza was used for some kind of rites.

Thus we see the schematic figure of a Mandala — a square inside a circle. In ancient cosmogonic⁵ texts the circle symbolises the Universe, the square — the Earth, our material world. Ancient men of wisdom, who had a perfect knowledge of the structure of the Cosmos, saw how naturally and harmoniously it was constructed. And so in building a city, it was like re-creating the Universe in miniature.

Arkaim was built according to a pre-determined plan as a single complex whole, oriented with extreme precision to celestial bodies. The design resulting from the four entrances in Arkaim's outer wall forms a 'right-facing' swastika, reflecting the clockwise movement of the Sun.⁶

The swastika (in Sanskrit, 'connected with good', 'the best success') is one of the most ancient sacred symbols. It is encountered as far back as the Upper Paleolithic period⁷ in the cultures of many of the world's peoples — including those of India, Ancient Rus', China and Egypt, as well as of the mysterious Mayan people in Central America, to name but a few. The swastika may be seen in old Orthodox icons. It is the symbol of the Sun, success, happiness and creativity. Correspondingly, a backwards ('left-facing') swastika symbolises darkness and destruction — the 'night-time Sun' of the dwellers of ancient Rus'.

Both swastikas were used, as may be seen on ancient ornaments — in particular, on the Aryan jars found around

⁵*cosmogonic* — relating to cosmogony, the astrophysical study (or a theory or model) of the origin and evolution of the Universe.

⁶*clockwise movement of the Sun* — that is, as seen from the Northern Hemisphere.

⁷*Upper Paleolithic period* — a period of between 40,000 and 10,000 years ago (also known as the late Stone Age, particularly in reference to Africa), before the advent of agriculture.

Arkaim. This has a deep significance. Day takes the place of night, light the place of darkness, and a new birth takes the place of death — and this is the natural order of things in the Universe. Hence in antiquity there was no such thing as a ‘good’ or ‘bad’ swastika — they were perceived as a unified entity (like the energy of *yin* and *yang*⁸ in the Orient).

Arkaim was outwardly beautiful: the ideal circular city marked by distinctive gate-towers, burning torches and a beautifully formed façade — probably featuring some kind of meaningful sacral pattern. Everything in Arkaim, after all, was fraught with meaning.

Each dwelling was attached on one side to either the outer or inner wall, and faced either the main ring road or the central plaza. In the improvised ‘entrance-hall’ to each dwelling was a special watercourse, which emptied into the ditch under the main street. The ancient Aryans were thus provided with a sewer system. Not only that, but each dwelling had its own well, furnace and a small cupola-shaped storage area.

From each well, above the water-level, two earthen pipes branched out. One led to the furnace, the other to the storage area. What for? Quite brilliant, actually. We all know that if you glance down a well, you will invariably feel a current of cool air. So, in the Aryan furnaces this cool air, passing through an earthen pipe, created such a strong draft that it was capable of melting bronze with no need for bellows. There was a furnace like that in every dwelling, and all the ancient blacksmiths had to do was to perfect their craft and compete with their artistic rivals! The other earthen pipe leading to the storage area ensured a lower temperature there.

⁸ *yin, yang* — the two opposite (though complementary) principles of Chinese philosophy (see footnote 2 in Book 7, Chapter 23: “Significant books”).

The famous Russian astroarchæologist Konstantin Konstantinovich Bystrushkin researched Arkaim as an astronomical observatory and came to the following conclusion:

Arkaim is not just a complex installation, but it is subtle in its complexity. In examining its schematics, one can easily see parallels with the well-known Stonehenge monument in England. For example, the diameter of the inner circle of Arkaim is always reported as being exactly 85 metres. In fact, it is a circle with two radiuses — 40 metres and 43.2 metres. (Try drawing it!) Compare that to the radius of Stonehenge's Aubrey Hole ring,⁹ which is also 43.2 metres! Stonehenge and Arkaim are positioned at approximately the same latitude, and both are at the centre of a bowl-shaped valley. The distance between them is almost 4,000 km...

Researchers have determined that on the basis of all the known facts, Arkaim amounts to a *horizon observatory*. Why a 'horizon' observatory, specifically? Because the measurements and observations made there are based on the moment of the rising and setting of the Sun and the Moon on the horizon. The recording of the moment of 'disengagement' (or 'touch-down') of the lower edge of the disc on the horizon allows the accurate determination of the place of this event. If we keep track of sunrises on a daily basis, we shall note that the actual point of sunrise shifts from day to day. Reaching its northern limit on 22 June, this point then moves south to its opposite apogee on 22 December. This is part of the cosmic order.

That means there are four visible points of observation of the Sun each year — two points of sunrise (on 22 June and

⁹*Aubrey Hole ring* — a ring of 56 pits ('holes') thought to have held posts forming a timber circle — named after the poet and antiquary John Aubrey (1626-1697) who discovered them in the seventeenth century.

22 December) and two corresponding points of sunset on the western horizon. Add to these two more points — namely, sunrise and sunset during the equinox (22 March and 22 September). This offered a sufficiently accurate determination of the length of a year. However a year is made up of a whole host of singular events, and these can be determined with the aid of that other celestial body, namely, the Moon. Regardless of the complexity involved in its observation, people of old knew the laws of its movement across the empyrean. Here are a few of them:

(1) The full moon which occurs closest to 22 June is observed at the point of the winter solstice (22 December) and vice-versa.

(2) Lunar events can be observed near the points of the solstice on a nineteen-year cycle ('high' and 'low' Moon).

As an observatory, Arkaim allowed astronomers to follow the events of the Moon. It is possible to note eighteen astronomical events just on these huge circular walls alone! Six of them are connected with the Sun and twelve with the Moon (including the 'high' and 'low' Moon). By comparison, researchers at Stonehenge were able to identify only fifteen cosmic events.

In addition to information about these amazing factual events, the following data were obtained: the Arkaim unit of measurement of length is 80 cm. The centre of the inner circle shows a displacement from the centre of the outer circle by a factor of 5.25 Arkaim units, which is close to the Moon's orbital inclination: $5^{\circ}9'$ plus or minus 10 minutes. In Bystrushkin's opinion, this reflects the correlation between the orbits of the Moon and the Sun (for the terrestrial observer). Correspondingly, Arkaim's outer circle is dedicated to the Moon, its inner circle to the Sun. Not only that, but astroarchæological measurements have shown a link between some of Arkaim's parameters and the wobbling of the Earth's

axis — this is getting into some pretty sophisticated science, even in terms of modern astronomy.

And so we see that by any stretch of the imagination Arkaim hardly falls under the category of ‘city’.

Its extremely small rooms offer no accommodation for families, but serve as an ideal space for philosophical reflections. Historians know that in ancient times so-called ‘wise-men’ were considered to be scientists and teachers. Consequently, it is possible that Arkaim, as one of the most celebrated scientific centres, could have belonged exclusively to these ‘wise-men’. There were simply no other scientists around in those times.

It is also known that the wise-men devised and adjusted their rites on the basis of their knowledge of the Cosmos.

The question is: what has become of these unique rites today? What kind of obscurantism has destroyed them or is concealing them from people’s view?



What is the message of Sungir?

And now I should like to bring to your attention some even more sensational news, eclipsing that of even the pyramids of Egypt or the ruins of Ancient Rome.

This information is also needed, as Anastasia’s grandfather said, in order to better understand the phenomena and knowledge of the Universe prevalent in our ancient forebears’ time. And for that we have to delve as deeply as possible into history.

The Siberian recluse said, furthermore:

"If your thought can dig down to three thousand years ago, you will begin to gradually feel the knowledge of three millennia. If it can go as deep as five thousand years, then five millennia, though not everything you discover will be comprehensible to you. You actually need a minimum of nineteen thousand years."

This attempt to dig into our country's historical past seemed to me utterly unfeasible. I was already prepared to go off to India or Tibet where, it is said, one can learn more about our ancestors than here at home. But, as it turned out, there was no need to go anywhere. Everything was available right here, and now I invite everyone reading these lines to cast his thought about our forebears more than nineteen thousand years back in time.

The archæological finds I am about to describe were made (by mere chance) on the outskirts of the city of Vladimir, which, according to official sources, is approximately 1,015 years old.

In 1955, while excavating a clay pit mine for the Vladimir Ceramics Factory, Alexander F. Nacharov discovered in one of the buckets the bones of some very large animal, which had been resting at a depth of three metres. Archæologists were informed about the discovery.

The first excavations thereafter simply astounded the scientists. Buried on the site were the remains of people, jewellery, clothing ornamentation and everyday objects, all testifying to some kind of ancient culture. Further investigation confirmed that our ancestors had arrived on the banks of the Klyazma River¹⁰ as early as the Old Stone Age, approximately 25,000 years ago.

¹⁰*Klyazma River* — a tributary of the Oka, which in turn flows into the Volga at Nizhny Novgorod east of Moscow. Vladimir is one of the major cities on the banks of the Klyazma.

Now somebody could be wondering whether they might have run about on all fours, dressed in home-made skins and carrying clubs! Not at all. The scientists were amazed by another finding.

On the skeletons themselves or close by were a whole lot of jewellery and ornaments which aided in reconstructing the appearance of the clothing worn by these ancient people — something similar to either overalls or a perfectly civilised dress.

The finding is such that if we are not going to relegate these remains to the category of buried extra-terrestrials, then we shall have to completely revise our whole historical outlook on the world.

In one of its halls the Vladimir State Museum of History and Ethnography mounted a special exhibition dedicated to these unique findings. It put out a booklet stating that the Sungir site is the most interesting archæological monument in Russia, and is known to archæologists the world over. It has hosted a number of international scientific conferences.

Sungir represents one of the northernmost settlements of Ancient Man in the Vladimir Region on the Great Russian Plain. In terms of richness of both objects and state of preservation of such ancient remains, it has no compeer anywhere in the world.

Thanks to the collaborative efforts of archæologists, geologists, paleontologists and paleobotanists, we have a fairly clear picture of how people lived back then, in this incredibly distant time-period.

Here, on the edge of a glacier, was where the tundra used to begin, dotted here and there with islands of fir, pine, birch and alder groves. The animal world was quite diversified.

According to the booklet, “ancient Sungirians hunted the reindeer, wild horse, Arctic fox, wolverine, bison, brown bear, wolf, Arctic hare; they also went after the black grouse, junglefowl and herring gull. And of course, they hunted the

mammoth — a huge animal, now extinct, almost four metres tall and weighing six tonnes. This represented for them a much sought-after trophy: meat, skins (indispensable in constructing dwellings) and tusks (a solid and superb material for the preparation of both weapons and ornaments.”

The inventory of objects made from bone and horn is most interesting: shaft adjusters, hoes, spearheads, arrowheads and beads from mammoth tusks, jewellery made from the fangs of the Arctic fox. A small silhouetted figure of a large-headed horse came to be recognised as a rare example of primitive art. This famous Sungir horse was decorated with tiny dotted ornaments and red ochre. The number of dots on the figure — a multiple of five — testifies to the use of a quinary counting system among inhabitants of the site. A seven-based system points to the knowledge possessed by people living 25,000 years ago. But it is the unique burial sites of these ancient people that have brought global fame to Sungir.

In 1964, in a heavy layer of ochre-coloured rock, was found the skull of a woman; lower still were the remains of an elderly man. On his chest was a pendant made from a pebble, while on his arms were twenty-five plate bracelets made from mammoth tusks. In addition, on the skull, all along the arms, legs and torso almost 3,500 beads were arranged in rows. The pattern of their arrangement on the skeleton allowed scientists to reconstruct the embroidered costume of this ancient Sungirian. It was reminiscent of the fur clothing worn by Arctic peoples today. At the bottom of the shallow grave they discovered a knife and some kind of scraper made of flint.

Just as much a treasure was the next burial site, unearthed some five years later.

This grave contained the remains of an adult body, but without a skull. Beside it lay a necklace of mammoth-tusk beads, a ring and a pair of reindeer antlers. But farther back, at 65 cm below the upper grave, were found two skeletons of children.

A boy of twelve or thirteen and a girl between seven and nine had been placed in the grave in a stretched position, their heads pressed tightly against each other. Children on their way to 'the next world' were accompanied by hunting weapons made from mammoth tusks: eleven darts, 3 daggers and two spears made out of split and straightened tusks, one 2.5 metres and the other 1.5 metres long. The grave also yielded mammoth-tusk 'rods', very expressive figurines of a horse and a mammoth, carved discs of an apparently ceremonial nature and connected with the worship of the Sun and the Moon. The children's clothing, too, was embroidered with thousands of little beads, and fastened across the chest with pins made of bones. The back of the costume had been outfitted with threads of beads in the shape of animal tails.

This finding testifies to the complex rite of burial and the developed religious beliefs of the ancient people of the Stone Age. One may confidently assume that they believed in the afterlife.

Multidisciplinary archæological investigations have been going on at Sungir, with a few interruptions, ever since 1956. For almost twenty years the project was under the supervision of the famous archæologist Dr Otto Nikolaevich Bader.¹¹ Anthropologist M. M. Gerasimov,¹² along with his students

¹¹*Otto Nikolaevich Bader* (1903-1979) — an internationally recognised archæologist of Soviet Russia, accorded membership in the Italian Institute of Prehistory and the Society of Prehistoric Archæology in France. As early as 1924 he was appointed head of the Archæological Division of Moscow's Central Industrial District Museum, and, in 1931, Academic Secretary of Moscow State University's Institute and Museum of Anthropology. He went on to hold a number of other prominent positions in Russian academe.

¹²*Mikhail Mikhaïlovich Gerasimov* (1907-1970) — a prominent Soviet anthropologist, archæologist and sculptor, who specialised in the re-creation of the outward appearance of a human being on the basis of skeletal remains. He has created reconstructed portraits of historical figures such as Yaroslav the Wise, Tamerlane, Ivan the Terrible and Schiller.

G. V. Lebedinskaya¹³ and T. S. Surnina succeeded in reconstructing the external appearance of the ancient Sungirians.

As is known, anthropologists are often able to reconstruct a person's face with sufficient accuracy on the basis of the skull. This offered a rare opportunity indeed to gaze upon the faces of ancient people — an opportunity I decided to take advantage of. A wise, intelligent-looking face on the adult male. A slightly sad expression on the young girl's face, a thoughtful one on the boy's.

And yet the presumptions about hunting, and especially the mammoth, I believe, were not entirely accurate.

I brought Anastasia's grandfather to this unique exhibition in the Vladimir museum. The old fellow slowly made his way around the displays, without stopping at any of them. Then he stood in the middle of the hall and bowed four times, each time shifting his position by ninety degrees. When I told him about the scientists' conclusions, he began to refute a good deal of it, explaining:

"These people, Vladimir, never hunted mammoths. Mammoths were their household animals, and a very great help to families, also a way of transporting heavy loads. They performed a greater variety of tasks than elephants do today in India, which are controlled by *mahouts*, or drivers.

"Standing on a mammoth, the Sungirians could gather fruit from very tall trees and store them in woven bags and baskets, and then carry them to wherever they liked.

"In the domain glades, the mammoths cleared out young underbrush from the forest encroaching on the glades or, depending on the task assigned, would shake and then pull

¹³Galina Viacheslavovna Lebedinskaya (1924-) — a specialist in remains reconstruction. Following Gerasimov's death in 1970, she succeeded him as head of the Waxed Reconstruction Laboratory at the Ethnographical Institute of the Soviet Academy of Sciences.

up trees so as to enlarge the glade. Whenever people had to move from one place to another, they would load their belongings, utensils and food supplies onto the mammoth.

"This was a very kind and industrious household animal. Even a small child could put his fingers around the end of its trunk and lead it about at will. Indeed, children often played with the mammoth, making it suck up water into its trunk and then give them a shower. The mammoth took great pleasure in watching how the youngsters jumped and squealed with joy.

"The mammoth was especially delighted, too, when his wool was combed out and removed by a special, rake-like instrument. A Man would wash the wool, dry it and then use it for his own purposes, for example, in making a bed.

"There was absolutely no need for these people to *hunt* the mammoth. This can be deduced just from the information available in the booklet, which contains quite a few contradictory statements."

"Why contradictory?"

"Think about it. They list all sorts of wild game which could easily be caught in sufficient numbers with the aid of special traps. If a Man killed a mammoth, which weighs six tonnes, he could not possibly eat all its meat right off."

"But what if there were a whole lot of people?"

"There couldn't have been that many. Back in those times people didn't live packed tight together the way they do now in cities or towns. Each family tribe had its own lands. Each family had their own territory, their own home. On an area of three square kilometres might be living fewer than a hundred people. Even collectively, they couldn't eat a six-tonne mammoth in just a few days, even if they didn't consume anything but meat during that time. The rotting meat would start to decompose and attract a huge number of insects. It could have started an epidemic."

"But maybe they invited people from other territories to some kind of feast?"

"What sense would there be in travelling several kilometres just to eat meat which there was enough of at home?"

"But if you say the mammoth's decomposing carcass could run the risk of provoking an epidemic, the very same threat could be posed by a household mammoth when it died."

"Vladimir, a mammoth would never die in the family surroundings. When it got old and felt death approaching, it would walk a little ways from the house and trumpet three times, before heading off to a cemetery for mammoths, where it died. You should have known that yourself, as that is what wild elephants do in India today. Before they die they trumpet and then leave the herd."

"So that means we have a very distorted understanding of how the ancient people fed themselves?"

"Yes, that's right. Perhaps it's an attempt to justify your current barbarity in regard to the treatment of animals. The farther you go back into history, the fewer people you'll encounter eating meat. They had a sufficient supply of growing things to sustain themselves. As for animals, they took from them only what the animals themselves gave to Man — milk and eggs, for example. Meat could have been harmful to the stomachs of the first people.

"Another argument in favour of the premise that hunting was not a basic source of food for primitive people is its illogicality by comparison with other ways of obtaining food."

"What other ways?"

"From tamed, domesticated animals. Picture to yourself a Man whose household includes a female mammoth, a cow and a goat, all of which can be milked, yielding a daily supply of top-quality fresh produce. This Man's household also includes domesticated fowl: a goose, a duck, a chicken, all of which provide eggs with little effort on his part. He has the

opportunity of gathering honey and pollen from bees, and a great many root vegetables and edible herbs are also at hand.

"Then all of a sudden it appears as though the Man is going out of his mind. He kills all his domestic animals — which, apart from everything else, have also been guarding him when he is asleep — eats them and begins hunting for wild game, thereby putting himself in danger without guaranteeing himself and his family a regular supply of fresh produce.

"In place of friendly surroundings and the love expressed to him by his household animals, he ends up with nothing but an aggressive environment in which it is virtually impossible, one might say, for his household to survive."

"But did the first people really begin right off to domesticate and train their animals? Maybe that came along at a later period?"

"There would have been no later period for Man if he had taken an aggressive stance from the start. You must be acquainted, after all, Vladimir, with situations where an infant alone in the forest may be fed even by carnivorous wolves — the very same forest where a pack of wolves could tear an adult to pieces. What would account for the discrepancy in their attitude toward Man?"

"I really can't say."

"Because in the first instance the infant Man has no aggression, while in the second we have aggression and fear which create unease in the surrounding environment.

"The first people had no sense of fear or aggression. It was love that was dominant in them, along with a genuine interest in the world around them. Consequently, it was no effort to domesticate or train animals and birds. Their primary concern was to determine the purpose of every creature they encountered on the Earth. This they did. As far as the animals go, you already know that they find their own highest benefit in Man's feelings of love and care for them.

"Meat was first consumed by a less-than-complete Man, one drained of the energy of Love. It seems that he either went out of his mind or was infected with the most terrible disease — a disease which has come down to the present day."

"But what connection can there be between *love* and Man's first consumption of meat?"

"There is a direct connection. A Man living in love is incapable of killing."

"Possibly. But can you determine why these children died 25,000 years ago? Why were they buried in such an unusual manner, head to head like that?"

"I could tell you, of course, but it would be a very long story. Besides, it is not important for you to know *why* they were overcome by death, but *for what purpose*."

"For what purpose?"

"There you go again, Vladimir, constantly asking questions. Too lazy to think for yourself. Only don't blame me for speaking like this, the way you did back in the taiga when you let resentment take over. Think, instead, on the whole point of my telling you things. What I say will bring you more harm than good if you don't begin to think for yourself."

"I speak, and you listen, and instead of working out your own conclusions in your thought, you are merely taking note of mine. You have set yourself up a goal of finding conditions in the past under which love could remain with people forever, and then reintroducing them in this present day. That's fine, the path is correct, and the goal is the most important of all."

"You are trying to determine how many ages ago love began to dwell with people. Look: here is a date right before your eyes. Think about it. Right in front of you lie two child skeletons. Their death at such a young age is meaningless unless people can realise what important information is concealed in their burial."

"Their death will acquire meaning if you retrieve this information right now."

I didn't resent the old fellow for his remark on my laziness of mind. I had long realised that he was using some kind of methods of his own, trying again and again to teach me how to control my thoughts by alternative means. But I, after all, did not go through the same school as they, training their thought from childhood. I went to an ordinary school, which quite possibly serves to do just the opposite — to switch thought off.

So here I am standing in front of these child skeletons, straining myself mentally, without being able to grasp how I can look on them and learn at least something about the love that existed 25,000 years ago — if it existed at all at that time.

"It did exist," the old fellow suddenly said.

"What made you decide that? There's not a word about love on the museum signs."

"Not a word, but so what? Look carefully. Judging by the skeletons, these are children. The boy is twelve and a half. The girl, she's eight.

"On their skeletons are hundreds of bone beads. On the basis of their arrangement your scientists have determined what kind of clothing the children were wearing. But is that all the bone beads can tell us?"

"What else can they tell us?"

"That their parents, Vladimir, loved these children very much. They loved their children and they loved each other. Only loving parents could get involved in such time-consuming ornamentation of their children's clothing. We can also tell that they had more than enough free time for artistic pursuits and for designing and then making fine clothing.

"Note that the objects found in the grave include absolutely no weapons capable of killing."

"What about the darts? Aren't those weapons?"

"Of course not. And they're not even harpoons for catching fish, since there are no barbs on the ends. The end of the object they've called a 'dart' is not even sharp. A thin, lightweight dart like that could hardly kill or even wound any creature."

"Then what was this object used for?"

"For training and controlling animals. See how it resembles a stick animal trainers use today? Elephant drivers, for example, use sticks like that to control their charges."

"But why did they need to make them out of bone? They could have also taken a real stick and not wasted time straightening out the bone and putting ornaments onto it."

"A wooden stick couldn't last very long. Animals, on the other hand, get accustomed to a single object — its shape and even the smell it acquires from contact with the master's hand."

"Right, then — everything you say sounds rather convincing, but there are other objects which resemble arrowheads. And arrows were meant for killing."

"In the case of these specific people, who were not of the very earliest period of human life on the Earth, arrows were intended for scaring away carnivorous beasts when they attacked."

"There are also some objects that look like hoes. These, indeed, were instruments for planting seeds and digging up roots."

"But the jewellery? Look, this necklace is made from the fangs of an Arctic fox. And scientists assume that the clothing was made from leather. So, they killed animals after all!"

"Your scientists are right about their clothing being made of leather, but there was absolutely no need to kill any animals for this purpose. There were reptiles which shed their old skin on a regular basis. Reptiles might die for some reason, and then ants would eat out their insides, leaving the skin untouched, which turned out to be very useful for making clothing. Given

such circumstances, it would be silly to waste time on killing an animal, cutting up the carcass, processing and drying the skin or softening it. What for? Since it was possible to acquire a ready-made skin in an ideal condition. In the Divine Nature all Man's needs have been provided for in advance. As for the necklace from a fox's fangs, it was a lot simpler to take them from a skeleton already worked over and dried by Nature."

At this point I'm going to interrupt, for a moment, Anastasia's grandfather's account about the archæologists' unique findings.

In the booklet put out by the Vladimir State Museum there are drawings showing two exhibit halls — the Sungir Architectural Park and the Sungir Museum Complex. It mentions that international conferences have been organised around these unique findings.

However, I would not advise any great haste to visit the excavation site of this ancient civilisation. There are no actual pavilions on the site — only the remains of unfinished construction. And the archæological work is not proceeding at any intensive pace. The State has no funds for such important projects. They are going ahead, one might say, thanks to the level of enthusiasm both of the scientists involved and of the local authorities.

I arrived at this unique place on a weekend. In one of the pits I saw two men taking soil samples from the side of the pit and carefully placing them into plastic bags. They turned out to be workers from the State Archæological Institute. They confirmed that Sungir is considered the richest archæological site for the study of Ancient Man anywhere in the world.

The Vladimir Museum exhibition is the only one of its kind in Russia. They said that tourists sometimes visited the Sungir excavation site, but mainly tourists from Japan, since there is an even fuller exhibition on Sungir at the Tokyo National Archæological Museum.

It seemed pretty strange that the people in the Land of the Rising Sun show more respect to our ancient forebears living on our country's territory than we do ourselves. Thank you, Japanese friends, for protecting the culture of our joint forebears.

We talk about Russia's lofty mission, about spirituality and the need to support the national image, but what support can we talk about if foreign tourists see our relationship to history through their own eyes?

Well, the only thing we can do is hope that possibly our more civilised descendants will learn what secrets still remain to be discovered in Sungir.

I managed to find out that 25,000 years ago our forebears were civilised people, who knew how to love passionately and preserve love forever.



A family-centred society¹⁴

To all appearances, in order to bring back lost effective traditions and rites capable of preserving love in families, it would seem necessary to obtain full information about the life of our forebears.

To this end we must delve even deeper into our historical past, right down to the family-community-centred society,

¹⁴Here and throughout this section of the chapter, the Russian term for *family* is *rod*/*rodovoi*, which refers not just to the *family* in any particular moment of time, but rather to the *tribe*, *clan* or *family line*, which includes all forebears in addition to the present generation and all future descendants. See also footnote 7 in Book 4, Chapter 33: "School, or the lessons of the gods".

when a husband and wife who loved each other created a friendly family community together with their children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

In today's world a husband and wife simply cannot hold on to even their closest relatives — their children. No sooner do their offspring approach adulthood than they try to get out from under their parents' wing. They go off to live in a university residence, or rent an apartment — often at considerable expense, but they still go.

And we're not just talking about children! Many couples separate even before children come along, or shortly after their appearance.

The family-community-centred society existed many millennia in Rus' before the princes came along. It was characterised by an absence of divorce and stronger family units, in comparison with subsequent social structures in our history. Only genuine love is capable of starting a family line. In the past it was much easier for grown children to leave the family than today. I'm talking about the early period in Rus', before the arrival of the princes.

If two young people who loved each other weren't happy with their relationships with their parents, they could leave home and set up their own dwelling on whatever territory they took a fancy to. They could start by nourishing themselves on what they found in the forest; then they would till the ground and establish a household. But they didn't go away. That means the founders of the family line treated them with understanding and love.

We need to study this period and from it draw into our modern way of life grains of logic capable of helping build strong families today.

But how, by what means can we access information about this era in people's lives, when Russian history describes only the Christian period?

Another factor necessitating an investigation into our people's historical past is the importance of determining whether the ancient rites and culture disappeared all by themselves, having outlived their usefulness, or whether the traditions of many millennia were deliberately destroyed.

If they disappeared all on their own, then there is no point in digging into the historical past, since the people themselves rejected their ancient culture, not seeing it as useful, which means it would not be accepted today either.

If, on the other hand, the ancient traditions were deliberately destroyed, then we must look into the question of by whom and for what purpose. We must seek them out, find them and present them to society for evaluation.

It is possible the ancient rites and traditions conceal within themselves such important secrets of human existence that without uncovering them we shall continue to move toward an abyss, die out and torment ourselves with family strife. We often talk about large-scale wars. Family conflict, however, is often more painful for each of its participants than news about war in Iraq or events in Israel.

Recalling everything I knew about Ancient Russian history, I decided that, strange as it might seem at first glance, the only thread leading through the vast labyrinth of historical falsehoods was the conqueror Genghis Khan¹⁵ — in other words, the three-hundred-year period of the so-called 'Tataro-Mongol Yoke' in Rus'. Why? Because this period began shortly after the Christianisation of Rus', when the traditions of our ancestors had not yet been completely annihilated.

¹⁵*Genghis Khan* (Mongolian: *Chinggis Khayan*; real name: Temujin, 1162–1227) — the founder, reformer and unifier of the State of Mongolia (1206). After uniting the nomadic tribes of north-east and central Asia, he organised campaigns of conquest throughout Asia and Eastern Europe, thus forming the largest contiguous empire in world history.

Not only that, but Genghis Khan was just about the brightest, most interesting and enlightened personality of his time. It is not only that he and his descendants conquered half the world, but it is fascinating to see how they did it.

I can tell you right off that their army played only a secondary role in this process. We know from various historical sources that Genghis Khan sent expeditions to many lands, as far away as China and India, which supplied him with wise-men. He spent a great deal of time conversing with men of wisdom. He was attempting to determine the purpose of human existence on the Earth, and to find immortality. In other words, he was gathering the wisdom of various peoples and could well have possessed information about the social structure of Ancient Rus'.

And it turned out, in fact, that he did. I am convinced that it was thanks to this information that his family, his sons and great-grandchildren were able to hold the so-called élite of many countries in subjection over the centuries. And I mean exactly that — it wasn't countries or their peoples that he held in subjection, but their élites that were usurping the peoples of these countries.

Somebody might wonder what on earth the knowledge of ancient family traditions and love-preserving rites has to do with the successful subjugation of states.

You shouldn't be surprised — there is a simple direct relationship, and such knowledge is more powerful than millions of soldiers' swords or even the most state-of-the-art weaponry.

I shall not bother describing the whole three-hundred-year period of the Tataro-Mongolian hold on Rus'. I shall cite just one episode — albeit a very typical and interesting episode — the subjugation of the Vladimir-Suzdal principality, on which I have collected information from various sources. Let's try to arrive at some conclusions together.



A mysterious manoeuvre

Chronicles, modern historical sources and church literature all talk about a mysterious and even secretive manoeuvre on the part of Batu Khan¹⁶, grandson to Genghis Khan, on the outskirts of the city of Vladimir in 1238. What is the mystery here? This is how the chronicles tell it:

“Having taken Riazan¹⁷ in 1237, in the spring of 1238 Batu Khan and his cavalry pushed their way into the city of Suzdal...” As subsequently reported in a multitude of ecclesiastical sources, he burnt Suzdal, exterminated part of the population and took the remaining part captive. A lot is said in these sources about the “atrocities committed against the people”.

Secular historians, on the other hand, describe the situation more accurately and impartially. Thus, for example, in the materials available in the Vladimir-Suzdal State Museum the event is described as follows:

¹⁶*Batu Khan* (also known as *Baty*, 1205-1255) — the son of Jochi and grandson of Genghis Khan, who inherited the leadership of the so-called *Golden Horde* (Mongolian: *Altan Ordyn Uls*; Russian: *Zolotaya Orda*) — part of the Mongol Empire that covered much of present-day Russian territory (along with Ukraine, Kazakhstan and the Caucasus) for almost three centuries, beginning in the 1240s.

¹⁷*Riazan* — a city on the Oka River south-east of Moscow (see footnote 6 in Book 5, Chapter 17: “Questions and answers”).

The Tatars set up their camps at the city of Vladimir, while they themselves went and took Suzdal, and plundered the Holy Mother of God (cathedral), and burnt the prince's court, and burnt the monastery of Saint Dmitry, and plundered others; and the old monks and nuns, and the priests, and the blind, and the lame, and the deaf, and the labour-weary and all other people were slaughtered, while the young monks, and monks, and priests, and their wives, and the deacons with their wives, and their daughters, and their sons — all these were led away to the Tatars' camps, and they themselves went to Vladimir.

As we can see, Batu Khan did not take anywhere near the whole population captive. And he killed off the old high-ranking monks and took the young ones captive. He didn't burn and plunder the whole city, but only the prince's residence along with Suzdal's churches and monasteries.

And now let us try to solve a superhistorical mystery. Why (as the document says) did the Tatars "set up their camps at the city of Vladimir, while they themselves went and took Suzdal"?

Any military historian — as, indeed, any modern army commander — will tell you that this manoeuvre completely goes against standard military tactics.

To establish a camp under the walls of a major fortified city and then leave it and move one's troops to a smaller target — that is tantamount to suicide.

The distance between the cities of Vladimir and Suzdal at the time was equivalent to 35 kilometres. With the roads rendered impassable by the spring rains, it was a good day's journey on horseback.

The taking of Suzdal required a minimum of several more days, and then a day's journey back.

It wouldn't have taken any more than a day for the soldiers defending Vladimir to go out of their fortified city on a foray

and rout the defenceless enemy camp. All they had to do was seize the spare horses, the spare quivers of arrows, the supplies, the wall-storming ladders and stone-throwing devices, and they would have shorn the enemy not only of the possibility of launching an attack on them, but of their battle-readiness in general.

But they never went out. Why not? Perhaps they didn't know that Batu Khan's troops had left the camp? But they knew. They could have easily seen that from their battle-ments; besides, their scouts would have reported it.

Possibly Batu Khan's forces were in such great numbers that more than enough guards had been left behind to repel an attack on the camp?

This is the way historians initially explained it. They said the Golden Horde's troops numbered almost a million. Then they changed their minds and reduced their estimate to 130,000, some even to as few as 30,000.

Naturally it is tempting to explain one's defeat by citing the enemy's significantly superior numbers. More objective scholars have begun to say that moving a million-strong army at that time was an absolute impossibility.

A million swordsmen together with equipment would mean three million horses. If a herd like that were kept in one place, even in the summertime, they would die of hunger, since the grass all around would be trampled down. And in the wintertime no amount of feed supplies would be enough.

So the figure was reduced to either 130,000 or 30,000. A humiliating figure indeed. With a scant hundred and thirty thousand men Batu Khan quietly went about conquering Russian principalities and whole countries too.

But even this figure is inflated. To subjugate the Russian princes of that time using the knowledge left by Genghis Khan to his descendants, there was simply no need for even a fifty-thousand-strong army. All that was required was knowledge

of the way of life of the Russian people, Russian families, and the proper strategy based on such knowledge.

After setting up camp at the city of Vladimir, Batu Khan did not go with a whole army to Suzdal, but sent a small detachment to take it. This is why the people of Vladimir did not leave their fortified city to rout the camp and destroy the enemy's military facilities.

Do you know how many days and nights it took for Batu Khan's small detachment to conquer one of Rus's spiritual capitals of the time, surrounded as it was by more than a half-dozen monastery fortresses — this legendary city of Suzdal?

No time at all. He simply arrived, entered the city and burnt the prince's residence. The prince, meanwhile, had fled together with his armed garrison. It was no effort to cut down every last one of the high-ranked clergy and take the young monks captive. And the Mongols later caught up with the prince and his garrison at the Sit' River and destroyed them too.¹⁸

How could that be? someone may wonder. Where were the brave Russian people, their indomitable and freedom-loving spirit?

I can tell you right off that there was nothing wrong with the Russian people and their spirit. Logic suggests that the people applauded Batu Khan's small detachment on its return journey from Suzdal. They served *kvas* and *braga*¹⁹ to the warriors along the whole route back to their camp at Vladimir.

The reason is that the people of that time did not look upon Suzdal as *their* city. Rather, they viewed its royal inhabitants as traitors and its clergy as foreign aggressors and enslavers.

¹⁸This battle took place 4 March 1238. Prince Yuri Vsevolodovich was beaten and beheaded by the detachment commander Burundai, who later presented the prince's head to Batu Khan as a trophy.

¹⁹*kvas* — a Russian fermented drink made from rye bread or vegetables; *braga* — a mild Russian alcoholic beverage.

This led to the flare-up of a number of rebellions on the part of the people against unbearable oppression.

Documents at the Vladimir-Suzdal State Museum put it this way:

By the end of the thirteenth century Suzdal had eight monasteries. Founded by the princes and representatives of the Christian religion, they played a major role in assimilating new territories and served as fortresses in the event of enemy aggression. ...

In the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries the Church owned a third of the best lands in the country and was endeavouring to subjugate the power of the Grand Princes to itself. From the end of the fifteenth century on, the State made repeated attempts to limit the landholdings of monasteries and churches, along with attempts at secularisation (in other words, complete eradication). The question of land provoked two ideological tendencies within the Church: *Josephism*²⁰ and the *Non-Possessors Movement*.²¹ The first defended the monasteries' property interests, while the second emphasised the idea of inner self-perfection and condemned the monasteries' acquisitive pursuits. The ideological leader of the Josephites

²⁰*Josephism* (Russian: *Iosiflianstvo*, also known as the *Possessors Movement*) — a movement defending the ownership of land by the Russian Orthodox Church, led by Iosif (Joseph) Volotsky (or Volokamsky; secular name: *Ivan Sanin*, 1439–1515), later recognised as a saint. Not to be confused with the 20th-century use of the same term, designating a movement opposing the Russian Orthodox Church's kowtowing to communist authority following the 1917 revolution (in this case named after Metropolitan Iosif [Joseph] of Leningrad).

²¹*Non-Possessors Movement* (Russian: *nestiazbatel'stvo*) — an opposition movement to Josephism, rejecting church land-ownership, led by *Nil Sorsky* (secular name: Nikolai Fedorovich Maikov, 1433–1508) and a Greek immigrant, *Maxim Grek* (secular name: *Mikhail Trivolis*, 1475–1556).

was Father Joseph, abbot of the Volokolamsky Monastery, while the Non-Possessors Movement was championed by a monk of the Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery, Nil Sorsky. The monasteries and clergy of Suzdal, as major landholders, came down solidly on the side of the Josephites. However, in the sixteenth century the authority of the Grand Princes did not manage to carry out its intended secularisation of the Church's wealthy landholdings, which continued to increase, even though on a limited scale.

Quite a trick! A third of Russian lands ended up in the hands of the Constantinople-derived²² clergy and its puppets. Monasteries were transformed into large-scale slave-owners. And it wasn't the monks who tilled the ground and raised cattle, but the peasant serfs.

The princes were already trying to reclaim part of the country they had lost. But that was by no means easy!

And just how was this 'enriching' the souls of the peasants, whose primordial family lands had now become monasterial property at one fell swoop? What was offered to people in exchange for their centuries-old traditions and rites, which were now labelled 'barbarian'? The same archival documents show what happened here:

Fees and penalties imposed on the peasant serfs of the Pokrovsky Nunnery in 1653

From each household — two altyns,²³ a chicken and lamb's wool from the first shearing.

²²*Constantinople* (original name: *Byzantium*, now *Istanbul*) — the seat of the Greek Orthodox Church, from which the Russian Orthodox Church was derived.

²³*altyn* — a mediæval coin worth three kopeks (derived from the Tatar word for 'gold'). A kopek is worth 1/100 of a rouble.

On the purchase of a:

Horse — 2 dengas.²⁴

Cow — 1 denga.

On the sale of:

Grain, horses, cows, hay — 1 altyn for each rouble received.

Log houses — 1 denga per internal corner.

For settling disputes:

Regarding field-lands — 2 altyns, 2 dengas.

Regarding household lands — 4 altyns, 2 dengas.

Court fees:

For travel to the site of a dispute — 1 denga per verst.²⁵

For travel in cases of acquittal — 2 dengas per verst.

From the guilty party — 1 altyn for each rouble assessed.

From the vindicated party — 7 altyns, 2 dengas.

For taking an oath — 4 altyns, 2 dengas.

Wedding fees:

From the groom — 3 altyns, 3 dengas.

From the bride for a table — 2 altyns, 2 dengas.

From a groom from outside the district — 2 grivnas.²⁶

From holiday beer-making

for weddings or funerals — 1 bucket of beer.

²⁴*denga* — a mediæval coin worth half a kopek. The plural of this word (*den'gi*) is the current Russian generic word for 'money'.

²⁵*verst* (Russian: *versta*) — an old Russian measurement of length, approximately equivalent to 1 kilometre.

²⁶*grivna* (also known as *grivennik*) — an old Russian coin worth ten kopeks.

Penalties:

For alcohol distillation for one's self without a permit, or for sale — 5 roubles, a beating with a cane, and arrest.

For consumption of wine except on holidays — 8 altyns, 2 dengas, and a beating with a cane.

And here is a description of the property of the highest-ranked church official:

**List of people and property
belonging to Metropolitan Illarion**

16 elders, 6 overseers in charge of properties, 66 personal bodyguards, 23 servants, 25 singers, 2 sextons, 13 bell-ringers, 59 craftsmen and labourers. In total: 180 persons.

Weaponry numbering 93 pieces, silver dishes weighing 1 pood²⁷ 20 pounds, pewter dishes weighing more than 16 poods, 112 horses belonging to the Metropolitan's horse farm, 5 carriages, 8 sleighs and chariots, 147 books.

(From the inventory of the Metropolitan's household, 1701)

A most extraordinary document. It is free of any kind of historical inaccuracies. It simply provides an impartial inventory of the Metropolitan's household property. However, it also begs a great many questions.

What kind of properties did the Metropolitan have that required the services of six overseers? Why a whole twenty-three servants for one man? And were the ninety-three pieces of weaponry also intended for the conducting of church rites?

²⁷pood (rhymes with 'food') — an old Russian unit of mass approximately equivalent to 16.4 kg. A pood was divided into 40 funt (pounds).

Note that none of this was the monastery's property — it was just the Metropolitan's personal effects. The monastery had its own.

Just who was such a large contingent of guards supposed to protect the Metropolitan from? He had more bodyguards than the first American presidents.

The large contingent of guards, like the high monastery walls, were designed to protect the Metropolitan from the Russian people, of course. The walls of the Suzdal monasteries had no strategic significance in terms of military policy.

But why then do almost all historical sources describe the high monastery walls with their embrasures as fortresses, designed to protect the people from the enemy? Why were not these so-called fortresses capable of holding out for at least a month?

Because they weren't at all designed for defence against any external aggressor, let alone a smart one.

For the soldiers under Genghis Khan's grandson, in any case, such fortifications were no more than a distraction. If the possessors of these mock fortresses had not acceded to the enemy's demand for immediate surrender, the Mongols would have thrown up an embankment a little higher than the walls and dragged their stone-throwing devices up onto it. There are many possible scenarios here. One of them involved putting a bag into the stone-launcher attached to a long rope, and launching the bag over the monastery wall. Before it hit the ground, the bag would become undone, showering the people hiding behind the wall with infected meat. After that, all they had to do was shoot the people as they attempted to escape through the main entrance gate.

The only thing that the high monastery walls served as a protection against was their own people, the peasant serfs — or, rather, the monastery slaves — who from time to time rebelled.

It was none other than the Constantinople clergy who applied their lofty 'spirituality' to the inculcation of serf law²⁸ in Rus'.

One document from the Suzdal Museum archives attests to the following:

Church landholdings prevailed in Suzdal in the seventeenth century, as they had before. Monasteries and the Metropolitan's residence were major feudal landlords, with enormous financial resources at their command, not to mention the free labour of many thousands of peasants.

Thus, the Spaso-Yevfimiev Monastery²⁹ placed fifth among all Russia's church-based feudal landlords. Its prosperity depended wholly upon land grants and contributions. In the second half of the seventeenth century the earlier established fiefdoms did not increase in size, as the inordinate expansion of monastery lands was held in check by the State. The peasants were subject to a double exploitation — first by the landowners (the *corvée* and tribute system) and secondly by the State (taxes payable in both money and kind).

²⁸ *serf law* (Russian: *krepostnoye pravo*) — a feudal system prevalent in Russia (as in other European countries), binding the peasants to the land, subjecting them to the will of the landowners, church and political authorities. In Russia it was introduced by the Law Code (*Sudebnik*) in 1497 and not officially abolished until 1861. Even after abolition, most peasants, being granted no land of their own, had no choice for survival except to continue in their servile relationship with the landowners. Slavery-like conditions persisted throughout the Soviet period: peasants could not leave their village without a special permission from the authorities, and were compelled to do unpaid labour.

²⁹ *Spaso-Yevfimiev Monastery* — one of Suzdal's principal monasteries, founded in 1352 by Boris Konstantinovich, Prince of Suzdal and Nizhegorod, as a fortress designed to protect the city from enemies both within and without.

Or take this quote from a similar document on the history of the Sviato-Pokrovsky Nunnery:³⁰

The full and free life enjoyed by the nuns was made possible by the labours of peasant serfs and the enormous staff of servants; the landholdings of the Pokrovsky Nunnery grew, thanks to rich donations and grants on the part of Russia's most élite families, including princes and tsars.

So there we have it: more lands — more serfs and more wealth.

But let us return to the thirteenth century.

What, then, actually happened with the arrival of Batu Khan's detachment at Suzdal? And where do traditions and love enter the picture?

The population of Suzdal at that time was fewer than 4,000 inhabitants. It consisted mainly of the prince's armed garrison and servants, craftsmen and clergy with their host of unpaid servants, hiding from the people behind the monastery walls.

All around Suzdal and Vladimir lived tens of thousands of peasant families, who were the only ones capable of worthily resisting an aggressor. But they didn't do this, they didn't rise up in arms, they didn't go to the monastery walls to protect the clergy. To put it simply, they hated the clergy. Note that they didn't hate God, only their oppressors. The people loved and revered God.

³⁰*Sviato-Pokrovsky* (lit. 'Holy Veil') Nunnery — situated close to the Spaso-Yefimiev Monastery, founded in 1364 by the then Prince of Suzdal, Andrei Konstantinovich (brother to Boris), in gratitude for protection from a violent storm. It received special attention from the Grand Princes of Moscow, including Vasily III and later Ivan the Terrible (the first to proclaim himself tsar).

It was for this reason that the people didn't rise to the defence of the city of Vladimir.

Batu Khan waited six days before storming Vladimir. He waited until the news spread that it wasn't the people he was taking captive, but their enslavers.

He waited and took the well-fortified city in a single day. It was to this end that he made the foray against Suzdal. The foray was of no military importance, but it served to deprive the authorities of support from the populace at large.

And then what did the Mongols do?

Realising that they could find no better overseers and tax collectors than the princes in collaboration with the clergy, they began to issue the princes licences to govern and the right to collect taxes from the Russian people, a portion of which was to be handed over to the Horde. Many monasteries were exempted from taxation.

All of this is confirmed by specific documents. Just so people don't go pointing the finger at me or the scientists or secular historians, let us turn directly to literature from the Church itself.

There is a fairly decent historical book published by the Sviato-Pokrovsky Nunnery — with the blessing of Evlogii,³¹ Archbishop of Vladimir and Suzdal, which states:

Saint Fiodor, the first Bishop of Suzdal, was from a Greek family. He arrived in Rus' in 987³² in the entourage accompanying Saint Michael from Constantinople.

³¹ *Evlogii* (secular name: Yuri Vasilevich Smirnov, 1937–) — consecrated Archbishop of Vladimir and Suzdal in 1990. He is an author of two books: *Èto bylo chudo Bozhie* (This was God's miracle) and *Premirnoe sluzhenie* (A humble service).

³² 987 — the year before the official 'Christianisation' of Rus' by Vladimir I of Kiev (988), through his baptism at the hands of Saint Michael of Kiev — see footnote 6 in Chapter 4: "Wedding rites" above.

Saint Michael baptised Grand Prince Vladimir at Korsun,³³ and subsequently became the first Metropolitan of Kiev.³⁴

After the baptism of the Kievans in 988, the prince, who had been accorded apostolic status, travelled around the Russian cities together with his sons and Saint Michael, on a zealous proselytising campaign. Bishoprics were established in Chernigov, Belgorod, Pereyaslav, Novgorod and Vladimir-Volynsk.³⁵

As can be seen from these reports, as well as from other sources, foreign ideologists were descending upon Rus' en masse. Complete with hired bodyguards and the prince's own contingent, they began to travel around the Russian cities, breaking down foundations that had been in place for millennia, planting an ideology profitable to the Church and government of the day and establishing foreigners in charge of cities.

Many historical documents testify to how the people resisted, though it appears they were poorly organised, and they did not expect treason on the part of their own prince. It was this treason that was largely responsible for the massive foreign invasion that befell Rus'. The saddest part was that it was done in the name of God. What an incredible sacrilege!

What if Prince Vladimir and the bishops from Constantinople actually believed sincerely in Christ's commandments?

³³*Korsun* (also known by its Greek name *Chersonesos*) — on the southern tip of the Crimæan Peninsula, in what is now Ukraine.

³⁴St-Michael was appointed first Metropolitan of Kiev by Nicholas II Chrysoberges, who served as Patriarch of the Eastern Orthodox Church in Constantinople from 984 to 996.

³⁵*Chernigov, Belgorod* etc. — names of major cities in Ukraine and Russia. *Pereyaslav* is now known as *Riazan* (see footnote 6 in Book 5, Chapter 17: "Questions and answers").

But subsequent events show that their real masters were the exact opposite of God. They were the servants of this opposite, with the advanced ability to manipulate the people, to subjugate to themselves their spirit and their will. They suggested to Man: *you are God's slave*, actually meaning: *you are my slave*. And Man began to forget that God has not and cannot have slaves. Man is the son of God, His beloved son.

All the quotations reproduced in this book are taken from historical documents. I gained access to them not by going to some super-secret archives, but simply by paying 15 roubles³⁶ to get into the State Museum and 30 roubles for the right to take pictures. I photographed the displays set up for general viewing. One of them was entitled: *Monasteries as ecclesiastical feudal landlords*.

And that is by no means the only official State source. There are many of them.

One that exerts an immeasurably greater influence, for example, especially on the young, is a Grade 10 high-school textbook published by Prosveshchenie³⁷ in 2003 and recommended by the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation. This is a high-quality publication under the editorship of A. N. Sakharov³⁸ and V. I. Buganov.³⁹ On page 63 it says:

³⁶ 15 roubles — equivalent to approximately US\$0.50 at the time.

³⁷ *Prosveshchenie* (lit. 'Enlightenment' or 'Education') — a general educational publishing house founded in 1931 (named *Uchpedgiz* up until 1964) as a state-controlled enterprise for the publication and distribution of textbooks and educational literature. The textbook in question is entitled: *Istoria Rossii s drevneishikh vremen do kontsa XVII v.* (History of Russia from the earliest times up to the end of the 17th century).

³⁸ *Andrei Nikolaevich Sakharov* (1930–) — historian, author of books on the politics, ideology and culture of Ancient Rus'. Not to be confused with the nuclear physicist and political activist Andrei Dmitrievich Sakharov (1921–1989).

Along with this the Church persecuted the old folk pagan culture and came out against the Roman model of Christianity, calling it 'Latinism' and apostasy. This damaged Rus's relations with countries confessing the Catholic faith, and contributed to Rus's isolation from Western European culture. Church facilities began to introduce slave labour. Some clerics and monasteries engaged in usury and victimised people. There were cases where prominent politicians active in the Church took part in political machinations. Thus there frequently arose a discrepancy between the words of the Church and its deeds, and this provoked a feeling of discontent among the people.

The textbook also mentions that Prince Vladimir, who baptised Rus' in 987, "...was the son of Sviatoslav⁴⁰ by a slave of his mother's named Malusha. Consequently he was accorded a secondary ranking among the Prince's sons".

It further states:

Vladimir spent more than two years in foreign parts, and when he was approaching Novgorod, he had with him a strong Varangian⁴¹ contingent. He quickly took control of

³⁹ *Viktor Ivanovich Buganov* (1928–1996) — historian, author of books on the sociopolitical history of Russia from the 11th to 18th centuries. He has also published a number of chronicle manuscripts.

⁴⁰ *Sviatoslav* (?–972) — Grand Prince of Kiev, who brought many lands — as far away as the Oka River (near present-day Moscow), the Balkans and the Caucasus — under the control of Rus'. He also established alliances with the Hungarians and the Bulgars.

⁴¹ *Varangians* (Russian: *Varyagi*, equivalent to *Vikings*) — Scandinavian (mainly Swedish) explorers and traders who used the Dnieper River through Russia and Ukraine as a conduit to the Mediterranean and Black Sea merchants. According to the Chronicles, they had significant interaction (and intermarriage) with the Slavs and took an active part in the political life of Ancient Rus'.

Novgorod and began preparing for his trek south. Along the way Vladimir conquered Polotsk, where he killed the reigning Varangian prince Rogvolod and his sons, raping Rogvolod's daughter Rogneda and forcibly taking her to wife.⁴²

The textbook goes on to describe how the Kievan prince Yaropolk, Vladimir's brother, came to negotiate with him. "No sooner had he entered the hall than Vladimir's bodyguards ran their swords through him."

We also read an account of the baptism and the imposition of a sacramental obligation to pay the Church 10% of the tribute collected from the people. It should be remembered that at that time the Church was in subjugation to the Patriarchate of Constantinople (Russia still did not have its own patriarch), which means that 10% of the tribute money collected from the Russian people was at the disposal of Constantinople.

Might it not be in historical facts like these that we uncover an answer to the question as to why the people didn't rise to the Church's defence when Peter the Great closed a third of all Russian monasteries and melted down church bells to produce cannon, or when Catherine the Great went about 'secularising' (i.e., confiscating) monastery landholdings, which meant that formerly wealthy monks were obliged

⁴²*Rogvolod* (also spelt: *Rogvold*, *Rogvald*, *Rognvald*, *Ragnvald*, 936–982 or 920–978, depending on source) — Scandinavian-born Prince of Polotsk (on *Polotsk* — see footnote 7 in Chapter 4: "Wedding rites" above). *Rogneda* (also spelt: *Ragnhild*, 962–1002) — reportedly a descendant of the Ynglings royal family of Norway. She bore Vladimir four sons (including Sviatoslav the Wise) and two daughters. It is also reported that after being divorced by Vladimir she entered a convent and took the name *Anastasia*. Her story was the basis for composer Alexander Nikolaevich Serov's (1820–1871) opera *Rogneda*, which had its première in 1865.

to beg for food and live at the mercy of the tsar. Or, when the Bolsheviks started killing clerics and blowing up churches, why some of the people themselves participated in the plunder of church property.

My remarks on the subject of the Church are based on historical facts and documents. I have resolved to call upon sensibly-minded members of the Church hierarchy and its wise elders who I am sure are out there, to transform the modern Church into a highly spiritual institution, one capable of helping society escape from its economic and spiritual crisis.



Love and the State's military preparedness

But what link can there possibly be, readers might wonder, between the conquest of Russia and *love*? The connection is quite direct. After seizing Russian lands, enslaving the Russian peasants, prohibiting rites capable of leading to love, the Constantinople assault force thereby began to hinder the formation of strong loving families and especially family domains. This meant, in effect, the immediate imposition of serf law.

Love among slaves, as a rule, is a most unhappy love.

In order for the feeling of love ignited in young people to be preserved, one's own Space is required. If it is not there, love, as a rule, vanishes. And what Space could be possessed by slaves? None at all.

Let's think: why, over the many millennia before the princes came to Rus', was our territory never conquered? There

was the Egyptian army, after all, and the Roman legions, but all these hosts with all their well-trained and well-equipped soldiers did not succeed in conquering our lands.

To answer this question, let us suppose that Genghis Khan's troops had launched an invasion of pre-Christian Rus'.

At that time, the territory of our present-day country was inhabited almost exclusively by people living in family communities. At the approach of any army, no matter what its size, the members of the community would hide part of their food supplies, take the remainder with them — along with their household livestock — and head off into the forest. Their horses and cows were loaded up with family belongings.

An invading army could move into a territory only so far as the provisions they carried with them allowed. But this was already an army on its last legs. The return journey would be impossible.

They couldn't go hunting in the forest, as that had to be done in small groups (any larger groupings would scare away the game), but once they penetrated the forest, small groups would quickly fall into traps and perish.

They ate, for the most part, the meat of their own emaciated horses, whose numbers kept rapidly decreasing, so that any kind of movement became exceedingly difficult.

Our ancestors would set up a whole bunch of clever traps all along the route of the foe's retreat, both in the forests and on the rivers. For example, they would sink a huge tree with prickly branches and stretch a cable tied to the tree across the water and fasten its other end on the shore. Whenever a boat approached the spot, the tree would float to the surface and catch the side of the boat in its branches, and then sink again, overturning the boat in the process. In the meantime the retreating soldiers would be met with a hail of arrows and harpoons launched from the shore.

But when the retreating soldiers stepped out on the bank, after gathering together the rest of the troops that had been spread out along the flotilla, there was nobody to be seen.

The people annihilated any enemy that invaded their Motherland. After all, they had something worth protecting. This was no abstract Motherland defined only by a beautiful word with not even a clump of native soil to back it up. They had their own family land, the same land that their ancestors had called home, and now it was where they lived along with their families, children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

And there was love in their families. And they protected their dear mothers, fathers and children. They protected their love! And that was why they could not be conquered.

CHAPTER SEVEN



Russia erased

Anastasia's grandfather and I rode along in silence. As we approached Suzdal and could see its buildings in the distance, I said to him:

"Look, there's Suzdal! It's a city around a thousand years old. Part of the Vladimir-Suzdal Principality. In fact it was one of the religious capitals of that period."

"Why are you going there, Vladimir?"

"I want to pay another visit to the museum, and take a look at the ancient sites, so's I can get a picture of how people lived over the past millennium."

"Try to get a picture *before* going into the city. Everything that lies around it is worth immeasurably greater attention than the city itself."

"All around are just fields," I protested, "with the occasional dilapidated village here and there. No information to help with the picture."

"Vladimir, stop the car. We shouldn't be talking while driving."

"Don't be afraid, I'm a good driver."

"I'm not afraid. I know, and so I'd better be quiet."

I pulled over to the side of the road and stopped the car. After a few moments I realised that I couldn't really drive and have this conversation at the same time. The difficulty was that, just like Anastasia, her grandfather sometimes spoke with certain special intonations, so powerful that the listener could perceive visible images, almost like holograms in space. This kind of speech allowed the possibility of showing scenes

of the past or future, or even on another planet, as Anastasia once did.¹

It's hard to tell just what is behind this phenomenon. Possibly hypnosis, possibly some kind of mysterious abilities enjoyed by people of the priestly class. Or maybe it was something possessed by everybody living on the Earth back in ancient times. A talented actor on stage can also create all sorts of pictures and images for an audience with the help of intonations and his own emotions — albeit not as vivid and detailed as those of Anastasia's. Still, it is actors above all others who confirm, through their mastery, the existence of such possibilities in Man.

It turns out that people of long ago didn't need television, with its huge network of personnel and technology, including satellites even. It turns out that in losing his natural, God-given abilities, Man replaces them with awkward artificial substitutes which are far less perfect. And he even boasts about it, calling his inventions a significant achievement.

The saddest part is that mankind today is losing its capacity for logical thinking. This is more than just a sad state of affairs. It is a most frightful epidemic, capable of transforming modern humanity into a bunch of mad rodents, devouring one another and destroying their own living environment. Suicide-rodents.

What Anastasia's grandfather was to tell me in the field needs to be understood. It gives rise to the following conclusion: in losing the ability to think logically, the people of the Earth no longer are able to see and understand the unenviable situation they are being pushed into. Judge for yourselves.

I had stopped the jeep at the side of the road. The grey-haired oldster got out and headed into a field. I followed along behind. Before long he stopped and bowed low to the ground, saying:

¹See Book 4, Chapter 22: "Other worlds".

"Health to your thoughts and aspirations, dear people!"

He uttered this greeting most sincerely and with such a tone that it seemed as though there really were people standing there in front of him. Then something happened that I can't put a name to, at least not for now.

At first there was some sort of stirring in the air, and a barely noticeable mist arose from the earth. It seemed to be congealing, and soon afterward I could clearly see the outlines of some kind of human figure becoming increasingly distinct. And, finally, there standing before us was an elderly man with a powerful physique. A headband encircled his light-brown hair. He had a calm expression on his face, with just a trace of despondency. Behind him, in the distance, I could see gardens, copses and beautiful wooden mansions. It looked as though the barren fields of a moment ago were now populated with a whole lot of families.

The man standing before us was speaking in inaudible tones to the Siberian elder. The vision lasted for several minutes. Then it slowly began to dissipate, as though being erased by an invisible hand. What was being erased was the genuine Rus', not a Rus' someone had simply thought up. The vision disappeared altogether when Anastasia's grandfather turned in the direction of Suzdal. He stood there silently staring toward the city, then turned to me and asked:

"What, do you think, Vladimir, was the original purpose of the city we see in the distance?"

"What's thinking got to do with it? Everybody knows this from their history: Suzdal was where the clergy was cloistered. The first Christian bishops lived here. The monasteries and the kremlin² where the élite lived are still preserved today. That's a historical fact."

²*kremlin* — the Russian word describing a fortress in the middle of a city, the most famous example being the Kremlin in Moscow.

"Yes, you're right, historical. But all Russia's ancient cities have two histories. The original history is more significant."

"I guess we'll never be able to rediscover the original history."

"We *shall* know, Vladimir. You will figure it out through your own logic and you will even be able to see it. But start by determining the reason these cities sprang up, along with their original purpose."

"I would say their purpose lies in the fact that they made it easier to live together and defend themselves against enemy invasion. For example, apart from the clergy and the élite, Suzdal was home to many craftsmen. They produced equestrian harnesses, carts, sleighs, earthenware pots, ploughs and harrows. They would sell these items and live off the proceeds."

"Who did they sell them to?"

"To the peasants, of course," I responded.

"That's it," the old fellow confirmed. "They sold or bartered their handicrafts for produce. And the produce came into the city from all the many outlying domains."

"Yes, of course."

"But which d'you think came first, which was primary in this place — the domains or the city?"

"The domains, I would say. The builders and the craftsmen would want to eat every day. If they started to build things in the open fields, there would have been nowhere to get their food from."

"Correct. So we've come to the conclusion that a little more than a thousand years ago the fields around this city were the site of marvellous, rich domains. And the place where the city of Suzdal sits now was the site of their *kapishche*.³

"What is a *kapishche*?"

"It's a place where people gathered together from all around for fairs, to exchange goods and procure household

³*kapishche* — pronounced *KAH-peesh-cheh*.

effects. They shared experiences with each other. They put on massive celebrations with singing and dancing, and some of which were designed to help people find their soulmates.

“This was also the place the elders of the families gathered for a *vieche*⁴ and adopted unwritten rules for living. They could censure a wrongdoer for his crime, although such instances were rare. Their censure was even a more fearful sentence than physical punishment.”

“And who was in charge of this whole land?”

“A hired hand. I really can’t think of an alternative term. A hired hand was the administrator in the *kapishche*. But he wasn’t really *in charge*. Rather, he carried out the decisions taken by the elders.

“For example, when they desired to put in a new tethering-post or a new road or build a big barn, it transpired that people from each domain would be assigned to carry out that decision. Sometimes the hired hand would be required to find other hired workers like himself.

“It was also his job to keep the whole *kapishche* clean and neat. Let’s say they had a fair, and after it was over, people dispersed to their homes. Then the tethering-posts might have had to be fixed and the horse-droppings cleaned up all over the place. This task would be carried out by the hired hand and his assistants. If he performed his work carelessly, the elders could sack him from his job. And then either the hired hand would go and look for work at another *kapishche*, or he would stay where he was, but be demoted to a hired hand’s assistant. It was difficult for the elders to maintain hired help, as just about everyone wanted to live in their own domains. Thus it might happen that hired hands for *kapishches* could be acquired from foreign lands.

⁴*vieche* — a council in ancient Russia. See footnote 5 in Chapter 1: “Love — the essence of the Cosmos” above.

“The Vedruss social order of Rus’ before the princes rose to power lasted for many thousands of years. It was superior to all the state social orders we know today, and it extended to all the continents of the Earth.

“When the Earth was overcome by corruption, Egypt and Rome fell into slavery, but the Vedruss social order in Rus’ still lasted five-and-a-half thousand years.”

“But why did the Vedruss social order give way to corruption, too?”

“Which are you most interested in — Rome, Ancient Egypt or Rus’? Pretty much the same thing happened in all three.”

“If they’re pretty much the same, then let’s go for Rus’. I already know that it was subject to external invaders, resulting in the destruction of the traditions and culture of the great Vedruss civilisation.”

“There were invasions, but there’s much more to it than that. The Vedruss social order underwent its first changes in other lands, back when there was no foe to invade. There were no armies. There were no wars or military campaigns, because there was nothing that could lead to them. The whole Earth at the time was made up of marvellous domains. People’s culture and concepts were truly outstanding. Everybody knew that to take vegetables or fruit out of someone else’s orchard by force or stealth was not only improper — it was useless and dangerous to one’s self.

“Only through produce that was given freely and with desire could benefit be acquired.

“Neither was it considered proper to take household animals from someone else’s domain by deceit or by force. A cow would not have let a stranger come close. And somebody else’s dog might have shown itself to be not a friend, but a foe. And a horse might have taken the occasion to throw a rider if it were not its own.

“With concepts like these, who would dare invade? Such concepts made invasions absurd. Corruption, in the main, came from ignorance, or rather from treason or betrayal, even in little things, of the culture of one’s forebears, their way of life. The family chain leads us to God. To betray one’s forebears’ meaning of life is tantamount to killing God within one’s self.

“Yes, in Rus’, of course, the people were deceived, through the priests’ well-honed manipulative techniques — techniques which are still active in our own time. Back then the elders overlooked this subtle play, and their mistake is still being paid for by subsequent generations even today.”

CHAPTER EIGHT



The elders' mistake

From a hired hand to a prince

At the beginning of the present era many countries were already ruled by emperors, pharaohs or tsars. The form of government under which a large state is controlled by one Man is unnatural. It has never brought and will never bring a good, happy life to a single nation on the face of the Earth. This form of government benefits the priests, who manipulate countries through their rulers. It is difficult, after all, to negotiate with all the people at once, a lot easier to deal with just a single individual.¹

Only in Rus' they did not succeed in setting up a single ruler. Everyone there was guided by the tribal elders' council. These councils were not something that could be corrupted or forced, under threat, into a decision that would lead to the oppression of the people. Who would make such an obscene decision for one's children?

Several times, through various subterfuges in different places, the priests' assistants attempted to set up a princely authority, a single ruler over the people. In this particular area, for example, events unfolded as follows.

One day a stranger from afar arrived at the Vedruss kapishche situated where Suzdal is now. Like the wise-men, itinerant minstrels, and craftsmen, he was offered food and lodging.

¹The first section of this chapter, told to the author by Anastasia's grandfather, is presented without identifying quotation-marks.

The stranger stayed two weeks, but did not engage in any useful activity. The hired hand in charge questioned him:

"What useful contribution, stranger, can you make to our kapishche?"

And the stranger replied:

"None at all, but to you personally I can render an invaluable service. I have heard rumours that the elders are not happy with you. In a year, maybe even half a year, you will be let go. If you take *my* advice, on the other hand, the elders will be crawling on their knees before you. You can have your pick of girls from any domain to wife, whereas right now there's not a single one that would live with you. I can make it so that it will be your decisions, and not those of the tribal elders, that will be carried out."

The hired hand in charge of the kapishche (and part-time janitor) agreed. He listened to the stranger, an agent of the priests. And the stranger proposed:

"When people gather for a fair at the kapishche from all around and stay until the following morning, during the night you will cut your face with a knife, and leave the kapishche along with your trustworthy assistants, so that you can return in the evening with broken-winded horses. During the night I and my assistants (they are already here in the guise of artists and craftsmen), will take the horses away from their tethering-posts, and you will bring them back in the evening, saying you recaptured them from the miscreants.

"In your wounded state you will ask the elders for an armed garrison for their own protection. They will agree. You will take my companions into your garrison: they will all meekly obey your command."

The hired hand agreed to the criminal act. He did everything according to the stranger's proposal.

When the 'wounded' man returned toward evening with the herd of stolen horses, he learnt that not only had the

stranger's henchmen stolen the horses — they had also killed three people, and burnt the smithy and a barn. The 'wounded' hired hand appeared before the elders. He told how he and his assistants had given chase to the miscreants, but they were outnumbered, and his assistants were beaten back. And then he began asking the elders for the resources to maintain a strong armed garrison. He asked them to grant him the authority to take decisions on his own in the interests of general security.

The elders were taken aback at the hideous crime and agreed to maintain the garrison, only they were unwilling to pull their own sons away from the domains. So it was decided to bring in strangers to form a garrison, and allot them a tribute from each domain. Other *kapishches* followed their lead and also began to create their own armed garrisons.

Indeed, since they now had power, the hired hands began transforming themselves into princes. They started waging war against each other, justifying this to the elders as a necessary preventative first strike.

The princes supposed they had achieved considerable authority. In fact, for centuries now, they have been strictly following the priests' advice, often without realising it. Such a system of authority came together all by itself. The hired hand remained a hired hand — he merely exchanged masters.² The new master was exceptionally cruel to his hired hands.

For thousands of years the priests' hired hands kept killing each other, conspiring and hatching their schemes, aspiring more and more lustily for power.

²In Russian, the word for 'prince', *kniaz'* (formerly spelt *koniaz'*), is derived from *kon'* (horse) and originally meant 'a herder in charge of horses'. This original meaning of *koniaz'* survived in parts of Russia until the 19th century. Also, a Russian proverb says: *iz griazi v kniazi* ('princes [are derived] from dirt') — preserving the memory of the fact that it was the most marginal members of the society that became the princes.

You surely know yourself from history how many deaths the path to princely power is strewn with. They even resorted to slaying their fathers and brethren. Pretty much the same thing came about in various countries, and little has changed, even today.

Thus the time of the princes had its start in Russia, too, just as it had in other lands long before. You know the rest of the story, I dare say. And the armed garrisons are still around today, still serving somebody's interests.

The armaments and weaponry may have changed, but the essence is still the same. And the crimes have not abated — they keep multiplying, and keep getting more and more sophisticated.

The elders made a mistake. It is a mistake which, if you form your own political party, you will not want to make again.



A mistake not to be repeated

“What, precisely, was the elders’ mistake?” I asked. “Was it in forming the garrisons with foreign mercenaries? But the way things have turned out now, a state can no longer survive without a militia or an army.”

“The garrisons here, Vladimir, are not the underlying cause. It goes a lot deeper, into the psychological.

“I don’t know how to put it more clearly. It has to do with forgetting the precepts of our ancestors — God’s precepts. Think about it: God gave each and everyone equal authority. Consequently, the only social structure that can claim

perfection is one where there is no centralised authority — where every individual is endowed with equal power.

“When you give somebody your vote, you are not bestowing authority on anyone. By voting for someone, you are simply placing them in subjection to the existing system, and voluntarily relinquishing the authority God has given you. And over the centuries most people’s minds have been perverted: it is the job of the ruler and the government to deal with all important questions for us, they think. These people’s thoughts don’t even touch the question of the order of life.”

“So, that means that there’s no longer any point in voting at all? We’ll never establish a party that way. By law, we have to vote.”

“Well, if you have to, then vote to make sure no one individual is able to control people’s lives.”

“If you’re talking about the *vieche*³ gatherings they had in Vedic Rus’,” I said, “that’s totally impossible today. People can’t keep constantly coming together from different parts of the country. Besides, there’s no way a party like that can ever get registered.”

“Why do they need to come together? Just turn all the modern inventions at your disposal to a good purpose. Use any kind of communications link — the computer, for example. As for registration, isn’t that a bit ridiculous for a party of the majority of the people? You ought to be registrars yourselves.

“Anyway, securing some kind of registration isn’t the main point at issue. The main thing is not to allow the setting up of any centralised authority. Anybody working in the central apparatus, if it is absolutely necessary according to your law, should be strictly hired staff — with no access to financial control. Besides, money should never be concentrated in one place.”

³*vieche* — see footnote 5 in Chapter 1: “Love — the essence of the Cosmos” above.

"But the law requires all parties to elect a central committee," I observed.

"So, elect all party members to it, or at least every tenth person in the party."

"There's something else to think about here. I got really angry at first when you said the party's main goal was the restoration of love to families. I thought you were making fun of me, that you were trying to make me into a laughingstock."

"I remember."

"But now, I've given quite a bit of thought to this question and have come to the conclusion that it really is not just *one* of the main goals, but *the* main goal. And that the question of finding one's soulmate requires specific conditions to be set up, special events to be organised. The rites of Ancient Rus' should be made public, and we need to get not only science but also culture and ideological propaganda involved in working out these questions. They need to be resolved on the state level. The degree of civilisation of any given state needs to be judged on the basis of the number of happy, loving families living therein."

"Congratulations!"

"On what?"

"On understanding that."

"Congratulations are still premature. I can't for the life of me think of a way to formulate this goal without people laughing at its constitution, or at me, or at our future party."

"So, let them laugh."

"What d'you mean, *let them*? If people start laughing, then I'll be the only member of a party with a constitution like that. It will end up being an unregistered party with a laughable constitution, supported by a single individual, and an ordinary member of the party at that."

"Why just a single individual? There'll be at least two. I shall be supporting it as well. And the two of us will raise some money and hire ourselves an executive secretary."

"You serious? What, you're going to join the party, too?"

"No. I shan't be joining it. Anyway, as you point out, I can't be registered under your law. But I'll be supporting the Motherland Party with my whole heart from right there in the taiga.

"And if you're concerned about there just being the two of us, remember that all great causes have always begun not with a mass of people, but with just a single individual. Years down the road, humanity will indeed laugh, but not at *you*. They'll be laughing at themselves, and they'll be happy."

"Okay, I'll try. I'll give some more thought to drafting the constitution. And I'll ask my readers to think about it, too."

"If I were you, Vladimir, I'd ask Anastasia to tell more about the wedding rite. In the Vedruss culture, after all, it began right at birth."

"How on earth could a wedding rite begin at a Man's birth?"

"Vedruss people considered the primary birth to be not the appearance of the body, but the illumination of love. Nobody in today's world can illustrate this the way Anastasia can. *Ask her to re-create a picture of life in a Vedruss family.*"



I shan't say where or how this meeting with Anastasia took place. I'll start right away to set forth her description of one Vedruss family's attitude toward love.

Whoever manages to make sense of it and feel the significance contained in the culture of their love, may also be able, perhaps, to figure out the great wisdom and cosmic dimension of the Vedruss rites.

CHAPTER NINE



The Creator's greatest gift

Childhood love

It was with childlike joy and inspiration that Anastasia began telling me about the Vedruss rite associated with the energy of Love:¹

The activities of the Vedruss people amounted to a continuous learning cycle. It was a great and joyous school of conscious being.

All Vedruss celebrations could be described as tests of mind and skill. They all involved, one might say, reminders to the adults, as well as wise lessons to the young. But even during the days of intense harvest gathering, the Vedruss people worked with a joyous heart. Their work was imbued with meaning that went beyond material creations.

Look, Vladimir — see, it is haycutting time. A magnificent, clear day. The whole settlement, from the littlest ones to the greatest, is heading out to the meadows with the first rays of the Sun. See, there go two drays carrying a whole family. Only the elder family members have stayed behind to keep the household animals company.

But the guys — the young lads — are riding horseback, with only collar-bands on the steeds and long lengths of rope

¹Anastasia's story of the Vedruss family over this and the following three chapters is presented without identifying quotation marks.

in their hands. On these horses they will use these long ropes to cope with the task of dragging the stooks of hay over to the main stacks.

The stately *muzbiks*² in the carts hold their scythes poised, blades up, while their wives and older children sit beside them with their rakes, ready to start raking up the hay the men will be cutting.

Also riding on the drays are some very small children. What for? Just for the fun of it, out of curiosity, to mingle, frolic and play, and to observe the grown-ups on this day.

The people are by no means dressed in rags. See their clean white shirts, and the women wearing flowers entwined in their braids, and embroidered dresses. Why are they dressed up in their best, as if going to a celebration?

The answer, Vladimir, is that they are under no constraint to actually cut hay. They all have their own piles of hay back in their respective domains. Though naturally it does not hurt to have some community stacks in reserve.

The main thing, however — the tacit purpose behind all the general activity — is to show themselves at work in their neighbours' eyes. To steal furtive glances at each other, and give a chance to the young guys and girls to get to know each other in a common activity. That is why the young people, even from outlying communities, are so happy to turn out for the haymaking.

Now it has begun — look!

The scythemen are moving forward steadily, all in a row. Not one of them must fall behind. Their wives are raking up yesterday's cuttings to be dried, singing as they work. The

²*muzbiks* (English plural of *muzbik*, stress on last syllable) — the Russian term for a hardy male peasant, or rural dweller. In modern Russian the word is also used in a broader colloquial sense, roughly equivalent to 'guy' in American English usage.

young people gather the dried hay into stooks. Those slightly older will build the haystack.

See those two guys standing on top of the haystack? One of them is eighteen, the other, twenty. They are piling the hay on the stack which those six smiling girls are handing up to them.

The guys have taken off their shirts. Perspiration is streaming down their tanned skin. But they are trying to keep up with the merry girls below.

There are two guys up top, and there ought to be four girls throwing up the hay from below, but it turns out there are six of them down there, laughing and joking, trying to drown the lads in hay.

The guys' father comes over to the haystack to get a drink of water. He has quickly sized up the whole situation. His two sons are trying to keep up with the six girls. They simply cannot afford to get done in. Besides, in the group of nimble, laughing girls below there may be two brides for his sons. After taking a drink the father calls up to his boys:

"Hey, there, boys! I don't feel like cutting any more for now. How about I climb up there and help you? Seeing as how there are six down below instead of four."

"Why, Father?" answered the elder son, not slacking off for a moment. "There are two of us up here stacking hay, my brother and I, and we haven't even got warmed up yet!"

"It's as though I'm still asleep!" added the younger, as he somehow inconspicuously wiped the perspiration from his brow.

Down below the light-headed girls took notice of his movements. One of them called out over the general laughter:

"Watch out, don't let the sleepyhead get wet!"

The father broke into a smile of contentment, before rejoining the row of scythemen.

The train of four steeds, which the young men were leading by the bridle, was on its way to the haystack from the farthest

meadow. The last horse was led by the youngest, whose name was Radomir.³ He had turned eight just before the start of the summer, and was now into his ninth year. But the boy Radomir was very well developed for his age.

But it was not only his physical height that elevated him above his peers. He had a quicker grasp of knowledge than did the others, and he excelled in festive games. And here at the haymaking he swelled with pride at having been given work usually assigned to kids just a bit older. He was in no way going to lag behind his elders.

He himself was trying to bind up the stooks as quickly as possible, and the horse obeyed him. Even though he brought up the end of the ‘train’, he was still not lagging behind.

Just a little distance away, a chorus of younger children could be heard in play, over by the edge of the forest. As soon as they took notice of the train of horses dragging the stooks, they rushed over to catch a ride on them.

The kids rushed headlong to their goal, only one little girl, barely four years old, lagged behind. The others had already reached the stooks when she took a mind to try a shortcut and anxiously started running across a swampy stretch of ground. This small swamp had almost dried up, but one could still find patches of elevated ground dotted around. The dear girl jumped from hillock to hillock, very close to the horses dragging the stooks. All at once, however, trying to jump to the next patch of ground, the girl slipped and took quite a fall, scratching her knee badly on a stick and getting her dress and her face all muddied in the process. She picked herself up,

³*Radomir* (pron. *ra-da-MEER*) — a name first encountered in the section entitled “A union of two — a wedding” in Book 6, Chapter 5: “The history of mankind, as told by Anastasia”. See esp. footnote 2 in that chapter. The name *Liubomila* (with its endearing variants *Liubomilka*, *Liubomilochka* — pron. *liu-ba-MEE-la*, *liu-ba-MEEL-ka*, *liu-ba-MEE-lach-ka*, resp.) is encountered in the same chapter (footnote 4).

but fell back at once and started screaming at the top of her lungs, smarting with annoyance at her plight, just as the last of the stooks came by and began to recede into the distance.

The stately youth Radomir heard the little girl's cries. He brought his steed to a halt, and followed the sound of her cries to the swampy ground. Here he found a dear little girl with clothes and hands all muddied, sitting in the midst of a puddle, using her tiny fist to wipe away the tears, and bawling with all her might.

Radomir took hold of her under her arms, picked her up out of the puddle, set her down on a dry patch of ground safe from harm and asked:

"What're you bawling for, little one? Is it that bad?"

Still crying, she tried to explain through her tears:

"I was running, running — see — I was jumping from patch to patch, trying to catch up, only I took a bad fall. All the stooks had gone, and I was lagging behind. Now all the other kids are having fun riding on the stooks, and I ended up in this puddle."

"They haven't *all* gone," Radomir responded. "Look, I'm still here, and there's my stook. If you can stop your bawling, I'll give you a ride on it. Only you seem to have got so dirty all over. Now stop that screaming once and for all," he demanded. "It's making me deaf!"

Radomir took hold of the hem of the little girl's dress. Finding a clean patch of dress, he put it up to her nose and commanded:

"Come on, now, blow your nose!"

Completely taken aback by this move, the little girl let out a loud "Ow!" and covered the front of her exposed lower torso with her hands. Now she blew her nose hard — one! two! — and stopped crying. Radomir let down the hem of her dress, and stared with a critical eye at the filthy and dishevelled little girl standing before him.

"You'd better take your dress off altogether," he said.

"Shan't!" she declared firmly.

"Take it off, I shan't look. I'll rinse out your dirty dress in the lake. You can sit here in the tall grass while you wait. Here, you'd best take my shirt. It will go right down to your ankles — it'll be longer on you than your dress."

Radomir rinsed the little girl's dirty dress in the lake while she wrapped herself in his shirt and peeked at him through the tall grass.

As she sat there in the grass, the girl was struck by a piercing, frightening thought. She remembered once overhearing her grandfather telling her grandmother:

"A terribly scandalous act took place in the next settlement — some good-for-nothing lifted up the hem of a maiden's dress before marriage."

"If he lifted up her hem, it means he's crushed the poor dear's life," her grandmother had sighed.

The little girl decided that something must be crushed in her too, now that a strange lad had lifted up the hem of her dress. She examined her little arms and legs and, even though they seemed to be in working order, nothing crushed, her fear did not dissipate.

If grandfather and grandmother believed that lifting up a dress hem would crush something, then something of hers must be crushed, too.

The girl jumped up from the grass and called out to Radomir, who had been rinsing out her dress in the lake:

"You're a dirty good-for-nothing!"

Radomir straightened up, turned toward the girl standing in the grass wearing his shirt and asked:

"What're you carrying on about this time? I don't know what you want."

"I'm telling you, you're a dirty good-for-nothing. You dared lift up the hem of a maiden's dress before marriage. You've crushed everything of hers."

Radomir looked at the girl's mud-covered face for some time, then burst out laughing. After getting a hold of himself, he said:

"Well, you've heard the song but got it wrong! Sure, lifting up the hem of a maiden's skirt before marriage is a bad thing. But in my case, I didn't lift up the hem of a maiden's skirt."

"You did, you did! I remember, you lifted up the hem of my dress."

"*Your* dress, sure," Radomir agreed. "But then you're not a maiden, are you?"

"How come I'm not a maiden?" the girl asked in surprise.

"Cause all maidens have protruding breasts, but you don't. Instead of breasts all you have are two little spots which are hardly noticeable. That means you're not a maiden."

"Then who am I?" the little girl asked distractedly.

"You're still a 'little one'. Now you just sit there in the grass and don't say a word. I haven't the time to talk with you."

Once again he stepped into the water, finished rinsing out the dress, then wrung the water out of it and laid it out neatly on the grass to dry. Then he called out to the girl:

"Come down to the water, little one. You need to get your face washed."

She came to him obediently, and stood quietly while he washed her face.

"Now let's go to the stook, and I'll give you a ride."

"Let me have my dress back first," the girl asked, almost in a whisper.

"It's still too wet. You can stay in my shirt for the time being. I'll bring your dress along with me. It will have dried out by the time we get to the haystack and you can change there."

"No! Give me back my dress!" the girl insisted. "Maybe it's wet, but I'm going to put it on anyway. It can dry on me."

"Have your own way, spruce yourself up," said Radomir, as he handed her the wet dress and headed over to his horse.

The little girl quickly put on her dress. She rushed to catch up to Radomir at the stook.

"Here I am," she said, panting away. "And here's your shirt back."

"Okay. You're my bad luck charm. All the other lads are heading back already, and here I'm stuck with you. Climb aboard!"

He helped the girl climb onto the stook. He took hold of the bridle and they started off in the direction of the haystack.

The little girl sat on the stook in her wet dress, jubilant as it whisked smoothly over the ground. She was riding the stook all alone, not in twos or threes like the other kids. She sat there all by herself. Her face was beaming with joy, as though she had suddenly been turned into a goddess. If only her girlfriends could see her now, not as part of a train, but all alone. He was carrying her all by herself.

She noticed the way Radomir led the horse by the bridle, and couldn't take her eyes off his back. Her little heart began to beat faster. She felt a sensation of warmth permeate her whole body. Naturally, she was still too young to realise what was going on: she was in love.

Oh for the love of childhood! It is the ultimate of purity — the precious gift of God. Only why does it sometimes make an early start, and perturb a little one's heart? Why? What does it mean when it comes early like that? It turns out that there is truly great meaning in early love, something the Vedruss people well knew.

Upon arriving at the haystack, Radomir came back to the stook.

"Climb down, little one. Don't be afraid, I'll catch you."

Catching the little girl in his arms, he set her down on the ground and asked:

"Whose kid are you?"

"I'm from the next settlement. My name is Liubomila. My sister and I are visiting, helping our brother," she replied.

"Go on then, go to your sister," Radomir admonished, walking away. He did not turn back even once to look at the little girl.

She stood there, watching everything: how he untied the rope from the stook, climbed up onto a barrel from where he could leap onto his steed. Then he took off at a gallop to fetch a new hay stook.



Love as a fully fledged member of the family

Little Liubomilka returned home with her sister. It was already the family's supper-time. But Liubomilka didn't want to sit down to the table. Clinging to her grandmother's skirt, she begged:

"Can we go for a walk together in the garden, Grammykins? I want to tell you about a miracle — just you alone."

Upon overhearing this request, the father protested:

"It's not proper, daughter dear, to go off when the family's about to sit down to table, let alone take your grandmother with you..."

But when the father looked into his daughter's face, he broke into a smile. The Vedruss people knew the grace of childhood love. They knew how to treat love kindly, to embrace it as a heavenly gift to the family, to refrain from making fun of it and to respect its every trace.

They valued the grace of its great energy, and so the diverse energies of Love would come to them with great joy.

"You and your grandmother go for a walk in the garden and eat some berries," said the father, feigning an air of nonchalance.

Little Liubomilka sat her grandmother down in a far corner of the garden and right off began excitedly telling her story:

"Grammykins, I was playing with my friends there at the haymaking, and they ran off to have a ride on the stooks. I didn't feel like joining them. I was just minding my own business. All of a sudden this most kind and handsome young lad stops his horse and comes up to me. Yes, indeed, Grammykins, he comes just as close as you and I are right now. And he was so handsome and kind. Here he stands in front of me and says: 'Little girl, I invite you...' No, he didn't say that. He put it another way. He said: 'Little girl, not only do I invite you, I *beg* you to take a little ride on my stook.' And I had a ride. There. You see, Grammykins? Has something happened with him?"

"Something's happened with you, granddaughter dear. And what might his name be?"

"I don't know. He didn't say."

"First of all, my little Liubomilochka, tell me the whole story, and try to remember the way it *really* happened."

"The way it really..." Liubomilka hung her head. "The way it really happened? I took a fall into a puddle, he came along and washed out my dress, then he gave me a ride on his stook, but I guess he never told me his name. He called me 'Little one', and when he left, he never once looked in my direction."

Liubomilka finished her story and began crying. She continued through her tears:

"I stayed standing there, and watched him go away. Only he never looked at me even once, and what his name was he didn't say."

The grandmother gave her granddaughter a big hug, stroking her dark blonde hair, as though stroking the energy of Love within her. And she whispered, as though saying a prayer:

"O great energy from God! Turn and help my granddaughter with your grace. Do not burn her still immature heart. Give her inspiration to take part in co-creation!"

Aloud she said to Liubomilka:

"Granddaughter dear, would you like this very good lad to always have eyes for you alone?"

"Yes, I would, Grammykins. I would!"

"Then you should not let him come by or see you for three years."

"But why?"

"When he spied you, you were all dirtied by the mud. He saw you as a crying, helpless little girl. That is the impression he still has of you. In three years' time, if you yourself make the effort, you will be older, smarter and more beautiful."

"I shall try. I shall try the very best I can. Only tell me, Grammykins, how should I try — what plan should I follow?"

"I shall share all my secrets with you, granddaughter dear. If you earnestly try to follow them, you will be more beautiful than all the flowers on the Earth, and people will rejoice at your presence. You will not need to wait to be chosen, you yourself will have your choice of lovers."

"Tell me, Grammykins, and I shall do everything you say. Only tell me faster!" Little Liubomilka was trying to hurry her grandmother up, tugging impatiently at the hem of her dress.

And, slowly and solemnly uttering the words, the grandmother told Liubomilka:

"You need to get up earlier in the morning. You spend your mornings just lazing around. You should get out of bed, run to the stream and wash yourself with pure spring water. When

you get home, have a little porridge to eat. But you always demand sweet berries instead.”

“But Grammykins, why should I try doing this all at home if he’s not there to see me?” Liubomilka asked in surprise. “He won’t see how I bathe in the stream and eat my porridge each morning.”

“That, of course, is something he won’t see. But your efforts will be reflected in your outward beauty. And the energy will be made apparent within.”

Liubomilka tried to follow her grandmother’s advice. She did not always succeed, especially that first year. But on those mornings her grandmother would come to her, sit down on her bed and say:

“If you don’t rise with the Sun and run down to the stream, you will not become more beautiful this day.”

And Liubomilka began rising early. By the second year she had become accustomed to the new regimen, and easily went through the routine of washing in the morning and cheerfully eating her porridge at breakfast.

Now the three-year waiting period recommended by her grandmother was almost at an end — only one month remained. People were gathering at the *kapishche*⁴ from all around for this season’s fair. Liubomila and her elder sister Yekaterina watched as carriages regularly passed by their domain on the way to the fair. And all at once they noticed one carriage pull off the road and approach their gate, where the sisters were standing. And lo and behold, there in the carriage...

Liubomilka recognised him right off. There sitting with the other passengers and holding the reins was none other than her beloved Radomir, looking just a little older.

⁴*kapishche* — see footnote 3 in Chapter 7: “Russia erased” above.

The little girl's heart began trembling when the carriage came up to their gate and stopped. An older gentleman among the passengers, probably the father, said:

"Cordial greetings, my maidens. Please convey my respects to your father and mother, and all your elders. We would like a drink of your *kvass*. We forgot to bring our own along on the journey."

Liubomilka rushed into the house, calling out:

"They send all of you greetings. Where's the pitcher? Our pitcher with the kvass, where is it? Oh, yes, it's in the pantry, keeping cool." And off to the pantry she dashed, overturning a pail of water standing by the door in the process. Turning around, she rattled off to her grandfather and grandmother:

"Not to worry! I'll mop it up when I come back."

Grabbing hold of the pitcher, she ran out to the gate, where she stopped to catch her breath. Restraining her excitement, she opened the gate, walked out with stately stride and handed the pitcher of kvass to the gentleman.

While the father of the family was drinking the kvass, Liubomilka kept her eyes fixed on Radomir. But *he* had eyes for Yekaterina.

When his turn came to be handed the pitcher, he drank up the remaining kvass, then jumped down from the carriage and held out the pitcher to Yekaterina, saying:

"Thank you. This kvass was prepared by kind hands."

Liubomilka watched as the carriage drove off, then, running to the deep far corner of the garden, collapsed on the bench and began weeping bitterly.

"Why so sad again, Liubomilka?" Grandmother had come over and sat down beside her.

Through her tears the girl told her grandmother what had happened:

"They came to us and asked for kvass, and the boy was there who gave me a ride on the stook three years ago. He's even

more handsome now. I ran and brought the kvass in a pitcher. They all took a drink, and said how good it was. He took a drink too, and then gave the pitcher to Yekaterina. Not to me, Grammykins, but to *her*, my rival, Yekaterina. And it was her he thanked, not me. She's a real dingbat, that sister of mine. She must have been chatting him up while I was getting the kvass. He looked back at her and even smiled. My own sister — a rival! A real dingbat!"

"Why are you blaming your sister? She's not at fault. You are."

"Why am I to blame, Grammykins? What have I done wrong?"

"Listen carefully. Your sister made a colourful embroidery pattern, which she neatly applied to the sleeves of her dress. You wanted to do everything yourself, too, but on *your* dress the sewing didn't come out straight.

"Besides, your sister can speak in verse, she's better than anyone at singing *koliadki*,⁵ and you're unwilling to talk with any wise-men who can teach you to recite and compose verse. The boy you've chosen — no doubt he's a pretty smart lad, he has an appreciation of beauty and intellect."

"Does that mean I have to study another three years, Grammykins?"

"Three, perhaps. But it could be five."

⁵*koliadki* (pron. *kal-YAT-kee*) — songs traditionally sung during winter solstice celebrations, venerating the Sun and light which bring forth life and joy as well as bountiful harvests and family happiness. The term is derived from the ancient Slavic name of the winter solstice holiday — *Koliada* (from *kolo* = circle, annual cycle) — the beginning of the new solar-year cycle. (The Latin word *calenda*, signifying the first day of a month, and English *calendar* are derived from the same root.) As part of the Koliada celebrations, children went from one house to another offering good wishes to the families, who offered them holiday treats in return. It was expected that the children would make up songs on the spot for each particular family — an opportunity for them to demonstrate their creative abilities. In the Russian Orthodox Church the term was later applied to what we would call Christmas carols. *Koliadki* are still practised to the present day.



True love will most certainly be reciprocated

Ten years went by. One day Radomir was walking through one of the regular holiday fairs with his best friend, who had the unusual name of Arga.⁶

Arga had a flair for creating marvellous pictures and doing fantastic wood-carvings. He could fashion statues of clay that looked as though they were alive. This was a talent he had inherited from his grandfather. From his father was derived his blacksmith's art.

The two friends took little interest in the long rows of carts with their vast array of savoury offerings. Nor was the young men's attention attracted by the rows of assorted dishes and household utensils. In fact people did not come to the fair for any material acquisitions at all. The main attraction was talking with others, getting to know them, sharing their experiences with them.

The lads decided to head over to the place where they were getting ready for a colourful show by visiting performing artists. Suddenly they heard themselves being hailed:

"Radomir! Arga! Have you seen it yet?"

Radomir and Arga turned around to see who was calling to them. Three young men from among their community friends were standing a little distance away, engaged in animated conversation and beckoning Radomir and Arga to join them.

"Seen what?" asked Radomir as he approached.

⁶ *Arga* — pron. *ar-GAH*.

"That extraordinary shirt," answered one of the three. "It's made from smooth fabric, and embroidered with very unusual ornaments. There's probably some secret meaning in them."

A second lad corrected him:

"The shirt's really good, but the girl selling it is much prettier. I've never seen a maiden like that at any fair anywhere."

"So, where do we find this marvel?" asked Arga.

The five boys headed over to the carts displaying jewellery and ornaments, marvellous handicrafts and fine clothing.

One cart in particular had drawn a bigger crowd than usual. Everybody was admiring an exceptionally beautiful shirt, hanging on a wooden hanger. The fabric was rippling lightly in the breeze, and people could see how different it was from the usual shirts made of coarse cloth, exuding, as it did, a feeling of lightness and tenderness. And the patterns embroidered on the collar and the sleeves were extraordinarily delicate and fanciful.

"A pattern like that is the mark of an accomplished craftsman," Arga said aloud in excitement.

"Never mind the pattern, squeeze your way through the crowd and see who's sitting beside it," said a neighbour from their settlement.

After making their way around to the other edge of the small crowd, the friends managed to approach the cart and catch a glimpse of the maiden.

Her eyes were blue as the sky, her dark blonde hair in a tight braid was tied. Her eyebrows were like two brown arches, her lips betrayed just the faintest hint of a smile. Her movements were gracious, but seemed to be entwined with some kind of energy. It was some time before the lads could take their eyes off the maiden.

"She's clever with her tongue, too," the tallest of them quietly observed. "She can speak in verse and comes up with witty sayings." Another added:

"She's kind of tender, but as aloof and inaccessible as a high cliff. Try talking with her."

"I can't," answered Radomir. "She's taken my breath away."

Arga spoke to her first:

"Tell me, fair maiden, are you the one who crafted this magnificent shirt?"

"I am," the maiden replied without raising her eyes. "I wove this shirt to while away the boredom, to make the winter nights shorter. Sometimes I would do some embroidery at dawn."

"And what kind of price are you asking for your handiwork?" Arga enquired, so that he could keep hearing the maiden's tuneful voice a little longer.

The maiden raised her eyes to look at the young lads and it seemed as though her gaze was carrying them away into heavenly heights. She let her gaze rest just for a moment on Radomir, thereby dissolving him, as it were, into the blue. From that point on he felt as though he were in some sort of unusual, unreal dream.

"What price again? Let me explain." The beautiful girl sitting on the cart went on: "I can give this piece without payment only to a kind and courageous young man. I shall ask only something trifling for myself as a souvenir — a colt, for example."

"What a beauty she is! And such a worthy reply, she's a true master!" Loud exclamations could be heard from the crowd. "A colt," she says — 'just a trifle!' Yes, a real beauty all right, no doubt about it!"

The exclamations went on, but the crowd did not move along. Then suddenly the whole throng divided into two halves. There was Arga, leading a dun-coloured stallion by a halter rope. The steed was unbroken and hot-tempered, and kept bucking and prancing on the spot. Whispers spread through the crowd:

"Now that is quite a horse! Such a marvellous steed! Could the fine young man have decided indeed to give it away?"

Arga approached the cart and said:

"My father gave me this steed. I offer it to you, my beauty, in exchange for the shirt."

"Thank you," the maiden calmly replied. "But I did say, and people heard me say, that the shirt is not for sale. I can only give it away to you, or perhaps to some other young man fine and true."

"Aha, the beautiful maiden is frightened!" Mocking voices rose from the crowd. "Of course, the steed is hot-tempered, and too flared up to handle for many a young man. A while ago she was expecting a tame and gentle mare, and now she's got cold feet! See, she's given up the game. So, anyone should be careful. It's a downright shame when a steed is unbroken and hot-tempered."

The maiden looked out at the crowd with an artful smile and jumped down from the cart with an amazingly lithesome style.

At this point all the exclamations from the crowd ceased at once. The girl's torso was absolutely stunning, as though refined to perfection by a master artist. She stood before everybody standing around in all her beauty, smiling at the steed. She took three steps in Arga's direction, seemingly floating toward him, barely touching the ground.

Completely taken aback, Arga suddenly let go of the halter-rope. The hot-tempered stallion reared on its hind legs. But the maiden managed to catch hold of the rope with her hand. And then...

And then, to everyone's amazement, her left hand deftly squeezed the stallion's nostrils. Letting go of the rope, she began caressing the steed's nuzzle with her right hand. And the hot-tempered stallion all of a sudden calmed down. She inclined his head toward the ground. At first he put up some

resistance, but eventually began bowing to the ground — lower and still lower. And then the steed suddenly fell to its knees before the maiden.

A grey-headed oldster stepped forth from the crowd and said:

“Only the old wise-men know how to tame a beast like that, and not even all of *them*. But you are still a young maiden! What is your name? And whose girl are you?”

“I am Liubomila, from the next settlement. And whose am I? Nobody’s. I am simply the daughter of my father. And here he comes, that strict father of mine.”

“If only I *had* been strict!” said the father, who had just come back to the family cart. “What have you been up to this time, my little gal?”

“Nothing much. I’ve just been playing a bit with this little colt.”

“A bit? I see. Let the steed go. It’s time we got on the road home.”



Love, too, was teaching in the Vedruss school

What had happened to Liubomila during these years? Where had she learnt such wisdom and agility all of a sudden? In the Vedruss school.

People studied their whole lifetime in this school, from their early childhood to their most advanced age. Every year they sat for exams. The school programme had appeared right at the beginning of creation in all its minute detail and

then become further enriched over the centuries. The wisdom was imparted unobtrusively. The lessons were not at all like those in your contemporary schools.

You once told me, Vladimir, about a certain expression used in your society. When it turned out that a child is mischievous and rude and bad habits show up in him, people would say that he was brought up by the street, that he's been granted too much freedom.

The Vedruss people had no fear about granting freedom to their children. It was common knowledge that the system of festivals and rites was so intricately and skilfully thought through that all children were absorbed in preparation for them. Even though it seemed as though they were playing, they were actually teaching themselves various disciplines, often without the help of adults.

Examinations in the Vedruss school were like one festival or celebration after another. With their help the adults taught the children, and they themselves learnt from the children.

Take the Festival of the *Koliadki*, for example. During the festival days children walk about and sing *koliadki* to all their neighbours. The verses and melodies, along with the accompanying dance movements, were all composed by the children themselves.

Children started preparing for their performances long before the start of the festivals, eager to learn from adults, their families, their peers and the wise-men as to the best way of mastering verse composition, along with singing and dance movements.

Not all children had the same abilities, of course. Those that were not as quick to learn as others would ask their parents to tutor them. And sometimes parents found they could use their children's thirst for knowledge to draw them into helping around the house and grounds.

A little boy might badger his grandmother, for example:

"Grammykins, dear, read some verse to me. Please do read, I beg you. I don't want to fall behind and be worse than the rest. My friends might not take me with them to sing *koli-adki* next time."

And the grandmother would answer:

"I've quite a bit to do. Perhaps you could help me, and then I would be able to read you some verse this evening."

The child would be eager to help all day long and afterward would listen intently to his grandmother, and try to memorise all her verses or songs, and implore her to teach him the appropriate dance moves. Then he might implore his grandfather, and perhaps his mother and father, too, to tutor him just a little bit more. And he would be grateful to his parents when they offered him a lesson.

Compare this approach, Vladimir, with the lessons children get in schools today — in literature, let us say.

You are right, there is absolutely no comparison. The Vedruss children aspired to become poets themselves, right from a very young age.

The parade of merry festivals in the Vedruss period was a system that helped people learn about the order of the Universe and in turn teach their children the simple wisdom of life.

The wise-men were itinerant teachers and sources of information in regard to what was going on in the world. The *bay-ans*⁷ and bards, too, not only reminded people of events of the past, but gave portents of the future, commending the world of marvellous feelings or reprehending unworthy ones.

Such lessons were constantly taking place in every settlement, but nobody would ever compel their children to attend.

⁷*bayan* (pron. *bab-YAHN*) — see footnote 4 in Book 4, Chapter 33: "School, or the lessons of the gods". On the role of bards, see Book 2, Chapter 10: "The ringing sword of the bard".

It was felt that each teacher himself should attract children's attention to the stories of science he was planning to tell.

Over the centuries rules such as these helped perfect the abilities of the wise-men-teachers.

You asked, Vladimir, whether any wise-men-teachers, in an effort to attract children's attention, would simply play some sort of game with them instead of actually giving them a lesson in science or the arts.

Indeed, if such a thing were to occur, the wise-man would be relieved of his wise-man's status. In talking with their children at home, parents would perceive right off that the children had not been properly taught. News of his dishonourable conduct would be made known in other settlements, and no matter what community he thought to visit, he would probably be asked to leave.

Before the appearance of love within herself, the little girl Liubomilka made no attempt to attend the wise-men's lessons or listen to the songs of the bards and bayans. The parents would not have forced their children to attend, but might drop a surreptitious hint at an appropriate occasion.

It was Love that enfolded little Liubomilka in its energy. In Vedruss families the appearance of love was greeted as a new member of the family sent by God to help them. And they knew how they could, in harmony with Love, make the little girl's life marvellous. This was why the grandmother advised Liubomilka to go and study with the wise-men. Not just to study for the sake of studying, but with a specific purpose — to become the very best she could be for the one she loved. Liubomilka consented, and decided that the next time a wise-man presented himself who could teach people to sing songs with a beautiful voice, she would indeed go see him along with her friends.

But the wise-man they needed never came. Liubomilka decided she would simply go listen to the next wise-man that

showed up. She did, and began to listen to his lecture. This wise-man began talking about the specific function of various plants, the fragrances these gave off, and about how plants could be used to treat Man's diseases.

"What do I need this for?" Liubomila thought to herself. "Indeed, this is neither here nor there — everyone knows how to treat: Mama, grandmother, sister — they all know. And even if I should learn more than anyone else about the various herbs, how will that be noticed by my intended? He'll never notice it."

So Liubomilka listened to the wise-man without paying too much attention. She sat there on the log simply for her girl-friends' company. And sometimes she would get up, walk out and wander about the little glade. She was glad when the wise-man ended his lecture and everyone made ready to go home.

Then all of a sudden the elderly wise-man turned to Liubomilka:

"Tell me, little girl, you did not find my presentation interesting?"

"It's just that it's really of no use to me, it does not fit in with my secret aspiration," little Liubomilka informed the wise-man, almost in a whisper.

The wise-man-teacher broke into a faint smile. The perspicacious old fellow knew all about little girls' secret aspirations, and remarked:

"You know, little girl, you may be right — I can allow that this knowledge has nothing to do with you right now. After all, you are still pretty young. But for older girls I explain how they can become beautiful and create a Space of Love for the one they love. When *he* sees this Space of Love, he will definitely want to know who was able to co-create such beauty. And he will be so excited to meet whoever steps forward as its creator. I shall also reveal to the maidens the secret of how to

weave a garland, how to prepare a tea of herbs for their beloved, and what to use in washing in the morning to make their bodies smell flower-sweet. I shall further be explaining..."

Little Liubomilka listened to the elderly fellow and began to regret more and more that she had not gone to his classes. He stayed in the settlement for more than a week. He revealed to the maidens important secrets, which she knew nothing about. And Liubomilka asked the wise-man:

"Are you going to be staying much longer in our settlement?"

"I shall be on my way in a couple of days," he responded.

"In a couple of days?" The little girl could not hide her disappointment. "Hmm, in two days... Then I would kindly, kindly beg of you to spend your last two nights with us."

"I have already accepted invitations to other homes," responded the wise-man. "But if it means so much to you..."

"Yes, I very, very much need to learn from you about the different herbs."

Each evening the old wise-man spent his whole time talking with the love-smitten Liubomilka. He knew that the inspiration of love would help this little girl grasp the essence of the subject in a day or so, while even a year might not be enough for some others.

When it was time for him to leave, Liubomilka escorted the wise-man to the outskirts of the settlement, and he told her:

"After me another wise-man will be coming here. He will be talking about the stars and the Moon in the skies, about the Sun and about worlds invisible to our eyes. Whoever succeeds in understanding him will be able to light a guiding star in the skies for her beloved, and that star will shine for them both for ever.

"Then along will come a wise-man who knows how to tame wild beasts — indeed, how to render even the most

headstrong steed obedient to your beloved and a faithful friend to him.

"A bard, too, should be coming to you. He knows how to write verse and come out with such songs that many people will fall in love first with the voice, then after that, everything expressed in the song. And he can also teach dance."

"Tell me please, which wise-men should I not bother going to hear?" Liubomilka suddenly said to the old fellow. "After all, I can't spend all my time listening to wise-men."

Once more the old fellow, cleverly concealing a smile, answered the girl in all seriousness:

"Yes, you are right. If you go hear all of them day after day, then there simply will not be time enough for play. You do not need to go and hear every single one. Why, for example, would you want to learn how to draw? Or embroider clothes with ornaments and imbue them with meanings that only your heart knows? Why would you need this kind of teaching, if you have an older sister and she, I believe, will turn out to be an unsurpassed master thereof?

"And why would you, for example, go and learn how to instil feelings of kindness in a shirt you sew — a shirt that will protect its wearer from many ills?

"Or learn how to make fresh porridge with love for your dear ones, which will satisfy not only their flesh but their soul as well? The taste of that porridge will be unsurpassed. But that is something that can be done to perfection by your sister's friend who lives next door.

"And when you want to obtain a beautiful dress or shirt to present to someone as a special gift — a gift that will arouse everyone's elation — you can always ask your sister and she will come up with a marvellous creation.

"And if, in the end, you want to treat someone to an extraordinary dish of porridge or kvass, you can always ask your sister's friend."

"*I shan't ask anybody!*" Liubomilka suddenly blurted out, even stamping her foot, quite forgetting herself. "Those are my rivals!"

"Rivals? In what way?" the old fellow asked in all seriousness.

And Liubomilka did not blush but responded:

"There's this boy — he's the best of the bunch, only he doesn't pay any attention to me, 'cause these dingbats managed to grow up ahead of me. They kept smiling at him all the time. I saw it when they danced the *khorovod*⁸ at the *kapishche*. And I'm supposed to present him with a shirt my sister made? And kvass prepared by her girl-friend? No way! *Never!*"

"But why should it not be that way? You say he is the best of all the lads."

"He is the best. That I know for sure."

"Then answer me, why should not the best lad receive the very best shirt as a gift, and the best porridge, and kvass besides? And..." The old wise-man paused, and very quietly, almost to himself, he added: "I think it is only just for him to have the best bride of all."

"*Bride?*" Liubomilka's cheeks flushed.

"Yes, bride," replied the wise-man. "Indeed, should you not wish him only good? Let him have the best bride of all!"

Liubomila looked at the wise-man, not able to utter a word. She was filled with feelings which set her on fire. And

⁸ *khorovod* (pron. *bur-a-VOT*) — a circle dance accompanied by choral singing, traditionally popular among Russians, Ukrainians and Belarusians. The *khorovod* is one of the ancient rites venerating the Sun. The dancers would almost invariably move clock-wise, symbolising the movement of Sun across the sky (as seen from the Northern Hemisphere). The dance, music and song served to put the participants into a trance-like state, so as to help them reconnect with the spiritual forces permeating the Universe.

suddenly she began running off. But after a short distance she stopped, turned around, and cried out to the wise-man:

"I agree. He *does* deserve to have the best bride of all. And that bride will be *me!*"



Liubomilka eagerly paid a visit to every wise-man that came to the settlement thereafter. She was always the first to arrive and the last to leave, and the wise-men could hardly believe the surprising questions she asked. She memorised in her head everything the men of wisdom said. In a learning situation this is possible only when a child not simply *attends* the classes, but actually *comprehends* where he will apply the knowledge received.

When instruction proves too gruelling for the pupil, it can be counterproductive. When a Man has a specific goal that can be mastered through the study of various disciplines, learning for him becomes an exhilaration, and the assimilation of knowledge proceeds a hundred times faster.

And when love enters into the equation, the resulting effect is unsurpassed. Love is capable of scanning the thought of any wise-man. Just a few words spoken by the teacher can be sufficient not only to explain the whole subject to the pupil in the blinking of an eye, but even beyond that, to further engage his thinking.

Love — a great energy, the gift of God — was paramount in Liubomilka's instruction.

Back at home the little girl followed her Mama and grandmother's dinner preparations with great eagerness. She had

them explain all their actions in full detail, and tried her own hand at creating various dishes. And the little one came up with some rather unusual creations.

Once at *Maslenitsa*⁹ a group of relatives had come to join in a meal. Two stacks of pancakes stood on the table — one of them cooked by the girl's mother and grandmother, the other by little Liubomilka herself. The guests found *her* pancakes much tastier than the others. And this now-not-so-little girl watched from a far corner of the room as her stack of pancakes began disappearing faster than the other.

When the whole family sat down to the table on a weekday, Grandfather would be the first to taste the cabbage soup from a wooden spoon. And he would say:

"I know for certain who made this soup. It has a pleasant and tender taste that no one else can match."

"Hear, hear!" the girl's father added. "Not only does it contain flowers from unusual herbs, but there is *feeling* in it."

Little Liubomilka found learning the disciplines no chore at all. In her life she became a craftsman without peer. She herself blossomed into an extraordinarily beautiful woman.

From the first wise-man she had learnt without realising it the truth of great love: if you wish to be close to God, become a goddess yourself.

⁹*Maslenitsa* — a traditional week-long celebration in late February or early March, marking the coming of Spring and involving the ritual preparing and eating of pancakes (symbolising the Sun). Russia's Orthodox Church later incorporated the holiday into its calendar, known in English as *Shrovetide* — the week prior to the beginning of Lent. For further information please see footnote 1 in Book 7, Chapter 22: "The marvellous Vedruss holidays".

CHAPTER TEN



Pre-wedding festivities

The children grew up. The time came to search for soul-mates. Festivities were a great help to young people in this important undertaking.

Young Vedruss people would gather in the evenings at a designated place, usually just outside the settlement. They would light a bonfire, chat among themselves or sing songs. And once a week there would be a common festivity involving three or four settlements all told at one of their favourite spots, where they would similarly light a bonfire, sing songs and chat among themselves. But there were some festivities which were especially useful in helping young people find their soulmates.

While such festivities were outwardly quite simple, their simplicity harboured a great inner significance.



‘Rucheyok’

There was a game called *Rucheyok*,¹ for example. Young people lined up in pairs, one couple after the other, took each other’s

¹*Rucheyok* (stressed on last syllable) — the Russian word for a small stream.

hands and raised them high, forming an arch overhead. To start with, boys were paired with boys, girls with girls. The first pair — or anyone left without a partner — would go to the end of the ‘stream’ and, bending over, pass under the arch of raised arms to the head of the line.

Those passing through the ‘stream’ were not supposed to look up. They were to slap somebody’s arm at random, thereby selecting him or her as a temporary partner. Whoever was selected followed suit, and the two of them then stood at the head of the line of couples. Those left without a partner went to the end of the line and chose a new partner in a similar fashion.

The game was simple, but think about it, Vladimir: upon clasping hands for the first time, the young people could convey a great many feelings for each other without words: recognition, gratitude and love, or, on the other hand, revulsion. As the game went on, the couples switched, and it was easy to compare which pair of hands held the most pleasant feeling for you.



‘Chastushka-govorushka’

This ancient wedding game was the most complex of its kind. Modern *chastushki*, which people still sing today, are derived from it.

The game, known as *Chastushka-govorushka*,² can be described as follows. Two rows of people stood facing each other. One row was made up of young men, the other of young maidens. The last girl in the row dedicated a four-line chastushka to the last chap in the men’s row, standing opposite

her. Her singing would be accompanied by dance movements. Directly she finished, the rest of the girls quickly stamped their feet twice and clapped their hands three times. And if the lad standing opposite her did not succeed in composing or recalling from memory a worthy response, the girl started singing a new *chastushka* to the next young man in line.

If the lad managed to come up with a worthy answer in the time allotted, the conversation would continue between them with the use of poetic witticisms. But that did not happen very often.

In spite of the fact that young Vedruss people knew a great many verses, still, not everyone was able to think up a worthy reply in the brief time available, especially since their rivals were trying their hardest to distract them from the sidelines by all their stamping and clapping.



At one of these get-togethers of young people from different settlements, Liubomila was present. Radomir's five friends who had caught a glimpse of this extraordinary girl at the fair kept stealing glances at her. His closest friend, Arga, could not take his eyes off her at all.

²*Chastushka-govorushka* (*che-STOOSH-ka ga-va-ROOSH-ka*) — The word *chastushka* (plural: *chastushki*) denotes a type of humorous, satirical or ironic four-line verse in trochaic tetrametre, sometimes sung to musical accompaniment. It is often compared to the limerick in English. The word *chastushka* is derived from the verb *chastit'* (to talk fast). In the name of this game it is paired with the rhyming word *govorushka*, a derivative of the verb *govorit'* (speak).

When the *Rucheyok* game began, the usually bold and decisive Radomir walked under the couples' raised arms with the full intention of taking Liubomila's hand and making her his partner. But all of a sudden he got 'cold feet'. He could feel her as he passed by between the two rows. He would have felt her even if his eyes had been closed. But as he approached the spot in the 'stream' where she was standing opposite her girl-friend, he slowed down ever so little, and found himself moving as in a dream. He ended up choosing a lad from a neighbouring settlement.

His friend Arga, however, turned out to have more self-confidence. When it came his turn to pass through the 'stream', Arga picked Liubomila right away, grabbed her hand and took up a position with her at the head of the line of couples, much to the envy of all the other young men.

Afterward they questioned him:

"What was it like when she held your hand? Did she squeeze it tight or not?"

"I don't know," Arga replied. "I cannot remember aught. It just seemed as though my hand caught on fire. Touch and see for yourselves — it still feels hot."

"What a gall!" the fine young lads exclaimed in amazement on the spot. "She's so hot with passion, it's as though she's burning with a flame from some mysterious fire!"

Radomir in turn heard all of this without saying a word. His own internal yearnings had been burning for some time — ever since that day he first discerned this wondrous girl at the fair. He had been thinking about her day after day, first thing upon waking in the morning. She even appeared to him in his dreams, but even there, it seemed, he could not bring himself to touch her.

Always successful in any undertaking, Radomir had a reputation as a poet, but now all of a sudden even the simplest of words to describe her utterly failed him.

When the *Chastushka-govorushka* game got going, he stood in the middle of the row of young men, next to his friend Arga. Liubomila was almost at the end of the maidens' row. When it came her turn to sing and dance the *chastushki*, she began her song with ease. At once it was clear to all that here was an extraordinary maiden indeed, impossible to beat.

She switched themes in a flash. She sang couplets no one had ever heard before. One after the other she won out over all the young men, even though she herself was the youngest of all.

When it came Arga's turn, he was still able to give a response to the crafty maiden, albeit not without a bit of a glitch. He replied to Liubomila with a quatrain, but she, without even waiting for the stamping and clapping, suddenly changed topic and offered up such a smooth new witticism in verse that Arga was completely thrown off the track and didn't even attempt to counter with one of his own.

Next it was Radomir's turn. Liubomila began singing to him, jauntily dancing to the rhythm of her verse:

Bold and eloquent you are,
Much you know, oh yes!
D'you recall how in the lake
You once washed my dress?

Some listeners laughed, thinking Liubomila was making a joke with her couplet. Some, including Radomir himself, could not figure out what it was all about. And, not being able to figure it out, he found it impossible to offer any kind of answer.

So Radomir could give no response to Liubomila. When the stamping and clapping came to an end, signifying the deadline for reply was up, he realised that his time had irretrievably gone by. This was something he could not allow. As

though completely forgetting himself, he now began moving toward Liubomila — first one step, then a second, then a third. By this time he had come right up close beside her. Everybody fell silent, wondering why the rules of the game had been defied.

Radomir stood silently before Liubomila. And all at once, against this background of silence everyone standing in the rows heard Radomir utter, with audible aspiration, the Vedruss declaration of love:

“With you, my marvellous goddess, I could co-create a Space of Love to last forever.”

Everybody waited with bated breath to hear what response this fiery-tongued maiden would come up with.

But all of a sudden she became very meek. At first she deferentially lowered the gaze of her fiery eyes, but then raised them again. Tears began rolling down her cheek and she whispered:

“I am ready to help you in your grand co-creation.”³

Finally Radomir recognised in the maiden standing before him the same little girl whose dress he had washed in the lake so many years ago. He recognised her, and took her by the hand. As they walked along side by side, they no longer had eyes for anyone else. The two rows of young people stood facing each other in silence as they watched the couple’s love head into eternity.

³See the section “A union of two — a wedding” in Book 6, Chapter 5: “The history of mankind, as told by Anastasia”.

CHAPTER ELEVEN



The wedding rite

The Vedruss wedding rite, Vladimir, is something you already know about. You wrote about it in *The Book of Kin*.¹ Let me remind you of the essence of these great acts.

It was the lovers' task to jointly choose a place for their future domain. They would usually go out beyond the perimeter of the settlement where *he* lived with his parents, and then inspect the area around the settlement where *she* lived. And there was no need for the lovers to let their parents know of their intentions, as everyone in the settlements had an awareness and comprehension of the deed that this was leading to.

On their chosen plot of land, measuring a hectare or more, the lovers drew up plans for their real life together. Their task was to mentally envision a house and arrange a whole lot of plants so that every part worked together with each other in harmonious precision.

Liubomila and Radomir quickly found a spot for their future domain. As though by mutual agreement, they had each gone outside the boundaries of the settlement to a spot where there was a small grove of trees and a stream flowing by almost unnoticed from a small spring.

Radomir had been here before. He had sat here alone, dreamt about the future, about his future life together with his beloved.

¹See the section entitled "A union of two — a wedding" in Book 6, Chapter 5: "The history of mankind, as told by Anastasia".

Liubomila had twice come by on her faithful fast-running horse without Radomir. She herself, without knowing why, had once halted her horse by the stream, walked over to the grove, let down her hair, put on a headband and stood for a long time by a goodly young birch tree.

Now the lovers stood on the spot together.

"I was really pleased when I came here on my own," said Radomir. "I would very much like to continue our family line here."

"And *I* like this place, too," Liubomila whispered.

Early the next morning, as soon as the dawn broke, Radomir brought to the place they had selected more than a dozen rods in a cart and long willow shoots, along with some small posts and a scythe. No sooner had he begun to cut the grass than he saw Liubomila approaching on her steed at a gallop. Radomir was absolutely delighted at the sight, and his heart started trembling. The beautiful girl leapt down from her horse, before it had come to a full stop, three metres short of the as yet unmarked boundary line of their plot, and dashed over to Radomir.

"I greet you with the dawning day, creator," she said to Radomir, smiling. "The day has turned out to be a fine one, and I decided to bring along some coloured ribbon to mark out the places for our future plantings."

"Thank you for brightening the day," replied Radomir.

The lovers did not kiss nor even embrace. According to Vedruss custom, anything like that was not seemly to do before the wedding. And there was a considerable significance to be perceived in this: they did not make a daily routine out of kisses and embraces before their children were conceived. And therefore, when the moment for conception arrived, their energies were at their peak potential. And they never set up dates for themselves.

Each one would visit the selected spot on their own whenever they wished.

Radomir was always the first to arrive with each day's dawn. Liubomila would follow suit on her steed.

Within a week Radomir had constructed a shelter resembling a magical little house. It was two-and-a-half metres wide and three metres deep. He dug the rods into the ground, made the walls out of interwoven branches, and covered it with a combination of rods and branches.

The lovers covered the whole thing with dried grass, and Liubomila spread a fabric cloth over the interior walls and ceiling. And she made two beds with straw on the bottom, hay on top, each bed covered with a cloth.

When the magical little house was ready, the lovers would often rest and spend the night there, but they did not enter into intimate relations. Such intimacy before the wedding, before creating the 'nest', was considered an affront to their future children.

Besides, the young people had a lot to keep them busy. Radomir brought a large board, on which he carved the plan for their plot, indicating all the points of the compass, including the rising and setting of the Sun and the risings of the Moon. Wind-speed and direction for both daytime and nighttime were also recorded.

Liubomila would often go to the perimeter of the plot, where she would stand for a long time, picturing in her mind their future plantings. She would also check with Radomir's plan to make sure they would not have any harm from the wind or shade.

When winter came, Liubomila made less frequent visits to their love domain. She would spend her days weaving fabric in her parents' home, and embroidering a shirt for Radomir with love.

But Radomir came again and again to their future domain. He continued to obtain and note down information on wind movements, and memorised how the snow lay in the plain.

This is how the Vedruss people over the years made a weather calendar. Every Vedruss family had boards inscribed with such plans and were able to accurately describe the weather to come for a year in advance — two and three years ahead, even. It might seem as though it would have been easier simply to copy a calendar like that from one their parents had made, but it would not have been entirely accurate. The landscape would be just a little bit different, and a copse or a hillock might be able to protect a plant from the wind. The wintertime snowdrifts, too, could be different.

By the time spring arrived, the design was already complete in Radomir's and Liubomila's thought, and in early spring they began once more to live in their little house. The task now before them was to mark out all the planting areas with posts, ribbons and branches, and harmonise their ideas with each other. Radomir also had to dig a well and fence off the waterspring.

There were only two weeks left until they could put the seedlings into the ground, and the lovers began preparing for the wedding.

First they went to the settlement where the groom lived, and then to the bride's. They would pay a visit to every house, inviting its residents to their wedding. In every house their arrival was eagerly anticipated. Everyone wanted to see their love and decide on a gift for their future living home. When the young couple visited a garden, a house or a household courtyard, they would speak briefly to the residents. Just a sentence to each one — something like *Oh, what a splendid apple tree you have!* *Your cat has a knowing look!* or *Your bear is a real worker, very considerate!*

To any resident hearing the lovers praise a tree growing in the garden or the household cat, this was a sign of appreciation of the resident's worthy life. It also indicated that the young couple, too, would like to have a plant or an animal like that.

The couple was not invited into the house nor given anything to eat. This was not just a random practice on the part of the Vedruss people. It would not have been deemed considerate for the young lovers to refuse an invitation for a visit and a meal, but if they had started making extended visits, they would not have had enough time to go round to all the families before the wedding.

Arga, who had known Radomir from childhood, broke the rules slightly. When the lovers paid a visit to his house and began talking with his father, Arga suddenly ran off and fetched a marvellous colt from the stable — the one that had earlier caught the fancy of the whole settlement. He started talking excitedly:

“Please, accept this steed as a present from me. Just as before, he has not let anyone near him since Liubomila made him submit that day at the fair.”

The father gave his son a sly smile and said:

“Perhaps, Arga, you are not letting any horse-breakers near your steed? For some reason you don’t seem to want to break him in yourself.”

Arga replied, slightly embarrassed:

“I haven’t been breaking him in. I decided to leave this stallion forever free. But now I’ve changed my mind. Take this steed as a present from me.” And he handed the reins to Liubomila.

“Thank you,” replied Liubomila. “But I cannot accept this steed, seeing as he is already accustomed to another. But if he has a colt, we shall gratefully accept it indeed.”

When the young couple had completed the round of the domains, and the wedding day that had been announced to all finally arrived, young and old began hastening at daybreak to the designated spot.

People lined up along the perimeter of the plot of land which the young couple had staked out with dry branches.

Right in the centre, next to the shelter, a little mound rose out of the ground, decorated with flowers. Radomir mounted the hillock, and excitedly outlined the plan for the future domain before the gathering.

And each time the young man pointed to a spot where some sort of plant was to grow, someone would step forth from the circle of listeners and go over to the place Radomir was indicating. And this Man held in his hands a seedling of the plant Radomir had named. And each contributor who stepped forth was accorded a bow from the people in turn. After all, each contributor had earned the young couple's praise during the visits to the domains for having been able to grow a marvellous plant. This meant that he was worthy of the praise of the Creator, the Father of all, the all-loving God.

After announcing their design, Radomir came down from the mound and went over to the spot where his Liubomila was following the whole procedure with excitement and trembling. He took her hand and led her solemnly to the little mound, where the lovers now stood together before the whole gathering.

Then Radomir once again addressed the crowd:

"I was not alone in creating this Space of Love. Here beside me, and standing before you, people, is my marvellous inspiration."

The girl — or, more properly, a maiden — initially lowered her gaze before the gathering.

Every woman has her own beauty. But there can be moments in every woman's life when she shines above the rest. Such moments are absent in our modern culture. But back then...

Now Liubomila raised her eyes to focus her gaze on the assembly.

The excitement of the whole throng before her merged into a single exultation. The girl's face shone with a radiant

smile, not of impudence but of courage. She was filled to overflowing with the energy of Love. Her cheeks were aflush with a brighter than usual glow. The people and the whole Space around them were captured by the warmth radiating from her luxuriantly healthy body and her sparkling eyes. For a moment everybody froze in rapture.

The young goddess stood before the people, shining in all her beauty. The people, in turn, could only admire the most delightful vision.

This was why the maiden's parents waited before beginning their solemn procession, accompanied by the elderly and younger members of the whole family, to the mound where the loving couple was standing.

Stopping at the mound, the family first bowed to the young couple, and now the mother asked the maiden, her daughter:

"All the wisdom of the family line lies in you, my daughter. Tell me, do you see the future of the land you have chosen?"

"Yes, Mama, I see it," replied Liubomila.

"Tell me, daughter dear," the mother continued, "do you like everything about the future you have been shown?"

"I really do like the design. But still I should like to add just a little something."

Quickly jumping down from the mound, Liubomila all at once ran through the crowd to the edge of her future garden, where she stopped and said:

"Here is where an evergreen should grow, with a birch beside it. When a breeze blows from that direction, it will first meet the branches of the pine, then the birch, and after that the breeze will ask the trees of the garden to sing a tune. It will not be repeated exactly the same way each time, but it will always be a delight to the soul. And here," the maiden added, running off a little to one side, "here flowers are to grow. First there will be a flush of red, then over here, a little later, violets will spring up, and burgundy over there."

Liubomila, all aglow like a fairy, started dancing around her future garden. And once more the people remaining in the circle set themselves in motion, hurrying about to carry the seeds in their hands to the spots on the ground the high-spirited girl had pointed out.

Upon finishing her dance, she once more ran up to the mound. Here, standing next her chosen one, she said:

"Now the Space here will be splendid in its sheen. The earth will produce a most marvellous scene."

"Tell, my daughter, for all to hear," her mother once more addressed her, "who will be crowned to reign over all this marvellous Space around? Of all the people living on the Earth, upon whom could you bestow the crown?"

Turning to her fiancé, the bride responded:

"He is worthy to wear the crown whose thought is able to create a future that will be splendid all around."

With these words the girl touched the shoulder of the young man standing beside her. He got down on one knee before her. And the girl solemnly placed on his head a most beautiful crown, a garland woven from nice, sweet-smelling grasses by the maiden's own hand. Then, running her fingers thrice through her fiancé's hair with her right hand, she took hold of his head with her left and drew it a little closer to herself. Then Radomir, now crowned, stood up, while Liubomila ran down from the mound and bowed her head ever so slightly before him in a sign of meekness.

Now, as was the custom, the young man's father, accompanied by his whole family, made its way over to the mound. As they approached, they stopped in respect, and the father asked his son, who was standing over the whole assembly:

"Who are you whose thought is capable of creating a Space of Love?"

And Radomir replied:

"I am your son, and I am the son of the Creator."

"A crown has been placed upon your head, a sign of a great mission to come. You who are wearing the crown, what will you do as you reign over your domain?"

"I shall create a future that all around most splendid will remain."

And the father asked again:

"Where will you gain the strength and inspiration, my son, and crowned son of the Creator?"

"In Love!"

Another question:

"The energy of Love is capable of wandering through the whole Universe. How will you manage to see the reflection of universal love on the Earth?"

"There is one girl, Father, and for me she is the reflection of universal love on the Earth."

With these words the young man came down to where Liubomila was standing, took her by the hand and led her back up to the mound. Whereupon the two families merged into a single group, sharing hugs and jokes and laughter.

Then the young man thanked everyone, and they all began to plant their living gifts in the spot Radomir had indicated earlier. Those not assigned a specific spot set about to walk around the perimeter of the plot which had already been marked out and to the sound of the *khorovod* threw the seeds they had brought with them into the ground. Within the space of a few minutes a marvellous garden had been planted.

Once again the young man wearing the crown held up his hand, and, when all was quiet, said:

"Let all the creatures given to Man by the Creator live together with us in friendship!"

And those who had brought animals as gifts approached the shelter, carrying a kitten or a puppy or a wee calf on a lead, or even a bear cub. Arga, Radomir's friend, gave them the colt he had promised.

Then people quickly fashioned tree branches into a wicker fence to attach animal pens to the shelter. And soon the dwelling which just a short time ago had been used by people as sleeping quarters was now filled with animals, who were similarly young. And there was tremendous significance in this. For in mixing with each other this way, these animals would forever live together in friendship, caring for and helping each other.

After accepting the gifts, the young couple once again thanked everybody, and then a joyful celebration with songs and khorovods began. The young people, however, withdrew with their families each to their own house. They would not see each other again until after two nights and one full day had passed.

During this time the best craftsmen of both settlements carried the pre-built framework of a log-house to the new domain, put a roof on top, laid down the floor and filled all the seams with moss and grass. And the women placed their best fruits of their harvest in the new home. The two mothers covered the bed with a linen counterpane. And by the second night every last one of the visitors was gone from the domain. The energy of Love lingered over it in anticipation of the young lovers' coming.



“Look what happens, Vladimir,” said Anastasia, after finishing her account. “The Vedruss family, in this case little Liubomila’s family, accepted the appearance of the feeling of love in the little girl as the gift of God. And they treated the

appearance of this feeling as that of a new member of their family, sent by God, as a helper in the raising of their little girl — perhaps as the primary helper. As a result, the girl's grandmother helped her understand what the great energy of Love wanted of her, pointing to concrete actions in a simple language comprehensible to a child.

"The little girl was inspired to start learning various disciplines, the pristine wisdom of being, and worked to perfect her own spirit and body.

"Who was primarily responsible, Vladimir, for Liubomila's success — her grandmother, the wise-men-teachers, the girl herself, or the great inexhaustible energy of Love?"

"I would say that if you took away the energy of Love, then all the other participants in the girl's upbringing would hardly be capable of getting even half of that done. But without them, the energy of Love would have a hard time setting the girl on the right path all by itself."

"So then, what happened was a joint creation, and joy was shared by all from its contemplation! Well, that is precisely what God wants of Man."

"I agree. The wedding rite itself is a festive masterpiece altogether unsurpassed in beauty, significance and rationality. If you compare it to modern wedding rites, it looks as though we've all transformed ourselves into a bunch of occult idiots. What are young people left with today, after a modern wedding? Memories of gadding around in a car, for some reason, to the 'eternal flame',² a drunken spree in a café or restaurant, cries of *Gor'ko, gor'ko!*,³ and public kisses wasting energy that

²'eternal flame' (i.e., at the tomb of the unknown soldier) — Such a visit shortly after the wedding ceremony is a common practice among Russian newlyweds.

³*Gor'ko, gor'ko!* (lit. 'Bitter, bitter!') — the traditional call at Russian wedding receptions for the bride and groom to kiss (and thereby sweeten the bitter wine).

should be saved for the conception of a child. Whereas after the Vedruss wedding rite the couple is left not with just memories but with an actual house built with joy by the finest craftsmen, a garden with a multitude of growing things planted by the hands of relatives as well as friends and neighbours who contributed to the young lovers' design."

"In reality, Vladimir, they are left with an actual Space of Love. A sacred, living, truly Divine nest, where the conception of a child may subsequently be expressed.

"The witnesses at a Vedruss wedding rite comprise not just two friends, as happens today, but all the relatives from the whole area, and they create designs not on pieces of paper but in a living creation on the earth.

"The young people in turn sit an examination together, describing their design for their future domain in front of the whole community. I would say their presentation is on an incomparably higher level than today's doctoral dissertations.

"Of course the materialisation of living Space — the house, the homestead, the beauty of the actions used to create these, all play an undoubtedly important part. But there is one incredible aspect that is just as important. See who actually marries the young couple. Not the parents, not some random official in the Civil Registration Office or a priest whom they often see for the first and the last time.

"Liubomila herself places the crown on Radomir's head, in front of the whole gathering! This is an act that God's children are indeed entitled to fulfil. It is a psychological factor that is not as simple as may seem at first glance.

"A Man who lets his love be registered by some random person is already relieving himself, on a subconscious level, of the responsibility for the subsequent fate of his family. Liubomila, by contrast, takes this responsibility upon herself.

"There are many formalities placed between modern couples registering their marriage and God. These include the

blessing by the parents, the registration at the Civil Office and a priest in the church. By contrast, nobody stands between the Vedruss couple and God. Consequently their marriage can be blessed only by God Himself.

“And even before the crowning, He really makes this into an actual manifestation. He sends them mutual love. The Vedruss people knew how to accept it and make it eternal.

“And what happened, one might ask, *before* conception in the Vedruss period?”

CHAPTER TWELVE



Conception

The wedding rite had now taken place. But the young people did not simply hop into bed to engage in the wedding-night activities we know about today, following a drunken spree. Their relatives did not make them lie in bed and then display the bloody sheet to the wedding guests the next morning, as has been done in many wedding rites, especially in the Caucasus.¹

The young lovers went off, each to their respective parents' homes. They slept, and then made their ablutions. And in the execution of this whole custom there is a great significance.

The excitement associated with the approval of the domain's design quickly passed. The excitement associated with the wedding itself, where their attention was totally occupied with each other in a climax, may have had a pleasurable dimension, but it was still accompanied by a degree of nervous tension.

At their parents' homes they rested and slept off the excitement, while of course still thinking about each other.

Two days later they experienced their first encounter as husband and wife. And by this time everything was ready for the conception of their child. It was not just a question of material benefits. The house, the warm enclosure for their animals, the vegetable garden and the orchard were all very important, of course. But equally important was the mental and physical state of the young couple.

¹Once more, this chapter is a continuation of Anastasia's narrative.

Radomir awoke before dawn. And without a word to anyone, he put on his garland and picked up his shirt that had been hand-embroidered by his mother. Then he headed off to the spring-fed stream.

The moon illumined his path through the pre-dawn darkness, while garlands of stars twinkled in the heavens. After washing in the stream, he put on his shirt and quickly made his way to his sacred creation. The heavens began to brighten.

And there he stood alone on the spot where the two villages recently celebrated their joy — the place he created through his dream.

The power of the feelings and sensations within a Man at such a moment can scarcely be comprehended by anyone who has not experienced them at least once for himself.

It can be said that these sensations and feelings are Divine in nature. And they have increased in quivering anticipation of the first ray of dawn, in which... *There she is! His most marvellous Liubomila!* Illumined in the dawn's rays, she ran to greet him and their co-creation.

The vision incarnate ran to meet Radomir. While perfection, of course, knows no real limit, it seemed as though time had suddenly stopped for the two of them. Enveloped in the mist of their feelings, they entered their new home. The table was spread with delicacies, and a tempting fragrance of dried flowers wafted from the embroidered counterpane on the bed.

"What are you thinking about right now?" she asked him in a heated whisper.

"About *him* — our future child," and Radomir gave a quiver as he looked at Liubomila. "My, how beautiful you are!" No longer able to contain himself, he very tenderly touched her shoulder and cheek.

It was not just that Liubomila and Radomir felt a joy in their hearts, they kept looking at each other in silent delight.

My husband, Liubomila whispered to herself without making a sound. *My husband, I thank heaven and the whole Universe. O righteous God, what happiness You give to people — the happiness of living a life in love!*

My wife, Radomir thought as he looked at Liubomila. He closed his eyes and opened them again so as to see her all of a sudden afresh. As though she were the best vision in the world. As though the most important goddess in the world had appeared before him. But it was not just ‘as though’ he saw the goddess Liubomila before him. Radomir saw a goddess in real life.

The warm breath of Love enveloped the twosome and carried them away to heights unknown.

Nobody in a million years would ever be able to describe in detail what occurs between *him* and *her*, when people merge together into one for the purposes of co-creation and bring forth the image of themselves and of God in a mutual impulse of love.

But the god-people of the Vedruss culture knew for certain that when two people are joined together by an unexplainable miracle, each of them subsequently maintains his or her individuality. At the same time, the Universe shudders at that unexplainable moment upon seeing the vision of the infant’s Soul tripping barefoot through the stars, making its way to the Earth, thereby embodying in itself the twain — plus a third — in one.

The dawn progressed into a happy day. And the Sun was rising over the Earth. It shone more brightly with its delicate ray on the spot where the gods stood on the Earth. And the energy of Love, God’s gift to the earthly gods, illuminated them with a light greater than the Sun, invisible, radiating blessings. And the energy of Love celebrated in joy!

Is this energy intelligent? It is! Like all feelings — particles of mind — it was considered by God to be the most

important of all. When the grand creation of the Earth was given birth by God, he told Love:

“Hasten, My Love, hasten, do not stop for rational contemplation. Hasten with your last spark. Envelop them with your great energy of grace — all My future sons and daughters in your embrace.”²

And now, when Liubomila and Radomir’s conception took place in love, Love called out to God:

“You are invisible, Great Creator. But Your children are visible. I too was invisible. Now my reflection on the faces of Your children I see. They are Yours and, in a way, mine to be. I want to nurse their children and understand how You, Great Creator, were able to foresee when you gave to them, as a gift from You, the whole of me. How You could likewise foresee earthly grace. Show Yourself in all Your beauty and grandeur for all Your children to see.”

God responded to Love in a whisper of a barely noticeable breeze:

“I Myself would not presume to distract My children from their grand and inspired co-creation. And I beg you, My Love, do not burn these young hearts in an impulse of your own delight. I remember how with the grace of your energy you once set Me alight. I feel you are also burning our children with your delight.”

“My God, I do not burn, I only warm them. When You said ‘our children’, I gave just a little shudder, and for a moment my energy in turn increased in me. But I restrained them, I declined to burn them. You distinctly said ‘our children’, which means they must also be, at least a little bit, mine.”

“Those who are born in love will understand who their mother and father are.”

²See Book 4, end of Chapter 6: “First encounter”.



It might not be easy, Vladimir, to understand, but you must try. The intimate relations involved were by no means the lead factor in the Vedruss conception of children. What people do in bed today, calling it 'love-making', is a mere mockery of Love and a debasement of God. The satisfaction of fleshly needs lasts but for a moment, and I would venture to say that it cannot compare with even a hundredth part of what has been determined in God's plan for Man.

The Vedruss people did not see each other as an object of fleshly desire. They saw something quite different altogether.

When the desire came to Liubomila and Radomir to create a child, they did not see him as being separate from themselves. The culture of feelings was quite different in those times. The husband and wife, in their love, saw in each other their own child. And, consequently, their caresses were quite different from today. People were not drawn to each other by the passion of copulation, but by the grand aspiration to co-creation.

And Radomir embraced Liubomila almost as his own child. He tenderly stroked her hair with his hand, touched her supple breasts, gently caressed her shoulders and kissed the palms of her hands. Her hands touched his face and his shoulders. She tenderly clasped him by the neck and drew him to her breast as though comforting a child...

There are many treatises in the world which try to teach the subject of intimate copulation. But there never has been, and never will be, a treatise capable of outlining the Vedruss approach to conception.

The lovers' bodies were not the focus of attention. The bodies simply carried out people's will and desire. People at that moment found themselves living in a different dimension. When the great and worthy act was accomplished, they returned to the Earth. The satisfaction they derived was no fleeting fancy. It remained with them eternally, as though lifting Man one step higher in the direction of Divine perfection.

At the actual moment of conception, Radomir seemed to be in a state of oblivion, as though he had not yet returned from a dimension he had never known before. He kissed Liubomila as though she were his own child, and fell asleep in a blissful dream. Men cannot help but fall asleep, perhaps because of an innate desire to return there once again.

But Liubomila did not sleep. She felt within herself, or so it seemed, an extraordinary particle of being. She rose from the bed and went over to the window, where the Sun was streaming through, dividing the windowsill into bright and shady sections.

Liubomila ran over the line with her finger where the light and dark met. She took off the flaxen ribbon encircling her wrist and put it on the same line. The Vedruss people always marked the day and moment of conception.

Then on the spot where the wedding took place they planted a tree whose trunk would be sure to grow straight. A second tree was planted at the moment when the border between light and dark coincided with the flaxen ribbon marking on the windowsill. The second tree was planted in the shadow of the first. This act allowed them to forever remember the moment at which they conceived the child. A horoscope calculated from this point will always be more accurate. The Vedruss people knew about the positioning of the planets and their influence on the flesh; nevertheless, in spite of the planets, they were able to accomplish successful deeds, since it was a great energy that they possessed.

Subsequently they poured the birthing water there, and buried the placenta there in the earth. And when he got older, a Man would go to sleep in the same spot on the anniversary of his conception. The position of the planets slightly varied from year to year, and a Man could feel all the information coming from the Cosmos on the night of such a sleep — not with his mind, but rather with his feeling, in his subconsciousness — right up to God's creation of everything earthly. And if there were any sorrow or disease, the dream could eliminate it on the spot with ease. But only very rarely could any disease of the flesh affect the Vedruss people.

The place of conception served them as a place to sleep and to become consciously aware of the whole order of the Universe.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN



Telegony can be overcome

“Anastasia, I heard that the wise-men knew how to overcome the phenomenon of telegony, i.e., the consequences of previous relationships. If a woman has had a prior relationship, then the first man, as is now known, will undoubtedly exert an influence on the appearance and character of a child fathered by another man — the woman’s husband, for example.

“If they go through the wedding rite you spoke of, does that mean that the consequences of the woman’s previous relationship will be eliminated once and for all?”

“Vladimir, the child does not always have to resemble the previous partner. When the new events in the woman’s life and the sensations of her feelings are sufficiently bright, the information about prior unsuccessful relations will be erased. Still, the Vedruss people had a rite which could help erase old, unwanted information. It purifies both the man and the woman, and three thoughts must participate. Whose thoughts those are, try to guess on your own.”

“It would be better for you to tell me yourself, Anastasia. My brain is overtaxed as it is from too much information.”

“Fine, I shall tell you. But it is very important that people learn to draw the conclusions they need for themselves.”

“At some point they will learn, but for right now *you* had better explain it, seeing as how the question is so important.”

“Then give me a full formulation of a question as to what interests you.”

“What d’you mean, a ‘full formulation’?”

"Vladimir, you are aware, are you not, that this phenomenon touches not only women, but, in equal measure, men. A man's previous relationships can also exert an influence on his future children. And the most upright and chaste girl can bear a child which is not her own, if the man is not a virgin. You know about that, Vladimir?"

"Yes, Anastasia, unfortunately I do. I read how one soldier on his way home from army service had too much to drink at the railway terminal and slept with an Asian prostitute. He came back to his village and married a girl who had been waiting for him. They produced a child who had swarthy skin and slanting eyes. Everybody started blaming the girl, but there wasn't a single Asian anywhere in the vicinity. I thought, though, that it wasn't really that necessary to bring up the subject of men."

"It is *vital*ly necessary to talk about men too. They are to play the principal role in the rite.

"The rite consists in this. The man must set up their bed in the open air under the stars on the spot where the couple live in natural surroundings. He should prepare the bed for himself and the woman. They should fast for three days and sleep three nights under the stars. And before they go to sleep, each time the man should wash the woman and himself with spring water. The man should rub the woman down with flaxen fabric, but not rub himself down, just get the water drops off himself with his hands. The man should be still wet when he lies down in the bed with the woman. During those three days they should not let themselves indulge in intimate relations.

"While they are falling asleep under the stars, on the first night they should forgive each other for all past transgressions and right away, right from that very first night, visualise their future child.

"The man should think about how their child should be like the woman, and the woman about how the child should resemble the man.

"After these three days have gone by, they are free to engage in fleshly intimacy, while the planets will erase all the information they might be harbouring about the past, about children that have never been conceived.

"But before entering into intimate relations, the man has an obligation to place a garland upon the woman's head. In the normal Vedruss wedding rite this is done by the girl: she places the crown on the head of her chosen one, but in this variant it is the man who is to crown the woman.

"This rite does not necessarily pertain to couples who have jointly sought out and found their own domain and have started to live in it."

"Why not?"

"The search itself, and the first three days of preparing the site, will purify them if they spend three days thinking of their future child without actually conceiving it... "

"Anastasia, what about the third thought? You did say three thoughts had to take part at the same time."

"Yes, I said that, and in the case we are looking at there *were* three thoughts. By the third night, while the man and woman were sleeping under the stars, they were already receiving help from the thought of their future child."

"And where might he have been?"

"Where all children await earthly embodiment before conception.

"So here, Vladimir, is the whole rite which a great wise-man came up with and freely offered to people. He himself rejoiced at how effective the rite proved to be, and there was a subsequent increase in the number of happy families.

"Did you understand everything, Vladimir, and can you now try your hand at telling people about this rite?"

"Of course, I understand, and I shall tell it all in time."

"And you will not add anything to this account of mine?"

"No, I shan't."

"Then I can say that the rite will not be effective."

"In what way? Why not?"

"There is no participation on the part of our ancestors' thought."

"Yes, I remember your grandfather saying that we need to apologise to them.¹ I shall remind my readers of this. Although it's still not entirely clear to me why it is up to our generation in particular to apologise. After all, *we* were not the ones responsible for hiding their culture from people's eyes, or for its demise."

"Of course one could think that '*we* are not to blame'. But it would be better if a different thought came to mind."

"A different thought? What kind?"

"Upon our generation has fallen the great honour and grace of restoring the culture of our forebears, to bind up the torn threads that have remained, linking us with them. Only then will great discoveries begin to take place among mankind. Only then will their thoughts be able to help ours. For now, their thoughts — in view of our lack of understanding — feel constrained to withstand us."

¹See the reference to 'repentance' in Chapter 5: "Conception involves more than flesh" above.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN



The psychology of Man's genesis and appearance in the world

In regard to this question, I have to say right off that according to Anastasia's information, the process of conception and carrying a child — as well as its appearance in the world as a Man — is not primarily a physiological, but a psychological one. It is the highest form of joint creation between a man and a woman. It is the apex of achievement of their thoughts, feelings and intellect.

Initially such an affirmation met with some scepticism on my part, as, indeed, I think, on the part of many of my readers. So I shall reproduce here my more detailed dialogue with her on this topic.

"Anastasia, how can you say that it is mainly psychological? After all, it's a real material foetus that develops in the mother's womb. The woman experiences actual physiological sensations, sometimes even painful ones. There have been lots of popular scientific books written on the subject of carrying a child and its appearance in the world, and these often go into great detail about what a pregnant woman should do, how she should act on a physiological level. When you come right down to it, physiology is primary, after all."

"Yes, sadly, such an opinion has indeed been thoroughly rooted in human society. It means that the principal component of the human self has been either relegated to the background or eliminated completely. The result is that people have come into the world who are, in essence, quite the opposite of God's likeness.

“Think about it, Vladimir: the foetus in the mother’s womb lives and develops not because someone has written a bunch of treatises on the subject, but because this was the original thought of the Creator — indeed, of Nature. To interfere with this eminently perfect process is tantamount to replacing what is natural and perfect by something that is artificial and less perfect.

“The *physiology* involved in the formation of human flesh was pre-programmed by the Creator and is quite capable of developing all by itself, without bothering the mother or father with a need to control this process.

“On the other hand, the *psychology and philosophy* of birth — a process on an immeasurably higher level — is wholly dependent on the mother and father. It is a joint creation by Man and God.

“The appearance of pain at the moment of birth is a sign of an erroneous psychological approach to the birth process on the part of the parents.

“Many, many animals give birth to their offspring in natural surroundings and none of them perish or experience suffering. Nor did the Creator come up with any thought of pain for His most beloved creation, Man. Just as loving parents would never conjure up the thought of pain for their children.

“As she fulfils her highest purpose — that of co-creating God’s Man — the woman who has carried the Divine child within herself receives a reward ordained by the Creator. This reward is the feeling of bliss and the chain of joyful ecstasies during labour, but certainly not pain. Quite to the contrary, the process of giving birth to a Man should be a joyful and pleasant one.

“It is Man himself, deceived by the occult sciences and suggestions from the dark side, who by his own intrusion has made childbirth painful for the mother and a fatal shock for the baby.”

"What's this about a shock, Anastasia — a shock fatal for the baby at that? The baby just gets born."

"Yes, it gets born, but it does not understand why it is being so rudely torn out of its pleasant and perfect Space and why its mother suffers and experiences pain. The mother's pain occasions untold mourning on the part of the child."

"What, is it possible for a mother to give birth without any pain at all?"

"Not only is it possible without pain, but with a supreme and most pleasing joy and delight!"

"You know, Anastasia, our modern medicine is equipped to do just that — it can guarantee an almost painless childbirth with the help of anæsthetics."

"Anæsthetics can lessen the mother's physical pain, Vladimir, but they increase the mental pain for the infant, since anæsthetics cut him off from contact with his mother. Such a state instils in him fear and a lack of self-confidence, which continue even into adulthood, even into his most advanced years. They prevent him from being born again."

"But why does something like that happen?"

"When a Man is living in his mother's womb, he feels a coziness there — he feels comforted, cared for, peaceful. On the physical plane his needs are completely met. He is free of the problems plaguing Man in everyday life, he is allowed to experience the whole order of the Universe."

"Over the nine months all the information about the marvellous order of the Universe, about Man's purpose right from the beginning of creation, is imparted to him."

"The world he knows inside his mother's womb is vast and marvellous."

"And then all of a sudden, something rudely tries to thrust him out of this world of supreme grace. Every woman knows: this means the labour has begun — an inevitability, or so it seems — and hence people do not think about the effect it

might have on the infant. Few women in today's world realise that they do not have to frighten their baby — on the contrary, they can caress their child during labour, talk with it, express their thoughts to it, invite it to be born into the world. And this need not be accompanied by any sensation of stress or pain.

"After hearing the call of his mother and father, the child will perceive the labour contractions as a caress — an invitation to make his appearance of his own free will, to explore a world that is brand new to him.

"To be born of his own free will — that is an indication of great and extraordinary significance. All the information imparted by God during a birth like this will be preserved in him.

"When the woman experiences fear over her labour, this fear is felt by the child in the womb.

"When the woman experiences pain from her labour trouble and has thoughts only for herself, the child in the womb experiences *double* the amount of pain. He feels abandoned, and, above all, helpless and defenceless. Such feelings are harmful, and they are lasting. They wipe out the information the child has earlier received about the grand Creation, since they are in contradiction to it. In this kind of birth, the child feels for the first time in his life that he is not the master of the Universe, but a worthless nonentity, subject to some kind of external forces.

"His body is born, but the spirit of mastery and of a kind creator is not born in him. Such a Man will not become the likeness of the Divine. A mere slave of some other entity he will remain, and he will try his whole lifetime to free himself from slavery, but in vain.

"Earthly tsars, presidents, along with their bodyguards and service staff, are likewise the slaves of circumstance. They think they are deciding something of importance, and try to make their life a happy one, but life for them only becomes

more and more unhappy and hopeless, like the ever deeper blackening of both the air and the water.

"This thought of hopelessness suggested at the birth by pain, interferes with human society's ability to make the right decisions."

"Yes, Anastasia, a birth like that presents a very scary picture. Maybe that's why some women today opt for a Cæsarean section? That would prevent something like that from happening, eh?"

"It still happens. One could hardly explain such a procedure as the birth of a Man — it is more like a routine operation. Who is thereby causing the Man to emerge into the world — the mother, who has not given birth to the child, or the surgeon, who has torn the foetus out of the mother's body?"

"The infant, who has not yet appeared in the world, suddenly loses contact with his mother and, consequently, with the whole order of the grand Creation. Then he is forcibly torn from the womb. What for? Whereto? And why so rudely? And why is he not in charge of anything himself? The whole world crashes before him!

"People believe a child is born into the world, while he, at the moment of birth, feels himself forlorn. And while it seems as though this infant Man has thrived, what has remained alive, in fact, is only his flesh. He will try to use what paltry remains he can reclaim of his spiritual substance to search for his Divine self throughout his life. And for this only his father and mother are to blame."

"Anastasia, as I understand it, it is on the women and on the way they carry and birth their children that the whole future of their offspring, not to mention the future of human civilisation, depends. Is that true?"

"Yes, it is true, Vladimir. But no less — in fact, in equal measure — does human birth depend on the *men*, on the fathers."



When a man brings a child into the world...

“Hold on, hold on there, Anastasia. Explain what you mean when you say ‘a man brings a child into the world’. After all, men cannot actually give birth. They are physically incapable of giving birth.”

“There is a trap hidden in there, you see, Vladimir. In accepting the suggestion that birth is mainly a physiological procedure, the majority of people have thereby excluded the Great Spirit, the Father-Creator, from the birth process. More specifically, they have excluded God the Father from the birthing mother’s labour. It was God’s absence that first got reflected in the woman in the form of labour pains, and subsequently of general human suffering.”

“Can you explain in more detail the *man*’s role in the labour? And why is excluding him tantamount to excluding God? Should the father, or the man, attend to his wife’s labour?”

“It is quite unnecessary for the man to *attend* to the labour. It is sufficient for him to be by her side, but that is not the father’s main purpose.”

“But what, then, *is* his main purpose?”

“To comprehend that, you must realise that the mother’s womb nourishes the flesh of the foetus conceived in her from her beloved male partner. It feeds the flesh, and that is important indeed, but it is not *the* most important factor.

“The foetus reacts to the condition and feelings not only of the mother, but in equal measure to those of the father.

“When a husband talks with his pregnant wife, the foetus conceived does not understand the parents’ words, it does not

really comprehend the meaning of the words uttered to their full extent, but acutely perceives the *feelings* of the parents.

"Sometimes a man is led by an impulse of tender feelings to caress his pregnant wife's tummy or to put his ear to it and hear the baby's movements. Caresses like that are pleasing to the woman, but the foetus inside her, it would seem, does not perceive them physically, but it feels them on an immeasurably greater level.

"The feelings of the baby's mother and father come to him in a flood. He receives them with great joy, with supreme bliss.

"On the level of feelings, the foetus takes account of *thoughts* as well. When parents wait for their child in love and harmony and keep thinking about him, then from the very moment of conception he constantly dwells in the father's and mother's energy field, and this is very pleasing to him.

"It is through the mother's and father's feelings that the child feels the surrounding world outside his mother's womb.

"If a father at his pregnant wife's side hears and exults in the song of a nightingale, the foetus in the mother's womb will feel both the song and the father's joy. After he is born and grows up, he will continue to delight in the nightingale's song, just as he did in the womb.

"If the father or mother suddenly takes fright upon beholding a serpent, the child, once born, will be frightened at the same sight, too. In the womb, of course, he could not actually *see* the serpent, but through what his parents see, the information about it will be stored in his subconscious throughout his life.

"When a father, Vladimir, skilfully sings songs to his pregnant wife, their infant will sing no worse than his father as he grows up. If a father starts contemplating the stars in his mind, their offspring after birth will show an interest in the stars."

"I have also heard, Anastasia, of how a certain composer played the piano for his pregnant wife, repeating over and over again a tune he had composed which had caught his wife's fancy. But later the composer divorced his wife before the birth of their son.

"When the child had grown a bit, his mother put him in a music school. And one day she heard him performing his father's tune. The amazed mother decided that her son had somewhere discovered an old musical score, since this tune had never been performed at any concert, and the score had never been published. But upon entering the piano room, she saw that he was playing without any score at all. She asked her son:

"Who taught you to play this piece, son?"

"Nobody," the boy replied. 'I just heard it somewhere, but I can't remember where. I like it. What about you, Mama?"

"I like it, too, very much," replied the woman, and asked her son how he could have memorised it, since in school he had never started playing new works right off, even from a score.

"No, never right away, but this one took hardly any time at all to learn by heart, for some reason. It just seemed to be inside me. I want to continue it, and add to it in the same key."

"The boy continued to develop his father's melody which he had heard in his mother's womb. Like his father, he too eventually became a composer."¹

¹A very similar experience is recounted by Boris Brott, former conductor of the Hamilton Symphony Orchestra in Ontario (Canada), who as a young musician found himself able to play certain pieces sight unseen. It turned out these were pieces his mother, a professional cellist, had played during her pregnancy. His experience is cited by Toronto psychiatrist Thomas VERNY in his book *The secret life of the unborn child* (New York: Random House, 1981), pp. 22-23.

"That is a good example you cited, Vladimir, and it is by no means the only one. Many examples point to the fact that child-raising effectively begins right from the mother's womb. And even a little bit earlier, before the conception even takes place."

"What d'you mean, earlier? Prior to conception, after all, there isn't anybody there yet."

"Remember, you were telling me about telephony, Vladimir, about how a child born to a woman may resemble the first man in her life, rather than the father with whom the material conception took place. This very phenomenon attests to the fact that someone who is not yet conceived, but just waiting his turn in the conception queue, can 'read' information about the father."

"Is there really such a thing as a conception queue?"

"There is. Just as soon as intimacy occurs between a man and woman, a spirit is born in space, ready for a material embodiment."

"What, even if they're just having sex for fun, without any thought of childbearing?"

"The spirit appears whenever the man experiences satisfaction."

"You mean, orgasm?"

"I do not like that word, Vladimir. It implies information which gives a false impression of the essence of the act."

"Okay, let's just call it satisfaction. But is there any way you can prove the existence of this spirit?"

"You yourself can find the proof, Vladimir, if you wish. After all, one person may grasp the essence of this phenomenon from just a few words spoken, while another may require years, even after being presented with a multitude of examples, and even then may still be reluctant to understand."

"Well, can modern science offer at least indirect proofs of what you are saying?"

"Of course."

"What kind of science — biology, genetics? To tell the truth, I need to know, so that I can more easily search for proofs."

"You will easily be able to find them in physics, Vladimir."

"In *physics*? What's physics got to do with it? You were talking about the spiritual — maybe I could try esoterics, but *physics*?"

"In physics there is a law of conservation of energy."

"And what's that law got to do with it?"

"During intimacy with a woman an unusually powerful energy builds up inside the man, and the moment comes when he releases it. According to the law of conservation of energy, it cannot simply disappear without a trace, but is capable of mutating from one state into another. In the situation we are talking about, it is precisely the man's colossal energy and the lightning speed at which it is released that forms a spirit."²

"Yes, I can agree with that. But at the same time it's sad. How many spirits have men formed that haven't ever obtained a material embodiment! They probably number many times more than the population of the Earth!"

"Yes, many times more."

"Do they suffer, or do they just stay as senseless energy?"

"They have feelings. Their suffering is monumental."

"What about the spirits that are conceived? Do they begin right off to feel their parents?"

²One of the most prominent scientists to study energy released during orgasm from the physical standpoint was the Austrian-American psychiatrist Wilhelm Reich (1897–1957). He named this universal life force *orgone* (from *orgasm*) and was even able to build working apparatuses capable of accumulating it and using it for therapy. In 1956 he was arrested and thrown into prison, where he died the following year. His orgone accumulators were destroyed by the U.S. government and his books burnt, including his monumental work *The function of the orgasm: Discovery of the orgone* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1986).

"Yes, right away. And they feel their father and mother in equal measure.

"Over the nine months in the mother's womb the parents can teach the living child a great deal. Such lessons need no repetition. The child will instantly memorise, with life-long retention, any information imparted by his parents.

"A father who possesses a thorough knowledge can 'carry' or shape, as it were, his child's spiritual and intellectual self.

"It is the father in particular who is responsible for the higher-level components of Man, and in this his role is indeed Godlike in nature.

"It is the father who gives birth to the Man's spiritual component. Fathers should spend the whole gestation period compiling the programme which shapes the spirit, character and intellect of the future Man."

"You are talking, Anastasia, in terms of a 'programme', of a father who has a thorough knowledge of the procedure of raising a child still in the mother's womb...?"

"I am not talking about the father *raising* his child, but about *giving birth*. The father does not do any 'raising' per se, but simply gives birth to the second, non-material self of his future son or daughter."

"I would say that we don't have any concept of that at all in our society. Our loss, no doubt. It is considered that the principal role of the father in a child's birth is finished after conception. Thereafter, in the best-case scenario, the father helps his pregnant wife with household tasks, makes sure all her needs are met."

"Unfortunately, that is all too often true."

"But, Anastasia, who then forms the Man's main spiritual component if the father doesn't understand his role in this?"

"Either circumstances, or someone who knows about it and uses it to forward his own agenda."

“So it turns out that men who are ignorant of the possibility of full participation in the formation of their future child right from conception are not raising their children in the fullest sense of the word?”

“Unfortunately, Vladimir, that indeed happens all too often.”

It seems I have only just begun to understand the significance of what Anastasia has said, which in turn has showed me the whole absurdity of our way of life. It may be that all our social upheavals are the result of the fact that the overwhelming majority of us, even when we are together with our children, have little in the way of a relationship to them in practice. We abandon them to the whim of fate, hand them over to somebody else. But at the moment I was having my conversation with Anastasia on this subject, it was not societal but rather personal circumstances that were calling forth sad feelings in me — hopelessly sad, perhaps — feelings that will remain with me my whole life. I didn’t even feel like continuing the conversation.

“You have gone pale, Vladimir,” Anastasia observed, noticing my condition. “Your eyes have dimmed. Why?”

“I have no strength left to talk about it, Anastasia.”

“I have a good idea of what has happened to you. But you will feel better if you can describe the cause of your unhappiness on your own.”

“What is there to describe? It’s perfectly obvious. When I realised the importance of the information you gave about childbirth, it made me realise, too, that I had not participated sufficiently in the birth of my own daughter, Polina. But back then neither my wife nor I had any idea of how we should relate to the question of childbirth.

“But *you*, Anastasia, had knowledge of this information. You bore a son, and a daughter, and I, it turns out, am once more on the sidelines. You knew this, and still, you didn’t tell

me in time what a father's supposed to do. Not only that, but I remember you telling me that I shouldn't see my son at all for some time, even after his appearance in the world. What did you do that for?"

"Yes, I did say that to you, Vladimir. But think about it yourself: what would you have begun to teach your son if you had stayed the nine months with me in the taiga? Do you want me to give you a hint as to the answer?"

"Go ahead."

"You remember, you asked me at that time to leave my family glade in the taiga, my Space of Love, which my parents had formed for me. You wanted me to give birth in a city, in a hospital. Then you said we had to send our son to kindergarten and the best schools, that you would make him into a businessman and that he would carry on your business."

"Yes, I did say that, but there was a lot I didn't know back then. Afterward I finally accepted that you would never be able to, or never want to, live in the city, but still, you did not invite me to stay with you in the taiga."

"If I had suggested it, would you have stayed?"

"I don't know, but quite possibly I would have."

"And what would you have done?"

"Like anyone else, I would have found some man's work to do around the home."

"But you should know, Vladimir, that I do not need any physical assistance. Everything here is all ready for willing service: the air, the water, the beasts and the grass. I asked about your activities in the hopes of finding out the most important thing, namely, where would your thoughts have been while awaiting the arrival of our son?..."

"So, you have nothing to say. After all, your thoughts were just like your words back then."

"And you might have regretted that you did not succeed in persuading me to live in the city. You even had a plan in mind

of taking me by force to give birth in a hospital. Yes? Admit it!"

"Well, yes, I did, but it didn't last very long."

"Now tell me, Vladimir, just how was our son supposed to react to such thoughts coming from his father? Such aggressive thoughts, besides."

"Yes, I see now, it wouldn't have been very good for him. And still, I'm sad that now I... In any case, it turns out that I'm not a fully-fledged father. And that means that you bore a son, and a daughter, too, who are not completely Man."

"Trust me, Vladimir, and don't be upset, and don't be sad. You *are* a fully-fledged father to our children. And our children have received everything in full measure. It turns out that our son is even a little overloaded with information and sensitivity — at one point my great-grandfather Moisey was not able to restrain himself and told him more than he should have."

"But how so? I wasn't with you during your pregnancy. I didn't compile any programme, I wasn't present at the birth, I did not invite my children to be born, yet you still say that I've come out a fully-fledged father. A moment ago, you were arguing quite the opposite."

CHAPTER FIFTEEN



A rite for a woman giving birth without a husband

“The Vedruss civilisation, Vladimir, had a great many rites. The word *rite*¹ is not entirely appropriate for such acts, but I simply cannot think of an alternative. Let us use it for the sake of brevity, only you must understand that in today’s language the Vedruss ‘rite’ could easily be termed a scientific and rational act on the part of Man, one grounded in the knowledge of all the diverse energies of the Universe and their interrelationship with Man’s soul. These rites, as you know, were thought out by generations of wise-men and enlightened thinkers, who also connected them with the stars. Subsequent generations checked their effectiveness in practice and perfected them as the years went by.

“One of these rites was for women who were carrying and giving birth to a child far from their husbands. Such situations did exist in the Vedruss civilisation, albeit rarely. It might happen that a woman’s husband was obliged to go on a long trek somewhere. His pregnant wife left at home carried out an outwardly simple rite, but one which lasted a long time and was very complex in terms of the mind and will. If the woman’s love for the child’s father was strong, she achieved

¹The Russian word for ‘rite’, *obriad* (pron. *abr-YAT*), is derived from the verb *obriazbat* (‘to dress, enrobe’), and initially signified ‘to dress [a spiritual concept into a material form]’, referring to an action (or symbol) based on deep spiritual insights and giving an actual physical embodiment to these insights.

her goal on her own and bore a fully-fledged child. She was assisted in this by the great energy of Love.”

“What actions did this rite involve, specifically? In our modern-day society there are also women who are obliged to carry a child and then give birth without their husbands around. Maybe the rite you speak of would apply to them.”

“Over the nine-month period, a pregnant woman whose husband is absent should spend at least three hours a day communicating with her child in the father’s name — sometimes also conversing mentally with the father about the future child. They might argue, but under no circumstances should they allow any suggestion of aggression to enter in, even during an argument. The parents’ dialogue should always proceed in a spirit of good will both toward each other and toward the child.

“The dialogue should preferably take place at the same time each day. The woman’s communication with the child in the father’s name may be divided into two segments — evening and morning. Approximately fifteen to nineteen minutes before engaging in this kind of mental dialogue, the woman should definitely take a small amount of easily digestible food or drink, which will be healthful both to her and to the child.

“The drink taken in preparation for the mental dialogue should not vary over the course of the nine months, and should not be used in any other circumstance or for any other purpose.

“I, for example, prepared a drink consisting of about a hundred grams of cedar milk, three drops of cedar oil and a pinch of pollen. I also took a little honey on a twig, mixed everything together in a wooden bowl and drank it in tiny swallows.

“The drink could also be made from other substances, only they must definitely be natural, ecologically clean and easily digestible by the mother’s body, as well as healthful and

pleasing to the child in the womb. This is very important. If the mother's drink is not healthful or pleasing to the child, he will associate the dialogue with his father with an unpleasant phenomenon and afterward reject his father and resist communicating with him.

"After the birth of the child the woman should take the same drink shortly before a feeding at which she plans to communicate with her nursling in the father's name.

"If the father does not return by the time the child ceases to take his mother's milk, the mother's drink should never be given to the child until the moment of his first contact with his father.

"The woman also needs to choose a star in the heavens through which to communicate with her beloved man. A star to think upon each time before initiating a mental dialogue with her child.

"In this mental communication, the woman should formulate as distinctly as possible a thought-picture of the child's father — his character, intonations and world-view — without falsification or embellishing any details. If she has a difference of opinion with him, she should try to explain her point of view, not aggressively but lovingly. Instead of blaming the *man* for the misunderstanding, she should point the finger to herself as incapable of setting forth thoughts understandably and convincingly.² Or possibly she should think more carefully about what her husband has said.

"In addition, during her dialogue the pregnant woman should stroke her tummy while cherishing an image of the father in her thought.

"And it is very important, while conversing mentally with her husband, to rule out all negative aspects that might have

²Compare Anastasia's dialogue with her great-grandfather in Book 2, Chapter 7: "Who's to blame?"

occurred earlier. It is vital to remember only the good while communicating with him.

“The woman should spend as much as possible of the nine-month period in real solitude. Then the child will feel both her and his father. And if the husband and father is not physically present, the child will still find himself in his father’s aura.

“If the woman carries out the aspects of this rite, the man will come back to her and to their child. Even if earlier his love was weak, or was not there at all, love will flare up in him with unaccustomed strength, and provoke him to good deeds.

“Many Vedruss women knew the effectiveness and power of this rite. Later the wise-men tried to erase it from women’s memories and turn to it only when they were confident that the woman was not harbouring any perverse feelings.”

“What kind of perverse feelings, Anastasia?”

“A woman in love could, through the help of this rite, seduce a man who was not in love with her — even if he were living with another wife and even if they had not had intimate relations.”

“But how could it happen if they had not had intimacy? Without intimacy a child could not have been conceived at all, and, in that case, who could she talk to about a father?”

“No matter what man she conceived with, she might try communicating with her child in the name of her most beloved, thereby drawing this man closer to herself. Not only that, but the child will even outwardly bear a greater resemblance to her most beloved, rather than the man who was actually with her. You should know that, Vladimir, from the phenomenon of telegony.”³

“Yes, I know, Anastasia, but why are *you* giving out this information that the wise-men suppressed? Now some women

³See Chapter 5: “Conception involves more than flesh” above.

will start luring men they fancy away from their families with the help of this rite. It shouldn't be published."

"You needn't be concerned about publishing it, Vladimir. I purposely left one particular aspect out of my description. Now it will not destroy any happy families."

"But if you were able to leave out some aspect, why didn't the wise-men do the same?"

"The wise-men did not know what to put in its place."

"If the wise-men didn't know, how could you possibly know? Besides, Anastasia, you said that the wise-men always checked the effectiveness of their rites in practice. But you didn't have the opportunity to do that."

"I did."

"When? With whom?"

Oh, God! I remembered Anastasia's words from many years ago. I didn't pay much attention to them back then, but now... She said:

"I shall restore to you the respect of your daughter and the love of your wife."⁴

It's incredible, but she did it! But why, then, is my wife not jealous of Anastasia? And why does my daughter have such respect for her? I went back to see my family this year. Anastasia was able to perform the incredible! I don't know how she did it, but she did it.

All our earthly institutions taken together — institutions that pride themselves on their technological achievements — are incapable of solving the number one problem on the Earth: *how to restore love and respect to families*. But she can. Oh, Lord! What colossal, truly Divine knowledge mankind is losing! Why? Who can give an answer?

⁴Originally conveyed through Anastasia's grandfather. See Book 2, Chapter 26: "Anastasia's grandfather".

And what strength of love Anastasia herself is worthy of! What she has accomplished will probably be appreciated more by our descendants than by people today. I felt like doing something very nice for her. I went over to Anastasia, got down on one knee and kissed her hand. She also got down on her knees and embraced my neck. I heard her heart beating, and sensed the extraordinary aroma of her hair, her intoxicating breath, the fragrance of mother's milk as though it was coming from my own mother's breast, and I whispered:

"What can I do to be worthy of you, Anastasia?"

But she didn't answer, only pressed my head a little more strongly to her breast. My life has probably never been blessed with happier seconds, hours or days than these.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN



Where should we have our babies?

How hard it is to write in a dry style, and yet it is absolutely necessary to determine, without agitation or emotion, where the best and most comfortable place is for parents and infants to go through the birthing process. In a hospital operation room or a home setting?

As far as I know, the first maternity homes appeared during the period of slavery in Ancient Egypt and Rome, where they were organised for pregnant slaves.

A birthing slave-mother stayed from five to nine days with her baby before returning to work. She was allowed access to her child for nursing and at nighttime. This continued from six to twelve months. It was different in different places, depending on how the slavemasters treated their slaves. After being weaned from its mother, the child was taken care of by specially trained slave-nurses. Later, when the child had grown, he would go off to be raised by other slaves, depending on the function designated for him by the overlord.

For example, boys might be handed over to specialists to be trained as warriors. After going through special physical training and psychological conditioning, these warriors, who knew not their parents, proved to be the most loyal to their slavemaster. They were brainwashed from childhood to consider him as father and mother — in short, God. There was even a religion worked out especially for the purpose of this brainwashing.

How close seems this situation from antiquity to our reality today! A maternity home — nursery — kindergarten —

school — college — and presto, the slave is ready. But since the slavemaster is invisible, the slave thinks he is free and, consequently, will not rebel.

The *élite* of Ancient Rome and Egypt, and even their middle classes, couldn't begin to imagine, even in their wildest nightmares, the birth of their own children outside the home.

They would first call in midwives, later doctors and soothsayers.

In Russia the first huts for birthing mothers were designated for prostitutes. Sometimes this category of women went off to give birth in a gypsy camp, where they would leave their unwanted children to be raised by the gypsies. The gypsies accepted them.

A 'maternity home' — or a maternity ward in a hospital — is utter nonsense. It is clear testimony to the loss of women's instinct to continue the family line, as well as to modern Man's ignorance, not only of his pristine origins but even of the fundamental culture of feelings — his loss of feelings of true love for his wife and child as being a part of himself and his legacy.

A child born in an institution cannot be exclusively yours. He belongs to someone else besides. The birthing process includes conception, carrying to term and the appearance of the infant in the world. And the last stage is no less significant than the rest. If you hand him over to strangers who are completely indifferent to both you and your offspring, then you have less than a full relationship to the birth. Consequently, you will not have fatherly feelings for him in full measure, and he will feel this, and afterward requite it with an absence of strong filial feelings toward you.

More than that, the love will not be what it could. Such a child will not be able to love — not just his parents, but life itself, since life was never, right from the moment of his appearance in the world, presented to him as something attractive.

Of course this lacuna can be compensated for by means of certain behaviour toward the newborn, but that is by no means easy.

The birthing of children among different peoples of the world can be considered more and more perfect the farther we go back in history, and primitive in the absurd today. In our modern world it has become tantamount to removing the appendix from the body of a sick person.¹

And so I should now like to switch to a brighter note. In spite of everything, mankind is beginning to ponder the meaning of what has been happening.

In Russia, America and France, so-called 'schools of spiritual midwifery' have sprung up. There is also an organisation known as the 'Association for Prenatal Education' active in a number of countries.

Courses on home births are being offered in Moscow and St. Petersburg. People are trying to bring back the knowledge and traditions they have lost — the *love* they have lost.

Let us see how the birthing process took place in Vedruss families. According to Anastasia's account, it went as follows.

¹ An evident reference to a Cæsarean section, which in many Russian hospitals today is used in more than half of all births.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN



The Vedruss birth

The birthing mother's mama and grandma would tell her what symptoms to expect on the eve of her labour. Liubomila's grandmother, in this instance, told her in detail how she gave birth to her own children.¹

Vedruss women as a rule gave birth in their own homes, in a wooden tub, something like our bathtub, only shorter in length and not as deep. It was a container designed especially for childbirth. Afterward it served as a cradle for the newborn.

To start, it was filled with pure spring water, heated to body temperature. There were little ledges on the outside of the tub which served as footrests.

The edges of the tub were curved so that it was easy for the woman to support herself with her hands. The air temperature in the room was not measured with a thermometer back then. They said it should feel comfortable for a naked body in a state of repose, with no sensation of either heat or cold.

The tub for birthing mothers was placed on the floor and oriented so that the woman sitting in it would be facing toward the rising Sun. Another smaller container of water was placed beside it. On the bench next to the tub lay four plain, smooth-textured flaxen towels (without embroidery or designs).

¹The first part of this chapter and the following two chapters are told in Anastasia's words, without identifying quotation-marks.

During a Vedruss birth only the husband was to be present in the room with a birthing mother. Even the couple's parents and close relatives, as well as experienced midwives, were excluded.

Just before labour began, the child's father would light a fire he had already prepared at the outer entrance to the domain, from which wafted sweet-smelling smoke. This was where the close relatives usually gathered, along with the midwife, and often a wise-man.

The birthing mother's and her husband's parents would bring in bundles and baskets of food and drink. They would sit down on benches under a tent-roof which had been set up earlier next to the fire-pit by the husband. Vedruss tradition forbade them from crossing the line into the domain. Nor was the birthing mother's husband permitted to go out to them, or even to talk with them at a distance.

Such rules were not the product of some kind of superstition, but the result of finely tuned psychological calculations. Nobody and nothing was supposed to distract the thought of the father, let alone the birthing mother, from the reception of their child.

The presence of the parents and midwife at the entrance to the domain, however, had a calming effect on the young parents-to-be. In case any abnormalities cropped up, they could always come in to help. But there was rarely a need for such assistance.

During the contractions the mother would constantly talk with her emerging child, giving him words of encouragement, helping him enter upon his new world without fear. The Vedruss people well knew how important it was to communicate both mentally and audibly with the new Man as he emerged into the world. As a result, all three — mother, child and father — were participants in the process.

It was also very important that the mother's first look at her newborn be without any fright at his appearance (a

temporarily snubbed nose, for example, or the birth-colour of his skin), that her gaze be tender and joyous.

The father would pick up the baby out of the water he had been born in, use his own mouth right off to suck the mucus out of his little mouth and nose, and place him on his mother's tummy. The mother would then offer the baby her breast. This prompted the expulsion of the placenta, which the father placed in a specially prepared container, before cutting the umbilical cord with a knife which had been disinfected over a flame, and tying it.

Then the father took the baby and placed him on a towel. After washing him, he wrapped him up in a second towel and placed him on the bed. Then he washed his wife's body, using water from the other container next to the tub, dried her off with a clean towel and led her over to the bed where the baby lay.

Next the father, using either his mouth or his hands, strained off a small quantity of milk from the mother's breast and sprayed it over a flaxen sheet, with which he covered the new mother and the infant lying on her tummy or breast.

After that, the father sat down and gazed silently at his wife. If she desired, he would talk with her, but even if she were asleep, he would not leave the room.

About fifteen minutes later, he would light the wood-fire he had earlier prepared in the hearth.

He would then pour out the birthing water, as well as the water the woman had used to wash herself, between the two trees which had been planted soon after conception. Here, too, was where the placenta would be buried.

The relatives that had gathered at the entrance to the domain would see the smoke from the chimney and understand this, along with the father's actions, to signal that the birth had taken place successfully. At this point they began exchanging congratulations and partaking of the food and drink

they had brought with them, after which they dispersed to their homes.

The Vedruss people understood that even in the womb the child could sense relatives' thoughts and feelings. And after coming into the world, he would continue to find himself in his parents' aura. If some kind of outsiders, even a relative with good thoughts about the child, happened to be in the birthing room, their feelings — even good ones — would be unfamiliar to the child, and put him on the defensive.

Besides, either deliberately or inadvertently, the relatives might distract the parents' thought from the infant. It was in the parents' mental field, after all, that the baby would feel the most comfortable.



A little experiment should help prove what Anastasia has said here.

Many women are aware that during breast-feeding they should not allow themselves to be distracted by random conversations and thoughts, especially on negative topics. They are concentrating their whole attention on their child, on his feeding, and mentally conversing with him.

For evidence that the baby really does feel the mother's thought, try entering the room where a mother is nursing her baby and strike up a conversation with her. The baby will at once feel uneasy, and may even stop his sucking and start to cry. He has become uncomfortable, and his Mama's thoughts about him have weakened or have wandered off somewhere.

But perhaps the baby was simply disturbed by the stranger's voice or odour?

I telephoned my daughter Polina. She picked up the receiver and started talking with me. Thirty seconds into the conversation I heard the cry of my granddaughter Mashenka.²

"Why is she crying?" I asked my daughter.

"I'm breast-feeding her, Papa," Polina responded. "She doesn't like it when I'm distracted."

I tried to end the conversation quickly. I did the same whenever I rang at an inopportune moment. My granddaughter would always start crying.

Many nursing mothers who are familiar with the culture of breast-feeding will confirm this phenomenon. But it does not happen, as a rule, with children of mothers who are unaware of the importance of mental contact with their nursling, who chat away at feeding time with all and sundry or spend the time thinking about their own problems. Why not? Because their child has no concept of mental contact with his mother. It is something he never had, and so has no point of comparison.

There's an old saying: *He took it in with his mother's milk*. What are our babies today taking in with their mother's milk?

Human society has learnt to create all sorts of satellites and intercontinental ballistic missiles. Yet at the same time it has lost something more important — the culture of giving birth to and raising Man. As a result, people end up aiming these missiles at each other.

Now what possible connection could there be between the culture of prenatal education, the breast-feeding of children and wars? A most direct connection, indeed!

²*Mashenka* (stress on first syllable) — an endearing variant of the name *Maria* (corresponding to *Mary* in English).

Many still remember the account of the Rostov serial killer Chikatilo.³ He performed sadistic acts on young women and then killed them. Such maniacs have appeared in many other cities, terrorising the populace. Each time hundreds of policemen are despatched to hunt down and capture the killer.

But an interesting pattern emerges from this. It has been established that in the case of three Rostov maniacs, at least, their mothers had all made unsuccessful attempts to abort their foetuses in the womb. As a result, when the foetus was born and grew into manhood, it then began taking revenge against women.

Now tell me which is more important for high-school graduates: to get high marks in physics, chemistry and a foreign language, or to acquire a high knowledge of the culture of the conception, carrying and raising of a child?

I would say the latter is by far the more important. And yet the disciplines which present such knowledge are not even taught in the school curriculum. Hence there are graduates of schools, colleges and universities who give birth to children which they have conceived haphazardly. They often reflect on whether to give birth at all, or perhaps an abortion would be better?

They may end up giving birth, only what kind of babies are they giving birth to? The kind that not only should not be exposed to the achievements of physicists and chemists, but should even be kept as far away as possible from knives and sticks.

The birth of advanced spiritual thinkers is especially important in this age of scientific and technological progress.

³*Andrei Romanovich Chikatilo* (1936–1994) — a Russian serial killer in the city of Rostov-on-Don, who was convicted of murdering 52 women (mainly prostitutes) and children between 1978 and 1990.

It is a tragedy when a maniac like Chikatilo kills and tortures women. It is a blessing that nobody like him is sitting at the controls of nuclear missiles.

A blessing — a blessing, okay — but the caveat must be added: *for now*. The worst *will happen* if society does not change its attitude toward the culture of giving birth to Man.



Anastasia continued:

With their knowledge of this culture, Radomir and Liubomila effected the transition of their first-born son from his mother's womb to his new world quite smoothly and painlessly. Possibly, even joyfully both for themselves and for the infant.

Liubomila had an easy and fear-free birth, and a cheerful one, too. When the baby came, she let out not a cry of pain but a cry of joy, of welcome. She herself drew him out of the water and embraced him.

When Radomir washed Liubomila with pure water and then dried her off, he felt like kissing every corner of her body. He even wanted to get down on his knees before her. And he knelt beside the bed as his smiling Liubomila lay under the sheet with her newborn son. As he stood there on his knees, he said softly and penetratingly:

"Thank you, Liubomila. You have co-created a child, you are a goddess. You can make dreams come true."

"We have co-created a child, Radomir," Liubomila responded with a smile.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN



Not Radomir's last battle

Many happy years went by. By now their children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren were living in domains of their own. But Radomir and Liubomila's love was as strong as ever. Even though their hair had gone grey, they grew happier with each passing year.

Radomir stood alone at the entrance to his domain. He looked at the road which led toward a little hillock and disappeared behind it. It was along this road that his sons and grandsons had headed off to battle two days ago. Even his teen-age grandsons had gone.

The enemy that lay ahead of them was most unusual. A prince had brought some sort of people from a foreign country who were all dressed in black and, for some reason, called themselves *monks*. In each settlement they visited, they declared that the entire populace had not been living a proper way of life, that their ancient beliefs and rites needed to be eradicated and that they should bow down to a different god.

The prince himself bowed down to it, as did his entourage and armed garrison. No sooner had the prince adopted a different faith than the men in black proclaimed his authority as coming from God.

Along with the men in black came soldiers dressed like those in the prince's garrison. They attacked each settlement in turn, demanding that everybody think differently about what they called 'God'. When they found people unwilling to bow down to the foreign 'God', they killed them with the sword and burnt their houses and orchards.

The tribal elders held a council to decide what to do. They called the monks and the prince before the council, but these only spoke to them of the 'higher good' their new 'God' would bring, thereby misleading them with a doctrine nobody could make head nor tail of. The elders were encountering a phenomenon they had never seen before. Whenever an out-and-out enemy had attacked the settlement before, men from all the families quickly formed a militia and collaborated in driving the foe from the land.

But here were monks carrying on about 'love' and 'meekness' — about 'blessings', and the marvellous life in Paradise awaiting anyone who submitted themselves to the new faith.

What the elders did not at first understand was that hiding behind the shield of these beautiful words was an entity which had definitely *not* been sent to them by God.

The God of the Vedruss people used no swords. The monks, on the other hand, were backed up by aggressive armed garrisons. Residents in some of the communities headed off to the woods, while others joined battle. Some immersed themselves in deep contemplation.

That day at dawn Radomir witnessed the departure of his grandsons from his own domain and his sons from neighbouring domains. They met at Radomir's domain early in the morning, as though they had planned it among themselves the night before.

Of course, they planned this, Radomir decided. After all, just the night before, his and Liubomila's eldest son had said:

"Tomorrow we're heading out for some war games. We shall learn how to keep enemies from invading our lands."

They departed, but still had not returned by the next day's sunset. And old Radomir kept watching the road.

Before long, a lone horseman emerged from behind the hillock, heading toward Radomir's domain at full gallop. On the spirited steed another grey-haired oldster, not unlike

Radomir himself, sat skilfully in the saddle. Squinting his eyes, Radomir recognised his old childhood friend Arga.

The grey-haired horseman climbed down from his steed with a groan and quickly began questioning Radomir:

"Who's left in your domain? Only talk fast."

"Liubomila's working on supper and our youngest great-grandson is after her with questions," Radomir calmly replied, adding: "It's strange, Arga, how you started asking me a question right off, without even saying hello."

"No time, I'm in a hurry. Get two horses right away, bring along Liubomila and provisions for three days, and bring your great-grandson with you, and come with me immediately."

"Whereto?"

"To the woods, to the Drevlians.¹ There's one family there I know fairly well that will give us shelter. No foe will find us there in the dense forest. Perhaps the people will come to their senses as time goes by. Save your great-grandson, Radomir, and you'll save your family line."

"And here I thought you'd galloped over to *help* me, Arga. I see two Vedruss swords tied to your saddle. What do you need them for, if you're planning to hide out from our enemies tonight in some place in the woods?"

"The swords are just in case. I'm not about to fight anyone. Besides, there's a whole horde of them — we'd be utterly routed. What's the point of dying thoughtlessly like that?"

¹*Drevlians* (Russian: *drevlianye*, stress on middle syllable) — the name applied to a collection of East Slavic tribes from the sixth to the tenth centuries along the Pripiat River in what is now Ukraine. The name is derived from the root *drev-*, signifying both 'of the woods' and 'of ancient origins'. Following their armed resistance to the invading Kievan princes, which resulted in significant bloodshed and executions among the civilian population, by the mid-tenth century their territories had been absorbed into the Kievan Rus' empire, while their popular resistance to the 'authorities' and the Christian church continued for many centuries thereafter.

"Yes, I know, Arga. You never fought with anyone. You never even tried to join in any of the manly games at *Maslenitsa* time."²

"That's beside the point. You and I both know, Radomir, that Man's life may be eternal, that his soul may be reincarnated in turn in an earthly form. But for that to happen, Man must not reflect on death as death approaches, but instead direct his thought toward a marvellous future. Where his thought is to be found, there will Man be regenerated anew."

"I know all that, Arga. You and I were both taught together by the wise-men."

"Then you ought to recall, Radomir, that you can fall and be fatally wounded in battle, and be deprived of the opportunity to think about your reincarnation."

"I remember, but, again, Arga, I cannot leave my family domain. It is alive, and it won't understand if its friend and master suddenly betrays with disdain the Space which has given him its love and abandons it to be torn apart by an enemy."

"*It is alive, and it won't understand!*" You've always been overly sentimental, Radomir, and you still are today. Well, then, stay if you like. Go ahead and stay."

Arga paced quickly back and forth, gave his horse's mane a bit of a tousle, and again came over to Radomir. The two grey-headed oldsters stood facing each other without a word. Nobody can ever say what made their hearts beat back then — perhaps each was immersed in a whole range of thoughts of his own. Once more it was Arga who was the first to break the silence, as he began entreating with noticeable agitation.

"Stay, if that's what you've decided, Radomir. But... but... do give me Liubomila and your great-grandson, and one of your steeds. At least let *them* depart and save themselves.

² *Maslenitsa* — see footnote 9 in Chapter 9: "The Creator's greatest gift" above.

Stay yourself, if you like, if you are unwilling to part from your living Space."

Radomir gazed at his friend and replied:

"You can ask Liubomila about that yourself, Arga. I know you've loved her all your life. That was why you could never marry any other girl and set up your own family domain."

"Who? Me? I loved her? That's utter nonsense!" Arga exclaimed, as all at once he started pacing again, as though trying to persuade himself of the truth of his claim. "I'm an artist, and all my life my aim has always been to draw designs and carve small statues. What would I need a wife for? I'm your friend, and my intent was to help you save and extend your family line. As for Liubomila, I'd quite forgot about her."

"You are an artist, Arga, and a great one. And an ace of a wood-carver — the best around. Your little statues grace many of the houses in these settlements. And doesn't everybody concur that all the women you draw have a face resembling Liubomila's! Your carvings, too, look like her."

"*Look like her?* So what of it? It's just that I've tried to perfect a certain type of face in my pictures."

"You've taken pains to hide your love all your life, Arga," Radomir maintained. "And now you're hiding it again. I was at the pine tree which remains all by itself at the edge of the forest. I know you often liked to sit beneath it and carve your little statues. I recently came upon your hiding-place there, where you've stowed away your latest unfinished work — the one that shows a beautiful maiden taming a hot-tempered steed. That is something only Liubomila could do, as is known to both of us, me and you."

"*I loved, I didn't love, I carved, I drew.* That's beside the point — it's not what we're about now, do try to understand." Then, after a brief pause, Arga exclaimed, almost shouting:

"Radomir! Radomir, all your sons have been slain in battle, and all your grandsons too!"

Radomir maintained his outward calm, looked at Arga but refrained from speaking.

"Save yourself!" Arga continued to exclaim. "I saw them before the battle. I tried to dissuade them from joining such an uneven fray. Your eldest son, your first-born, he's made just like you, an exact copy, in fact..."

"Stop beating around the bush, Arga!" Radomir entreated his childhood friend, though showing no outward signs of concern. "Tell me, what did my eldest son say?"

"He said: 'We'll join the fray. We'll manage to hold off those 'black monks' at least for an hour or two.' I asked your son: 'Why should *you* die in strife? What good are those couple of hours to you?'

"Our whole family decided this in a council meeting,' your eldest son replied. He said: 'May our parents, Radomir and Liubomila, enjoy at least two more hours of a happy life.'

"Even though they were greatly outnumbered by the 'black monks' and their soldiers, your sons, along with some children from the next settlements away, managed to stave them off for a whole day. Eventually the monks slayed the children, hacking them to pieces, then went back to their lair again. Tomorrow morning they'll start heading for your domain."

Radomir listened to his friend but gave no response. Arga continued, agitatedly:

"I galloped over here to help you save your family line. You and I both know that reincarnation on the Earth is possible. But this way there will be a finer chance of being reincarnated in a body of a family member. Only your great-grandson this time is capable of extending the family line. Let me have Liubomila and your great-grandson, I'll help..."

All of a sudden Arga stumbled in his speech and paused. He began to peek past Radomir. Radomir turned and looked. Behind him, resting against a tree, stood Liubomila. Tears

were rolling down her cheeks. A trembling hand was clasped to her breast.

"Did you hear what Arga said?" Radomir asked Liubomila.

"Yes, I heard," she replied with a trembling voice.

"So why are you crying, Liubomila?" Radomir went over to her and began stroking her hair and kissing her hand. "Our children have surrendered their lives so that we can thrive one more day here in gladness. It is not right for us to spend it in sadness."

"No, it is not," smiled Liubomila through her tears.

"You are bright, my dear wife. You have gained the wisdom of the wise-men more mightily than anyone else. Think about how best the remainder of the day, the night and the morning, should be spent."

"I think, so as to do right by the children, we should enter into our Space of Love. Our grandson is there in need — it is time to feed him."

And, taking each other's hand, they headed for the entrance to their family domain.

Arga climbed into the saddle and cried out as they walked off:

"You're both mindless, sentimental old fools! You ought to save yourselves. You're not in a position to fight with anyone. If you're wounded, it's possible you might not succeed in sending a thought into space about your reincarnation. I'm getting out of here. I'm going to save myself. I recommend you do the same."

At the entrance to the domain, Radomir turned around and responded to his old friend:

"Save yourself, Arga. Gallop off to your hiding-place in the forest. We are tracing a different path to salvation."

Arga spurred on his steed, which rose on its hind legs and galloped off to the forest at full speed.

CHAPTER NINETEEN



From the stars will they return to the Earth

As they were walking toward the house, where their great-grandson Nikodim¹ was waiting for them, Liubomila said:

“I think, Radomir, that we should now begin a brand new game with our little great-grandson — the game of life.”

“What kind of a game is that?” Radomir asked in surprise. “I’ve never heard of it.”

“*I’ve* never played it either. But I learnt about it back in my childhood, when I happened to overhear two old wise-men talking with each other. The gist of the game is this: one person plays out all the different stages of life with a child, while the other recalls in detail, as fast as he can, everything he has known in his lifetime, and imparts this knowledge mentally to the child. And if the thought of the narrator is clear, the child memorises the story through his subconscious. And when he grows up, he finds all sorts of hints about life within himself.”

“Who d’you think should lead the playing with our great-grandson, Liubomila?”

“You do that, Radomir, while I tell him the story through my thought.”

“But how will you be able to impart to him all the wisdom of life in just one hour? After all, it’ll be time to put Nikodim to bed in an hour from now.”

¹*Nikodim* (pron. *nee-ka-DEEM*) — a Russian name corresponding to *Nicodemus* in the Bible (see John 3: 1).

"I shall manage. You just start the game, and mark off the different stages of life with a clap of your hands."

Four-year-old Nikodim ran to meet them, his arms open wide. Radomir caught him and gave him a toss in the air. Then he set him back down on the ground and began to say:

"I recently heard tell of an interesting game. Would you like to play it?"

"I would," answered Nikodim. "But how is it played?"

"I shall name something from life in words, and you tell us what it's about without words, using actions and gestures. And Grandmother will watch you act it out."

"Terrific!" exclaimed Nikodim, as he started jumping for joy on the spot. "Let's start playing it right away."

"Okay, let's begin," said Radomir, clapping his hands. And he went on: "Once upon a time there was born into the world a little boy named Nikodim. He was just a wee little baby back then."

The boy at once lay down on the ground, flung out his hands and bent his little legs at the knees. "Waa, waa..." he bawled, imitating a baby.

Radomir clapped his hands and continued:

"In time the baby began to get up on his little feet and walk."

Whereupon Nikodim at once got up on his feet, and took a step as though it were his first, staggered a bit, and then dropped down to all fours. He crawled along for a metre or so and then got up again. But this time he was already walking steadily.

Another clap, and Radomir went on:

"The little one's interest connected with everything: he inspected the bugs, and the grass, and tried to detect how apples grew on trees. He reflected on why the Sun came up and why he felt so warmly affected by everything both in summer-time and when winter came."

Little Nikodim bent over to inspect a bug creeping over the grass, he looked up at the sky and jumped for joy, then all at once ran over to his grandfather, put his arms around the old man's legs, then he dashed over to his grandmother, who was sitting on the grass. Claspng her around the neck, he pressed his cheek against hers and gave her a kiss.

Radomir again clapped his hands and said:

"One day it happened that all the people left their domains. They did not travel along the roads, and where they were going was not heard. Perhaps they flew away like the birds, on their way to the stars.

"Then into the domain, where the little one had been left alone, came a foe who burns houses and hacks down orchards with an axe."

Little Nikodim listened to his great-grandfather's frightening tale. This time he stood motionless, without attempting actions or gestures, and finally said:

"I don't like this game. That should never happen in life."

"Yes, in life it shouldn't, you are right," Radomir replied to his great-grandson. "But this is a game, after all."

"Well, I shan't play it!" The boy stamped his little feet and cried out: "*I shan't!*"

"I'll take over," declared Liubomila, getting up from the ground. "When the little one caught sight of the foe, he called over the bear that he had played with when still just a wee mite. He took hold of the nape of the bear's neck, just as he had always done. He grasped hold of the bear's fur with all his might, and the bear lumbered off with him into the woods."

With these words Liubomila called out in the direction of a little grove of trees where their household animals lived:

"Hey there, brown bear, come over to me! Come on, come on, as quick as can be!"

Out from the grove emerged the bear and bounded over to Liubomila. When he came up beside her, she began stroking

its muzzle. Then she whispered something in its ear. She tousled the fur on its shoulder, then, grasping hold of it with her hands, sprang onto its back.

"Hey, giddy-up!" she called to the bear.

The bear ran around in a wheel formation with all his might, until halted by Liubomila.

"But why would our great-grandson go off to the forest on a bear, and not on a horse?" asked Radomir, and Liubomila replied:

"Of course, a steed could go faster than a bear over the fields, but a horse would be helpless indeed in the woods, while the bear will find food and shelter there. Besides, in the woods the bear will offer the best protection. So there's your answer. Let's go on with the game...

"So, the bear ran off into the forest and hid the child there from the foe. He took care of him until the boy grew up to be a man.

"When he had grown, one day the young lad caught sight of a girl in the forest, who had come to pick berries in a glade. They liked each other right off, and later got married. They found a spot on the ground which would be hidden from malevolent eyes, they built a domain and began to bear children. And all their relatives who had flown off to the stars long ago, came back to the Earth."

As he drifted off to sleep, little Nikodim thought about the game, but he did not find it entertaining.

During this time Liubomila and Radomir walked about their family domain and recalled the life they had lived there. It had been a thoroughly joyful experience.

Liubomila laughed like a child when Radomir tried to portray her as a little girl standing amidst the tall grass.

"D'you recall? You remember how you called out back then that I was a good-for-nothing, 'cause I had raised the hem of

your dress? I dried your tears with your dress, and you talked about being dishonoured.”

“Yes, I remember it all,” his wife responded, laughing. “But I thought of something just now: you could have dried my tears with the edge of your shirt.”

“I was a smart boy, I was. I decided: why soil and mess my shirt, when I was going to have to wash out your dress in any case?”

“Yes, you were a smart boy. But still, you did lift up the hem of my dress, you good-for-nothing!... Oh, look at our spot, the wedding mound! New flowers have come up. And look how tall and majestic the cedar has grown! It was so small when we planted it on our wedding day.”

Liubomila pressed the palm of her hand to the trunk and rested her cheek against it. She stood there without saying a word. Radomir, as love-struck as ever, put his arms around her shoulders as before and said:

“Where shall we sleep tonight — here or in the house?”

“Wherever you say, my darling.”



The next morning a detachment of fifty soldiers entered the domain. With them were two monks dressed in black. The soldiers saw an old man standing by the cedar, and an old woman beside him, her back pressed against his. Each of them held two swords in their hands.

“You see?” the elder monk called out to the soldiers. “You see the infidels standing there? These infidels have borne children. Don’t use your arrows — hack them to pieces with your swords.”

Two warriors approached the elderly couple from different sides, their swords raised. They tried to land a blow, but Radomir managed to turn back the foe and disarm one of the warriors with his sword. And Liubomila warded off the attack against her. Then the old people repelled a second attack, then a third. After that the soldiers began fighting with each of them by twos. But Radomir had two swords in his hands, which flashed like lightning. He warded off both attacks simultaneously, but did not shed the soldiers' blood.

The grey-haired Liubomila laughed as she, too, repelled both attacks on her.

"Everyone step back," shouted the elder monk. "They are being helped by an unclean force! Everyone step back. Everybody shoot at them with your bows."

Those wielding the swords retreated. Others prepared their bows, but as soon as they had reached for their bowstrings the old couple threw down their swords, turned to each other and embraced. Radomir whispered something to Liubomila, and she smiled in response.

"What're you waiting for? Shoot!" shrieked the monk. "*They* are infidels! *You* have been sent by God! Shoot or I'll curse you!"

One arrow went into Liubomila and two into Radomir. But as though they did not feel any pain, the old couple still stood there embracing as before.

The arrows flew. The ground was covered in blood. And Liubomila and Radomir slowly sank down, or perhaps they flew off to the stars. As their bodies lay on the ground, the elder monk, the priest's emissary, looked into their faces and said to himself: *They were not thinking about death as death approached. Their thoughts were of life. Their faces show no fear nor sorrow. What must be done to prevent them from being reincarnated again?* He stood there in fear, feverishly trying to come up with a solution.

All at once behind his back rose a murmur of agitation. The monk turned around and saw six soldiers lying dead on the ground beneath the apple tree. Each of their hands was clutching an apple core.

The monk knew right away what had happened. The high priest's emissary knew that the Vedruss orchards produced marvellous fruit, but it could only be eaten when the garden's owner gave it of his own free will. The Vedruss people treated their trees and flowers as living beings, which repaid them with their love. When the trees and flowers saw how strangers acted toward the people who had bestowed their love upon them, the apple tree called up other juices from the depths of its roots and infested its fruits with an extremely strong poison.

"Don't touch it! Don't eat anything here!" cried the monk. "I told you, this is a devil's tribe, and the place here is unclean. I command you in the name of the Almighty to cut down everything, but everything, here."

"Look!" yelled one of the soldiers. "Look over there!", waving his hand in the direction of the entrance to the domain.

Everybody turned to see a bear heading out of the domain by leaps and bounds. On top of it, clinging on to its fur, rode a little boy. The bear rushed out of the domain and made a headlong dash for the woods.

"After them! Go get them!" shrieked the monk. "Don't come back until you have hacked the little vermin to pieces."

He knew that if even one of the Vedruss people escaped, their whole line could be regenerated on the Earth. But he did not tell this to the soldiers. To them he simply kept referring to the 'will of God'.

"Go get 'em! God commands you to rout out everything unclean from the Earth! You see how unclean it is here?!"

The detachment's commander ordered a dozen soldiers to follow the bear, catch up to it and kill the boy. The soldiers

jumped on their steeds and headed out after the bear at a gallop.

In the meantime the bear was bounding quickly toward the forest. But it could not keep up such a feverish pace for long. And the pursuers, galloping as they were at full speed, were gradually catching up. The distance between the bear and the horsemen slowly but surely narrowed. They were only about a hundred metres from the forest when one of the pursuers caught up. Racing alongside, he raised his sword to kill the child. But the bear suddenly rose on its hind paws and took the blow on itself. The horse with the rider struck out to one side and reared. In the meantime, the wounded bear continued streaking toward the forest. Now it had a mere fifty metres to go, but by this time the detachment of horsemen had almost caught up, swords in their hands at the ready.

But then all at once the soldiers noticed another horseman, this one all on his own, heading out from the woods directly toward them. An old man was sitting with ease in the saddle, his grey hair and beard waving in the breeze. Each of his hands brandished a sword, while he controlled his steed with his legs alone.

"Giddy-up! Giddy-up!" the old man called, and spurred on his horse which was already moving at an incredible gallop.

"He's ready to fight us. Make ready for battle with this crazy old man!" the detachment commander shouted to the rest.

"But he's all alone, and there're ten of us," a warrior protested. "He's just an old man, what's there to be afraid of? We need to get on with the chase!"

"Yes, he's alone, but he's a *Vedruss*! Make ready for battle, whoever's not a timid goose!"

The elderly attacker on his steed galloped around the detachment of horsemen. With his swords he managed to disarm the two outer warriors and cut the saddle-girth from two

of the horses, at which point his own extraordinary steed was wounded by an arrow.

But the old fellow did not direct his wounded steed toward the forest, but galloped along the edge of the woods, causing the whole detachment to pursue this course as well. When they got to the lone pine tree at the edge of the forest, his horse stumbled and the rider fell. The old man jumped up from the ground and started running toward the pine. He was looking for something in the grass at the time the detachment caught up with him.

The pine tree took seven arrows in its chest, but the eighth pierced Arga's breast. The thrown Vedruss rider lay on the ground, but did not groan. A stream of blood flowed from his chest. The pine tree, being wooden, could not lament the wound, while Arga's thought rose to the heavens in a state of doom:

*I don't ask for myself any reincarnation,
But I give them my thought for their future creation,
To add to their joy and their great inspiration.
Get together, reincarnate, and live without end,
Radomir, Liubomila: I'm no foe, but your friend!*

The Vedruss lay there on the ground, but did not utter a sound. Even in his weakened state, he was still able to press a little statue of his beloved to his breast.

"*Good shall prevail!*" he whispered to his beloved, almost in a wail. And the wooden pine tree wept. A rather strange-looking pitch began showing itself, flowing down its trunk.

All at once the Vedruss opened his eyes and his vision was clear. And, barely able to enunciate the words, he blurted out:

*Don't be sad, little pine tree, it's all nonsense here.
My thought will break through these bad times of barbarity.
Once more there will flourish bright ages of clarity.
To all earthly goddesses the morn will give hail
And my thought will imply to them: Good shall prevail!*

The soldiers on their steeds did not succeed in catching up to the boy on the bear. They tried to penetrate the forest, but the forest did not turn out to be a friendly place for them. Their steeds began snorting in fear, and no clear path under their feet remained. The soldiers returned and explained to the monk that the boy had been slain.



A few years went by, and people began to say that while they were mushroom-picking in the woods, they caught sight of a boy about ten or older. He would peer at them from the bushes, but seemed afraid to come near. And there was always an old lame bear with him.

Some time later, two young boys got lost in the forest and became frightened. A youth came toward them and gestured them to follow him. He led them to the edge of the woods, right to the road which led to their settlement, while he himself retreated once more into his forest hiding place. After this incident people stopped being afraid of the forest youth. And when, a year later, he headed out of the woods one day toward a group of young lasses gathering berries in the glade, the girls were not afraid of him and did not run away.

The youth was blue-eyed and of slender build. He was dressed in clothing woven from grasses. He stood at the edge of the glade. One lass in particular caught his eye, whose name was Praskovia. In truth, he could not take his eyes off her, and everyone suddenly stopped picking berries and stared at the youth.

Then very slowly, so as not to frighten them, he took several steps toward the group of girls, and stopped. Seeing that the maidens were not running away and were not afraid of him, he approached young Praskovia, stood facing her, smoothed out his hair and blurted out, though not without some stumbling:

"Together with you, my fair maiden, I could create a Space of Love to last forever!"

Praskovia had absolutely no idea as to what these words meant, but for some reason her cheeks flushed with a rosy glow and she began to talk with the young lad.

"Where do you live?" she asked. "Everybody says you live in the forest, all on your own."

"For the time being I live on the Earth alone," replied the youth.

"Alone? But where are your parents, then? No one exists without some kind of family."

"They are living. My father and mother, and elder brothers, and my sisters. And my grandfather Radomir, and my grandmother Liubomila."

"And where do they dwell? In the forest as well?"

"They have flown way up high to the stars in the sky. They will come back down to the Earth from afar when I have found my intended. I shall create and form a Space of Love all around, and this is where our children will be born."

"But how will you look for your intended in the forest?"

"I shall not need to look — she has already been found."

"And who is she?"

"*You*, my maiden — you are the most splendid of all. I ask you now to come with me to my Space, which I have already begun to create. I shall build a house, but... there are just a few tools I need to get. Not having them yet, I have constructed a shelter in the meantime. I have been observing from afar how it is done."

The maidens whispered amongst themselves and made fun of the youth. By this time they had become quite unafraid.

Praskovia did not answer his proposal right away, but withdrew to her group of maidens. The young man stood a little apart, looked to the sky and opened his arms wide, as though apologising to someone, then slowly turned and headed away from the glade.

A hush fell over the maidens. Praskovia watched him depart and then all at once called out loudly and confidently to the youth:

"Wait for me here tomorrow. I'll steal the tools you need from my father as a dowry."

The youth quickly turned around, and ran over to Praskovia. The maidens saw him smile for the first time. And all their cheeks flushed with a rosy glow. The young man's smile was extraordinary, and his eyes were beaming all the while.

"How handsome he is! Too bad he didn't pick me!" whispered one of the girls.

"I'm ready to go with him, too," another announced all of a sudden.

In the meantime the young man said to Praskovia, not seeing anyone around:

"You mustn't steal. That is not a kind deed."

"I was only joking. My father will be glad to give me anything I need."

From that point on, nobody ever again laid eyes on the pair — they saw neither the forest youth nor the maiden Praskovia, who had gone off with him to goodness-knows-where.

CHAPTER TWENTY



Even in chaos there is a purpose

“Life continued on the Earth,” Anastasia went on. “But it was not the same life as before. The great Vedruss civilisation, its traditions, rites and culture, which had existed for tens of thousands of years, were replaced by a chaotic, barbarian order of human society. In our state the period of slavery began with Kievan Rus¹ and continues to the present day.”

“But wasn’t the Vedruss civilisation destroyed even earlier in other territories of the Earth? I remember you saying, Anastasia, that the Vedruss way of life was prevalent among the inhabitants of what is now Germany, England, Poland and the Baltic countries.”²

“Yes, I did say that. It was all one people, one language, one culture. If you look closely, Vladimir, you will see that they all resemble each other even in outward appearance. This despite the fact that for more than two millennia there was a good deal of blood-mixing between them and Asian peoples.”

“But why did things come about like that, Anastasia? You said it was a great civilisation and a great culture, yet in the blink of an eye this civilisation was destroyed by the sword, fire and arrows.”

¹*Rus*’ — see footnote 4 in Chapter 5: “Conception involves more than flesh” above.

²A reference to Anastasia’s declaration in Book 6, middle of Chapter 4: “A dormant civilisation”.

“Not *destroyed*, Vladimir. That word is not really appropriate. As long as there are at least nine people on the planet who are striving for a conscious awareness of the Divine earthly being, the Vedruss civilisation is alive. But now, after all, there are not just nine people, but hundreds of thousands who are discovering more and more the truth within themselves and are changing their way of life at the core. They will soon number in the millions, but for now these hundreds of thousands should be seeking for the answer to the puzzle within themselves, for an understanding of how the disaster came about.”

“But what if they don’t understand? On our Internet site there’s a whole lot of people who’ve been trying for several years now to determine what specific mistake mankind permitted to slip through in the Age of the Image.³ There’s a discussion forum there, known as “The mistake of the Age of the Image”. But so far nobody’s managed to make out what that mistake might be. There’s a lot of variants, but no overall answer here. It may not come for another thousand years! Maybe nobody will ever be able to determine the mistake.”

“They will. Perhaps in a day, or perhaps in five to nine years. They will find the answer.”

“How can you be so sure?”

“Think about it, Vladimir. It was only a short time ago that people did not even talk about the subject at all, and there were not even any attempts to *think* along these lines. Now you tell me yourself that a whole lot of people are endeavouring to solve the mystery. Thought is switched on. Just like a little shoot from a seed, it will find its way to the light.”

“It will find it someday, perhaps. People today are mainly involved in the routine of their everyday life. Your grandfathers and you have had the opportunity to do a lot more

³*Age of the Image* — see the section on “Vedism” in Book 6, Chapter 5: “The history of mankind, as told by Anastasia”.

reflecting. Besides, you have access to a huge amount of information about the past, and then, naturally, you have your own view of things. Why not share it? At least give people a hint?"

"In other words, Vladimir, you are asking me to switch people's thinking off?"

"Now why would *I* be the one who wants to switch it off? Why would a simple hint have that kind of result?"

"If everybody who is trying to work out the solution today in their thought takes the hint as 'gospel truth', their thinking will immediately cease operations. Then they'll be expecting even more hints. And you may be sure that the hints will come — in fact they'll quickly pour down in showers upon them. That is precisely what is happening right now. People are getting hints right and left about what is healthy to eat and drink, how to dress, where the best resorts are, how to live, where to search for God. And what is the result? Life progressively gets worse. God created the order of the Universe with His thought, and He gave thought as a gift to Man. But somebody is constantly trying to bring it to a halt."

"Does that mean you know the answer, but you don't want to talk about it?"

"I do not know the answer, but I can presuppose."

"Well, what presuppositions have you come up with, for example, pray tell?"

"Perhaps a period of chaos was needed, a period of mistakes, so that mankind might have a complete account of it and not repeat it in the future. Similar phenomena have emerged in history when mankind is on the verge of a great discovery — a discovery of universal proportions."

"Now *that*, Anastasia, is what I call a good and encouraging presupposition. Your story about the Vedruss family, Liubomila and Radomir, had a very sad ending — quite unlike your usual optimism."

“Vladimir, why have you decided that the story has come to an end? Life continues, and so not a single story about life can ever be considered to have come to an end.”

“I remember how the great-grandson, Nikodim, went off with Praskovia and continued the family line, but I still feel sorry for specific individuals like Radomir, Liubomila and others. The story about *them* cannot be continued. One can talk only about continuing the family line. If there’s something more you can tell me, then please do tell me, Anastasia.”

“Fine, I shall tell about events that took place in the very near future.”

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE



‘Soulmate gatherings’

The time came when people started to realise the need of searching for their soulmates. Earlier they had been taught that the lovers themselves should find each other by the whim of fate. Of course that is true, but then Man may also control his own destiny. Or at least give fate a hint as to what Man desires of it.¹

And so people in different towns began to organise special events to facilitate two soulmates getting to know each other. And they even applied some of the rites of the Vedruss period, with just a smidgen of adaptation to fit modern situations.

Every autumn, after the tasks of summer are completed, large gatherings take place in various towns, attended by young and old — anybody who has not yet been blessed with a happy home.

These are mainly your readers, Vladimir — those among them who have been endeavouring to build a domain to start up a happy family line.

These gatherings might go on in various towns over a period of two or three months. Your readers spread word of them ahead of time. And they come from different places and countries. Some might come for a week, some for a month. And your readers in particular have a significant advantage over others desiring to create a happy home. All the participants in these gatherings have a single goal — a conscious

¹In the first part of this chapter, as well as in the following chapter, except as otherwise indicated, the narrative is presented by Anastasia herself.

awareness and concept of how to build a happy life for their future family.

“Wait, Anastasia, how is it that my readers specifically had a significant advantage? After all, many married couples apart from my readers have such a single goal in mind. There are often married couples, for example, among performing artists. But the majority of them get divorced, some several times over. They all have the same goal and aspiration, but there is no happy life for them.”

“You and I are talking about *different* goals, Vladimir. One’s profession cannot be — and should not be — a goal of life for a Man. In such cases, the Man would be debasing himself.

“Think about it — take a salesperson, for example. Is it in the nature of a son or a daughter of God to consider one’s life goal to be simply selling things? Or driving a vehicle, or doing laundry, or going back and forth to a factory all the time to perform the same task over and over again?”

“Wait, Anastasia, you named off what may be necessary professions, but they’re still not very prestigious. There are, however, some fairly prestigious professions — or, rather, professions everybody holds in high regard. For example, everybody knows about surgeons and cosmonauts, military commanders and marshals, or presidents of countries.”

“But their significance, Vladimir, lies simply in the fact that they have created a bigger illusion of importance and significance than others. Who knows? Possibly *someone* has tempted one of them — a commander or a president, let’s say — by the illusory significance of these particular professions or positions just so as not to allow his own spirit to develop — a spirit which is capable of accomplishing the acts of the Universe. The deeds such people have accomplished are not interesting to God. But when a Man builds his own corner of Paradise on the Earth and founds the happiest family

line you can imagine, his deeds not only resemble those of God's — he actually becomes a god himself.

“And the readers who came to these gatherings had a noble goal, the same for both women and men. Their advantage was that both men and women were creating through their dreams a way of life for their future families. When they met together, they had a subject of common interest to talk about.”

You know, after all, Vladimir, how often in modern families there is rarely a single topic of conversation of interest to both marriage partners. They have nothing in common, no common aspirations. Two people get married and live together in the same dwelling, but each of them thinks and dreams only of what is of interest to them individually. People like that become strangers to each other, and their cohabitation ends up in nothing but irritation.

The people who come to the gatherings are not married, but even those unacquainted with each other feel closer than many marriage partners.

They go on excursions together and organise fashion shows in which first women — and then men — of all ages take part. The clothes modelled at these shows have either been bought in stores or sewn by the women themselves.

The evenings are spent in playing wedding games in town squares or somewhere in one of the glades. One of them is *Rucheyok*, which I told you about before.

And there is no feeling of embarrassment, no concealing that they are seeking to find themselves a life companion. And women who are left to deal with life with children and no husband bring their children along to these nuptial gatherings. And they reveal the purpose of the trip to the children. The children's thought and participation help them a great deal in their search. Here, I shall show you a scene from one of these gatherings.

Look, a summer theatre in the open air. A full audience, comprised of adults and children of various ages.

See how they are introducing themselves from the stage. Those who are bold enough get up on stage, where they are each given five to ten minutes to talk about themselves and answer questions. Sometimes they introduce themselves in a humorous fashion, or sing and dance a *chastushka-govorushka*. They have full freedom in their choice of repertoire. Take a look.



A girl who looked to be in her mid-twenties came out on stage. She sported a fashionable hairdo and a skin-tight outfit. She had barely taken two steps in the direction of the microphone when she did a somersault and burst out laughing. After that she took a turn around the stage, strutting the catwalk like a professional model. Straightening her hairdo, she approached the microphone and purred teasingly:

"Hey, guys! Is this chick hot, or what?"

From the audience rang out peals of laughter and loud applause, and the girl went on talking about herself in a humorous vein.

"Hey, the way I look, you know, that's not even my greatest asset. I graduated from the Family Domain Academy with top honours. That means I'm tops at cooking, too. And I can rid your body of any ailment, you name it, and, hey, I can make one really coo-ool bed! And I can give you children that'll grow up big and strong...

"I'm not after anyone in particular, but here's a contest for you guys. But like they say, 'this ain't no cakewalk'. The

contestants can do whatever they like to show what stuff they're made of. And the winner is... the one I fall in love with!"

After this a young boy came up the microphone and said:

"Hi! I'm Dima.² That's what they call me. And I'm eleven. Well, maybe not quite eleven yet, but I shall be very soon — this December... My Mama's name is Svetlana, or Svetlana Nikolaevna. She's a great restaurant cook. That is, she used to work in a restaurant, but now she doesn't... At first she cried when she stopped working there, but now she does fine catering for a whole bunch of rich people. She put an advert in the paper and they ring her up on the telephone...

"I'm in school. Mama says I'm not a very bright student, but I know I'm doing okay. It's just that I really don't need fives — threes³ are perfectly good enough for me...

"My Mama and I are here to look for her future husband and my future Papa. Then we'll have a jolly friendly family... My Mama's a really nice person. She's pretty, even though there's no way she can lose weight. She's still pretty!... Mama and I have been spending lots of evenings talking about how we'll live as a complete family. Right now we're in a one-room flat for which we have a monthly rent to meet. But when we're a whole family we'll treat ourselves to a house and plant a garden...

"Mama's already been given land, and we lived there in a tent for a whole month this summer. It was really neat!...

"She — my Mama, that is — she didn't come up here with me on the stage, she's shy. But I've been tellin' her: you've got

²*Dima* (pron. DEE-ma) — an informal variant of the Russian name *Dmitri*.

³*fives* (piatyorki), *threes* (troiki) — part of the marking system in all Russian educational institutions: 5 — excellent (= A), 4 — good (= B), 3 — satisfactory (= C), 2 — unsatisfactory (= D), 1 — fail (= F).

to show yourself! If you don't show yourself, then why did we come all this way and waste a whole lot of money which we've been saving for a house?...

"Hey, there, Mama! C'mon up onto the stage!" the boy called out into the audience.

But nobody made a move toward the stage. Then the audience started clapping in unison, urging the boy's mother to go up to the stage.

Finally, a short, slightly plumpish woman of about thirty could be seen making her way to the stage. She stood beside her son, her cheeks flushed a bright red with embarrassment. She put her arms around the boy's shoulders and gave him a big hug, but couldn't bring herself to speak. Then the boy, in a very businesslike manner, took a crumpled piece of paper out of his trouser pocket, unfolded it and began to read what was written on it:

"My Mama and I live in the Briansk Oblast, in the city of Novozybkov.⁴ There used to be a lot of radiation there, but now there's not so much, and there's going to be even less in the future. Here at the gathering we're listed under number 2015. If anybody wants to, they can write to us. That's all."

The boy's mother took him by the hand and they started heading over to the stage exit under noisy applause from the audience. But when they got to the edge of the stage, the boy suddenly released himself from his mother's grasp and quickly, almost running, went back to the microphone.

"I forgot to say — I mean, I didn't write it down, that's why I forgot. My Mama can play the guitar and sing really

⁴*Novozybkov* (pron. *na-va-ZIP-kaff*) — a city of some 45,000 people not far from Briansk, a major centre located 350 km south-west of Moscow, not far from Chernobyl, just across the Ukrainian border, where a devastating nuclear accident occurred on 26 April 1986, spreading radiation clouds for hundreds of kilometres around. An *oblast* is a territorial division similar in status to a state or province.

cool songs with it, even though they're sad. And my Mama can draw, too. She's drawn a house and a garden... And I, too, can help build a family. And even help build a house... When the elections were held in our town, I got hired to put up campaign posters. And we're gonna be having elections again soon."

Once more the audience thundered their applause, and the boy headed back to his mother. She took his hand, and they came down off the stage and took their seats in the audience.

Then four men got up from their seats at the same time and headed for the stage. The first looked around fortyish, and he walked with a bit of a limp. But the other three beat him to it, and he ended up last in the queue for the microphone. One by one, the men went up to the mike and said something about themselves, but they didn't make any public proposals of marriage. That simply wasn't done at gatherings like this. People were supposed to write notes. But the fact that they went up on stage was a good indication of their desire to get better acquainted with the mother and her son. When it came the lame man's turn at the mike, he said:

"My name's Ivan.⁵ I have my own flat in Moscow. I'll soon be forty years old. I'm a former paratrooper, discharged as an invalid by a medical review board three years ago. I make something on the side in multi-level marketing, but I'm tired of it. I've still got a pup tent, an axe and a mess-kit, which my buddies gave me. Right now my dream is to set up this tent in Briansk Oblast around the town of Novozybkov. Next to your tent, Dima. I'll be glad to work in return for a place

⁵*Ivan* (pron. ee-VAHN) — considered to be one of the most common names in Russia, derived from the Biblical name *Ioann*, which corresponds to *John* in English.

to deploy my tent. I've been trained in bunker construction, and can put up a log house, only I'm not sure how to get an orchard or vegetable garden going."

"I know, I can show you!" cried out Dima, jumping up from his seat.

A day or two later Svetlana Nikolaevna, her son Dima and the former paratrooper Ivan left the gathering.

"Anastasia," I pleaded, "tell me, please, how did life turn out afterward for these three people?"

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO



A nuptial rite for women with children

Their lives unfolded quite well. Ivan invited Svetlana and her son to come for a visit, and they stayed a week in his apartment. After that they corresponded with each other. When spring came, Ivan let his Moscow flat to tenants for a goodly monthly rent, while he himself went off to Novozybkov. He set up his pup tent next to Svetlana and Dima's tent.

The former paratrooper had everything needed for life in field conditions, including a camp stove that could be used for heating. Ivan eagerly set about digging trenches for the foundation of their future house. He was assisted even more eagerly by Dima, who visited with his mother on weekends. With the onset of the summer holidays, they all began sleeping in the tents. Each evening they would gather round a fire and talk about plans for their future domain.

One evening when it came time to go to bed and the fire was burning low, Dima said:

"In normal families a husband and wife sleep together in one room, and their children in another. Is it okay if I sleep in your tent, Ivan, and you and Mama in ours?"

"But we aren't husband and wife just yet," Svetlana protested.

Ivan rose to his feet and held out his hand to Svetlana, helping her up. Solemnly, with just a slight trembling, he pronounced:

"With you, fair goddess, and with our fine young son, I could co-create a Space of Love to last forever."

And Svetlana quietly responded:

"We are ready to help you in your grand co-creation."

Dima jumped for joy and clapped his hands. Then, under a starry sky, they performed the nuptial rite to become husband and wife, as well as the rite of adoption at the same time, whereby Dima became Ivan's own son.

"Maybe you intended to say, Anastasia, that the boy Dima became Ivan's *adopted* son?"

"He became his *very own* son. And Ivan became Dima's very own father."

"But how could that be, Anastasia? It goes against all the laws of biology!"

"But it does not go against Heaven. The Vedruss people knew the laws of Heaven. Ivan, Dima and Svetlana were familiar with the Vedruss nuptial rite for women with children. They performed it."

"What kind of rite is that? How did they know about it?"

"You described it."

"I never wrote about it."

"Don't forget, Vladimir, I'm telling you about events that will happen in the future. And you will describe this rite. I am going to tell you about it."

This rite derives its principal power from the thoughts and desires of three people who want to build a future together. Women play a central role in preparing for this rite. The woman should be able to explain to her child the necessity of living as a family, the necessity of having a father and creating a domain together with him, building a house and planting an orchard. When a child shows or generates an interest in such a project, he must be brought into the search for a future spouse and father. Every mother knows her own child better than anyone else. There is no single formula for achieving the

desired result — it will be different for every mother. The main thing is to achieve one's goal.

Many children do not immediately desire to welcome some other person into their home. And in the absence of such a desire on the part of the child to have a father and join in the mother's search, it is better not to introduce anyone else into the home.

The mother plays a central role in preparing for the nuptial rite only at the beginning stages. At the moment when the rite is actually performed, the motive energy source will be the thought of the child.

If a man and woman have decided on co-habitation while the woman's child is still very small, they can live together without performing the rite until the child grows a little and acquires his own conscious awareness of what family life means. The man and woman should make joint efforts, too, toward this end. If the child grows up accepting his stepfather as his own father, the nuptial rite is still necessary, since it is able to transform an adopted son or daughter into the father's own — in terms of both blood and spirit. This rite can exert a tremendous beneficial influence only if it is performed on the ground of their future family domain, regardless of whether it was first started by the man or the woman. What is important is that it is to everybody's liking, especially the child's.

The rite should take place in the open air, under the stars. There should be a fire burning, or three candles. Svetlana and Ivan were lucky: after their mutual declaration of desire to co-create their life together, there were lots of stars in the sky, the fire was still burning, so they did not have to wait for another night, but got married right away. And they did everything just the right way.

Ivan and Svetlana stood in front of Dima. Ivan looked up at the stars and spoke first:

"Here, on the ground of our family domain, I wish a happy life for our family line. I wish to build a house and plant an orchard.

"I ask you, Dima, for your agreement to allow me to be wedded to your mother for ever, and for you to become my own son."

"I shall be very happy if you, Ivan, will live with my mother and me. Perhaps I shall even become a better pupil. And can I call you Papa?"

"Of course," replied Ivan.

Then it was Svetlana's turn to speak:

"Thank you, my son, for helping me find a husband. I agree to become his faithful wife. A wife should take care of her husband. With your permission, my son, I shall surround Ivan, your father, with loving care."

"Of course, Mama. You should most certainly take care of Ivan. And I shall take care of him. Let us buy Papa a new prosthesis. I saw him wrapping his old one around with insulation tape."

It is not important to pronounce the same words each time in this rite. The most important aspect is thought, which should be heard by the planets currently standing above the marital pair and their child or children. For this it is necessary to bring a wide-mouthed vessel of some sort — a glass, or a mug, for example — out of which each participant should take a drink of water (at least three swallows), and then pour water on their hands and wash their hair. Then all three should lie down on the grass for no less than nine minutes head to head, hold each other's hands and look up to the starry sky, mentally asking the planets above them to help them build a happy life for their family line, and requesting love to take up residence in the family domain. This will happen if the thought of all three of them is sincere and strong.

It is not necessary for the *love* to be strong at the moment of the wedding. A strong mutual sympathy or attraction is sufficient. Love will undoubtedly grow stronger with time. It almost always happened within a year or two among the Vedruss people.

This is a very powerful rite, but it is not occult. When astronomers and psychologists restore at least a part of the knowledge people used to have, they will understand its cosmic power.

Have you understood, Vladimir? This is something in which plants, water, the Earth, the planets and human thought all take part. As the people's aspirations merge into a single whole, they will harness the elements into forwarding their cause in accordance with Divine essence of the Cosmos.

You most certainly know already, Vladimir, the close interconnection between the faraway planets in the heavens and the blades of grass and flowers and bugs and everything else living on the Earth. The ebb and flow of the tides are governed by the planets.

Of course, there is a lot in human life which is influenced by the planets, but in this particular instance, the three people performing the rite, uniting into one, charge the planets with the task of making their union beneficially strong. Man's request to the planets, when his goal corresponds to God's programme, is treated by the planets as a great gift, giving them a feeling of pride in themselves and in Man. His conscious, earnest appeal sets many of the planets in the sky into a rousing, propitious acceleration. The heavenly bodies located at that precise moment above the people lying on the ground, form a wordless alliance to assist these people in their deeds.

This discovery was made by a wise-man, after a period of ninety years leading up to it, in which he observed the planets and compared them with people's deeds.

When the wise-men-scholars were endeavouring to understand this rite, they came to the conclusion that in some miraculous fashion, either the planets or the power of various cosmic energies can erase unpleasant reminiscences of one's past life from human memory, making room for new, bright sensations.

Not only that, but these energies unite three people together in ecstasy.

Remember, Vladimir, how you were telling me about telogy. Modern science has learnt that there is some kind of energy which participates in the formation of the physical bodies of animals and people. Note that these energies are invisible to the eye and are not contained in visible matter, but their power is effective. Besides, their participation comes about by the will of Man. When they act in accordance with human will, their effectiveness increases a hundredfold.

It is important to point out that the essence of the rite we have been discussing is such that, in contrast to telegony, there is no invasion of the old liaison into the new alliance, but that it completely extirpates the energies of the old alliance and endows the participants with new strength, and gives them new life.

"Wow! It's such a brief rite, and yet the results are extraordinary. It really creates blood ties among them."

"Brief, you say? Think about it carefully, Vladimir. The preparation for this 'brief' rite, as you call it, may take several years."

The rite must be preceded by two important customs.

Take the first — here is an example: the mother needs to prepare her child ahead of time, then — pay close attention, Vladimir — Ivan started by saying that he wanted a place to set up his tent and offered to do household work in return.

This point actually comes from a different rite. Every 'old stag' — as old or middle-aged bachelors used to be called — was supposed to spend one month a year working in a woman's home, either for a widow living alone or one living with children. He was not obliged to spend the whole month with the same widow. The bachelor could work a week for one, and then go on to another. This custom, of course, was not designed just to offer aid to single women. Its aim was to get people acquainted with each other and help them create a family.

A bachelor might come to a widow and say:

"Madam, I am looking for work, you see. Would you happen to have anything for me?"

If the woman did not like the man's looks at first sight, she might reply:

"Everything here's been done over and over again. Besides, I can't afford to pay anything right now."

On the other hand, if she liked the man, she might give him some sort of work to do for two or three days. Then she could offer him more work. It did not really matter how knowledgeable or skilful he was. The main thing was whether the two people liked each other or not.

If there was a mutual attraction, the woman might ask the man to stay longer than a month and, if he stayed, start calling him her *primak*.¹ And after a year of co-habitation they could either get married or go their separate ways.

"Tell me, Anastasia, after this rite, would the newlyweds still need to go to the Civil Registration Office?"

"People can go through with whatever formalities are necessary in life, but these can never interfere with what is most important."

¹*primak* (stress on last syllable) — roughly equivalent to an 'associate' (a person one has tentatively joined with).

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE



High-society ladies

As I was completing the preceding chapter, it came to me that a rite like this could be successfully applied in our day, too. People in many parts of Russia today, mainly readers of the Ringing Cedars Series, are gathering together in groups, each family taking a hectare of land, planting orchards, building houses and setting up their own little Motherland. They are doing this, by and large, as families. But these groups also include a significant number of single women.

The settlement I have visited the most often is the one near the city of Vladimir, which numbers at the moment more than sixty domains under construction. Already, children are growing up who have been born in them. But there are also single women who have taken a hectare and are building their domain, sometimes with the help of their children, but sometimes all by themselves. Can you just see it? A woman builds a house all by herself, and plants an orchard. It's not just a little dacha on a mere 600 square metres of ground that she is putting up, but an actual domain that she is building.

Is it hard for them? In a financial sense, yes. I know one woman who has rented out her Moscow apartment and is building a house in a field on the proceeds.

Because of insufficient funds, she is not always able to hire tradespeople, so she does a lot of the work herself. And she does it joyfully. She has a goal, and takes joy in progress toward that goal. The progress may be slow, but it still more than compensates for all the challenges, and makes them seem insignificant by comparison.

After collecting information from various communities, I came to the conclusion that I should write a book about them as soon as possible. This will be a truly historic book. Our descendants ought to know how their new and happy civilisation got its start, and who started it.

In the meantime I asked the wife of one of the founders of the Rodnoye¹ settlement in Vladimir Oblast to describe some of the unmarried women and what they were doing. Here are her brief descriptions:

Evgenia T. — born in Moldavia, 53 years old, a geologist, a real beauty, with a smile that would outshine Hollywood stars. She has an apartment in Malakhovka near Moscow, but she doesn't go to it. She says: "My home is here."

She first came to have a look around in 2003. She went mushroom-picking in the woods.

"They warned me," says Evgenia, "they said that's not your average forest! But I told them: 'I'm a geologist, I shan't get lost.' I spent twelve hours wandering within a three-kilometre radius! My legs were practically broken by the time I got back around midnight. 'This is my place!' I said. I rented out my flat in Malakhovka for 10,500 roubles a month.² I was able to start building with the money I received. I rented a house in Studentsovo, close to my plot. Turned out the furnace hadn't been lit in ten years, and the house was falling apart. I pulled out a nest from the chimney — I hadn't been able to light a fire.

¹*Rodnoye* (pron. *rad-NAW-yeh*) — the name of the settlement in question, literally meaning 'one's own' or 'native', derived from the root *rod-* ('kin' or 'family'). For further information on this Slavic root, see footnote 1 in Book 4, Chapter 24: "Take back your Motherland, people!"

²Note that in terms of the then current official exchange rate, *one* thousand roubles would be roughly equivalent to US\$35, but closer to US\$70 in terms of actual purchasing power.

"I spent the winter in the village alone. Sometimes I would go visiting, to Koniayevo.³ I was sparing with the wood, lighting a fire only every other time. In the fall I laid a foundation and put in a four-metre-by-four-metre log *banya*.⁴ I spent the whole winter caulking the walls with tow. I now know the sound of falling snow.

"I would go about the house wearing three pairs of trousers and three sweaters along with a jacket and a *shapka*.⁵ But when I worked outdoors I got by with not so much clothing.

"In the spring I took a knife and scraped the rest of the bark off the timber frame. I now have a house which looks as though each log has been finely planed. I can hear the snow melting.

"I needed someone to fix the furnace. So I got dressed warmly and took a fishing rod (with no hook) and went down to the pond where some men were fishing (God forbid they should see my 'tackle'). I got into conversation with the men and 'caught' myself a furnaceman. And whenever I needed a tractor, I just went out onto the road and stopped the first one that came along."

Evgenia's got herself a vegetable garden — it's all in order, everything's coming up. The first year she put in a lavatory and a summer kitchen made of wattle. When there's absolutely nothing left to eat, she makes up some porridge with fish oil. She's a marvellous cook. Her feverish activity has been giving everyone a pain in the neck — the locals

³*Koniayevo* (pron. *kan-YA-ye-va*) — like neighbouring Studentsovo, a village in Vladimir Oblast, close to the eco-settlement under discussion.

⁴*banya* — a Russian bath-house, similar to a Finnish sauna. For a more detailed description see footnote 20 in Book 2, Chapter 1: "Alien or Man".

⁵*shapka* — a warm hat, usually made of fur, with ear-flaps, to keep one's head warm in winter.

tend to shy away from us — but her house is already up!
She says what she thinks.

Liubov E. — born in the Far East, 58 years old, lived 27 years in Perm⁶ and 20 years in Tsimliansk in Rostov Oblast.⁷ She's an ichthyologist, worked with fish conservation, now retired.⁸ She has a mother 84 years old and a son, 30, who lives in Perm (two grandsons); another son, 18, lives in Tsimliansk.

This year she began counting time in reverse, says she's now 57. She began setting up her domain in 2003. She came for ten days, cut down the wild grass, planted a hedge (fir, pine, birch, aspen, linden, maple). An ideal plot indeed. In the winter she brought 50,000 roubles with her — all her mother's savings. She put up a house-frame and covered it with asphalt roofing... In the spring she arrived with her ex-husband; he dropped her off on his way to Perm. They worked on the plot together. She says if it had been like this before, she would never have left him. She arrived in the summer, on 6 July (she was hurrying to get here in time for the Feast of Ivan Kupala⁹).

She really loves holidays. She sings, plays the guitar and dances. She gets a pension of 2,000 roubles a month. She took a leave of absence from her work for the summer. She's got enough money, except for travel expenses... The

⁶*Perm* — a major city of over a million inhabitants 1,500 km east of Moscow.

⁷*Rostov Oblast* — a large territorial jurisdiction of just over 100,000 km² north and east of the Sea of Azov (north of the Black Sea). Its administrative centre is Rostov-on-Don. The town of Tsimliansk (stress on last syllable) dates from the construction of an electric power station on the nearby Tsimliansk Reservoir in 1961.

⁸*retired* — The normal retirement age in Russia is 60 for men, 55 for women.

community has helped her buy bricks, cement and timber. She herself spent a month laying the foundation under the furnace, then she put in the foundation for the house frame, put in uprights under the floor joists, caulked the whole house, made an awning and built a summer stove. She dragged around barrowfuls of rocks, sand and crushed stone. She thought she couldn't do it, but she could! She got stronger, lost weight, and began swimming across the lake and back (something she couldn't do earlier). She took off ten years (she dreamt of looking just a year younger). Her eyes sparkle, she's always smiling, and she's made friends and gets along with everybody... She's building the house for herself and her mother, and hopes the two of them can move in come spring. She wants her son and grandchildren to come and see her from Perm, and stay for a while so they can see whether they might want to live there... She's got no money, and no source of income. She does have an old Italian violin which her father brought back from the war. Fifteen years ago experts appraised it at between ten and fifteen thousand dollars minimum, without restoration. She really hopes she can sell it — it's

⁹*Ivan Kupala* — the ancient Russian Summer Solstice holiday, later adopted by the Orthodox Church under the name of a Christian saint, *Ivan Kupala* — the Russian name for St John the Baptist, whose official day of 24 June in the Orthodox Church's Julian calendar falls on 7 July by our modern (Gregorian) calendar. Even in their present form, the Ivan Kupala celebrations preserve key traits of the pagan festivities, including letting burning wheels run downhill into water (to symbolise the descent of the fiery, masculine energy of the Sun-god Yarila into the water — the feminine element of Mother Earth), jumping over a bonfire with one's intended mate, bathing in the lakes and rivers, searching for a 'fern's blossom' (symbolising a spiritual insight into the workings of Nature) and picking medicinal plants throughout the night. One of the main festivities of the pre-Christian era, the Summer Solstice was traditionally the day on which weddings were 'played out', more or less as a game.

a violin ready to be played, not just a museum-piece. If she pulls it off, the work will go faster; if not, she'll have to do everything herself. But you can't lay down a floor or ceiling without boards. She's very concerned over the lack of funds, but the house is getting built... She'll be coming again in September, for a month. This past winter she visited her grandchildren in Perm, and paid a visit to her new domain on the way back — just for one day, to walk around, and stand in her own place, even though she could have taken a direct train to Rostov...

Natalia D. — born in Vologda,¹⁰ came here from Moscow, has two children — daughters two and five years old.

She's been living in a tent since the end of May. She's divorced, and wants to take her children out of the city to avoid having them turned into puppets of the system. The summer's been cold and rainy, but not a single complaint from Natalia. They brought in an old trailer for her. She's peeled off all the old wallpaper and given it a thorough cleaning. She wants to cover it with board siding and put in insulation, so she's buying up boards... She has no money. Her husband provides enough to feed the children. She's now living with them, and earning a living by working in the old field, helping the men put in the foundations. She dreams of staying on in the domain — even if not for this winter, then at least for the following one. She's studying all the different house plans that she can build herself (including an adobe and a dugout). The children have become calmer and more cheerful.

¹⁰*Vologda* (pron. *VAW-lag-da*) — a city of more than 300,000, located 400 km north of Moscow. Like Moscow, Vologda's first recorded mention was in 1147.

When she drops by Liuba¹¹ E.'s house and sees what *she's* managed to do, she says: "Well, if you can do it, I can, too. After all, I'm younger and stronger than you." *She'll do it!*

She's always smiling, and has a terrific singing voice. She's got a college-level education. A beautiful soul!

Sorry to be so emotional, but I just love them all so much...

Nadezhda Z. — a farmer from Belarus. After the Chernobyl disaster they lived near Azov,¹² then spent a year at Paretskoye in the Suzdal area (while waiting for a field), and this past year they've been living in someone else's house at Koniayevo.

This summer she began construction on her own house. Two grown-up children are currently living in Moscow. Her daughter and sister have also taken plots. They all want to get together. The husband and children work. Nadezhda looks after the household, supervises the construction, and works on building the house herself... For many years she was part of a professional dance ensemble. She has the poise of a ballerina, even when she's pushing wheelbarrows full of manure... You can't help but admire her! The family has two dogs, four cats (mousers), rabbits, hens (Smirnov breed, preserved in homesteads during revolutionary times), a goat, and pigeons.

The house is awash in all sorts of flowers, both plain and exotic. She has an encyclopædic knowledge of everything she needs to know about. Her husband and children support her, but she has to do everything herself; they're

¹¹*Liuba* — an informal variant of the name Liubov, a name which literally signifies 'Love'.

¹²*Azov* — a port on the Don River, not far from Rostov-on-Don.

leading their own lives for the time being. She is firmly and confidently building the future.

She recently broke her right arm (falling off a bicycle which her children gave her as a fiftieth-birthday present, so that she could get around everywhere). She took one day off. The very next day she was back forking hay (winter fodder for the animals). Now she's painting and planing the boards. When I asked her how she does it, she smiles: "With one hand tied behind my back!" She's always smiling, she loves to sing, she's the life of any party, she's everyone's darling, a real storehouse of knowledge, and our consultant to boot. She's tiny and slender, a support for the whole family. She's successful in everything she puts her hand to — house, construction, animals, vegetable garden, canning preserves, and what fruit liquors she makes!!! She hasn't any apartment or house to go back to, and by the fall she'll have to vacate the house in the village, as the owners are returning. She'll be spending the winter in her new house!

This information I obtained a year ago. Now all the heroines described have already finished building and none of them plan to retreat from their goal. No doubt it was women such as these the poet¹³ had in mind when he said:

*She'll stop a wild horse on the gallop,
And enter a hut all in flames.*

¹³*the poet* — These lines dedicated to simple Russian village women (particularly their bravery in saving others) are taken from the epic poem *Moroz, Krasny nos* ('Frost, Red-nose'), written in 1864 by the celebrated Russian poet Nikolaj Alekseevich Nekrasov (1821–1878). Later he would write another epic poem (in two parts), entitled *Russkie zhenshchiny* ('Russian women').

And I would add: *She'll build the domain herself, and take her man into eternity.* But where is this man of hers? When will she have a chance to meet with him if she's engaged in such a big undertaking from morning 'til night?

How many bright young women in various parts of the country dream about co-creating a family domain! And it would be good if they could find their life partner before creating it.

I've thought about the possibility of organising a data bank where such women could register, and men could pay them a visit as temporary workers. Maybe the women could even choose themselves soulmates. It shouldn't be that the men choose them, but that they should choose the men.

We have an expression: *a high-society lady*,¹⁴ meaning a woman who is 'in' with the élite crowd of the rich and famous. But what is this 'high society', if the in-crowd has nothing better to offer society at large than spread gossip in the tabloids? But if you marry one of these ladies, as many men have noted, you get nothing but caprices and unreasonable demands thrown at you.

It has come to me that the real 'ladies of high society' are the married and unmarried women of today who are building their family domains and are getting ready to give birth therein to healthy children, or pass along what they have built to their children already born.

Good can come only from them — good which will benefit not only single men but the nation as a whole. The children they bear will be the face of our future civilisation.

And Anastasia's grandfather could not have been more right when he spoke of the vital importance to resolve

¹⁴ *a high-society lady* (Russian: *zhenshchina iz vysshego sveta*) — literally, 'a woman from a higher world'. Note that the Russian word *svet* (world) can also signify 'light'.

questions of the family on the national level. How they are being resolved today, the Russian families themselves know better than anyone — and not just *Russian* families.

Somehow we have got to resolve the question of organising events which will be able to assist these women, or rather assist the men to get acquainted with women who are setting up their own little Motherland.

I hereby request the administrators of the *Anastasia.ru* website to consider ways to better facilitate such acquaintanceships on-line. Perhaps each unmarried woman or man among my readers could post their address and contact co-ordinates on the site. I would remind anybody who doesn't have a computer that there are Internet clubs in almost every city, where they can read information from websites, as well as post offices which offer Internet access services.

For my part, I shall formulate here the text of my greeting to men of all countries where my books are available, and would ask all the translators in Europe and America to highlight it.

Gentlemen! I know that many of you, and especially those who are not yet involved in family life, would love to meet that unique woman with whom you could find joy in a life-time companionship. But where to find such a woman? Just about the only recourse you have is to apply to one of the many marriage bureaus around. Beware, however, that almost all of them give priority to outward characteristics, as well as age, with only a little attention paid to character and life-goals. And even this 'little' has not been confirmed for certain. But what *is* for certain?... Women have shown up offering their youth, beauty and smiles, all ready to sign a marriage contract with you on the condition that you are rich and can guarantee them an abundance of material benefits. Already in Moscow there are cafés where beautiful

women gather to offer themselves to rich suitors. This is no new phenomenon.

"But what's wrong with it?" certain men might think. "I'm a man of some means and I can afford to sign a marriage contract with a young and beautiful girl. All she has to do is take care of my needs in bed and make me the envy of everyone at social gatherings. After all, if you have relationships with young people, you'll become younger yourself."

All this is fine and dandy, but there is one *but*. What does your young cohabiter think and dream about? She is, after all, a living being and capable of attraction and affection, only the object of her affections is by no means *you*. So along comes the desire, sooner or later, to free herself from you, whom she sees as an obstacle on the road to happiness. So then, even if she doesn't resort to putting out a contract on your life (such things occasionally do happen, as you know), or to slipping poison into your morning coffee, it doesn't take much more than a thought — a subconscious thought at that — to get you permanently out of the way. And even though you may think you are bringing into your home a kind and tender beauty, in fact you are bringing home a poisonous serpent. The distinction between the two is only in external appearance, and so, instead of placing this serpent in an aquarium behind impenetrable glass, you are putting her beside you in your bed.

Perhaps, as a counter to the destructive phenomena of our life, some women have shown themselves to be harbingers of a new and happy civilisation. In building a family domain, they are not merely putting a roof over their head, they are actually laying the foundation for a whole new life. *An actual foundation!*

A dying billionaire, for example, will be revived and will regain his youth upon meeting a woman like that. A

prosperous businessman will flounder without her. It is not money that prolongs life, but the thought of your beloved and the Space of Love which the two of you have co-created together. And insofar that it guarantees the conditions requisite for a quick and conscious reincarnation, it not only prolongs life, but makes life eternal.

No matter what words I have written, no matter what arguments I have put forward, they will not succeed in touching your heart the way an acquaintanceship with such women can. I would urge you to make every effort to get to know these earthly goddesses of eternity.

And it is quite possible that this encounter will be similar to the one Anastasia told me about.¹⁵

¹⁵The whole of the following chapter is narrated by Anastasia.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR



Millennial encounter

One day a girl in her mid-twenties by the name of Liuba came to one of the ‘soulmate gatherings’. She was wearing an embroidered linen blouse and a plain skirt whose hem reached just below the knees. A small travel-bag was slung on a strap over her shoulder, but it contained nothing more than a few rather plain outfits.

The girl walked up and down the street in the hopes of finding some sort of privately run lodging for the night. During the gatherings all hotels (both for Russian and foreign visitors) and *pension* rooms had been booked up in advance. Besides, Liuba could not afford an expensive hotel room, and so she was looking for plainer lodgings. But there was no chance of finding any privately-run accommodation during the nuptial gatherings. With little hope of success, Liuba asked a woman who happened to be coming out of the gate in front of a private house:

“Hello, there. Could you tell me please, whether you might have any rooms available in your house for overnight accommodation? I’m looking for something not too expensive.”

The woman replied:

“Not much chance of that, dearie. Everything’s been booked up for ages. All the visitors make arrangements in advance through the housing office. You’re just wasting your time. You’d better head for the railway station, or you won’t find a place to sit down even there.”

“Thanks for the advice. I’ll probably do that,” Liuba responded and headed down the street in the direction of the terminal.

"Wait a minute, dearie. Come here," the woman called out, and Liuba came back to her.

"I'll tell you what you can do. Try knocking or ringing the bell five houses down. There's a doorbell right at the gate — try ringing it. Maybe an old woman will come out — one that looks like Baba-Yaga.¹ She's Greek, and has a hooked nose. My husband says that all Greek women are beautiful when they're young, but when they get old, they all end up looking like Baba-Yoshkas.

"Anyway, dearie, you can ask and see if she's got any rooms. Before, when her husband was still alive, she used to have all sorts of people stop over, but he died, and she hasn't let a single person in these past three years now. Anyway, you can always try asking — she just might give you a room."

"Thanks, I'll try," replied Liuba. And she went along to the house the woman pointed out. She rang the bell once, and a minute later she tried it again, right at the gate, but nobody came out. Finally, after ten minutes had gone by, the door creaked open, and a bent-over old woman came out. She came down the grapevine-lined path and opened the gate, groaning at every step. She started in speaking without any formalities of saying hello.

"What you knockin' at my gate for, girl?" she asked with a tone of annoyance.

"I wanted to ask you about a room. A kind lady, your neighbour, suggested I should."

"She was not bein' no kind, she was laughin' at you. I haint had no roomers for ages."

¹*Baba-Yaga* (stress on final syllable), also known as *Baba-Yoshka* — a witch (usually portrayed as an old hag with a hooked nose), who, despite her threatening looks and habits (in the Christian period her image was often demonised to represent evil), actually offers help to the good and punishes the evil in traditional Slavic folk-tales.

"I know, she told me that too. But I've been looking all day and I haven't found anything, so I decided to ring your bell, just on the off-chance."

"Just on 'off-chance', eh? Well, you won't find any 'off-chance' with me. You've *all* come here just on 'off-chance'... So, just like everyone else, you have come here to find yourself 'a bloke'?"

"I want to meet my intended. Please, forgive me for bothering you. I'll head down to the station and spend the night there."

It began to drizzle, and the old woman grumbled:

"To hell with these girls! To hell with them! And now — it's started: rain. Fine, I will set you under this tent-roof in my garden. There is this hammock there, and this bench, and nails for you can hang your clothing up. And for this you will pay me five hundred roubles each night."

"Five hundred?!" exclaimed Liuba in surprise.

"And just how much was you thinkin' it will be? What, you imaginin' that you are come to visit your relations?"

"Okay, I'll give you five hundred. Only I wanted to stay here ten days. Never mind, I'll just stay for five. I agree to your terms, Granny."²

"Then come. You can see where you will sleep and pay me this money each day in advance."

Five days went by. On the fifth morning Liuba began neatly packing her plain-looking clothing away in her bag. The old woman approached her, groaning and leaning on her cane.

"So you already start packin', eh, girl? You leavin'?"

"Yes, Granny. It's been five days now."

"Five days. You got your ticket?" the old woman asked, sitting down on the bench.

²Granny (Russian: *babushka*, pron. BAH-boosh-ka) — a more or less respectful term of address to senior women.

"Yes, I bought a single/return ticket before I left home. The return is actually for five days from now, but I think I'll be able to exchange it at the station and get one for today or tomorrow."

"No chance of that — not with everyone and her dog comin' and goin' around here these days. I will tell you something, girl, you stay with me five days more until your ticket will be good."

"I can't. I've got no money left to pay you."

"No worry. No need to pay, you just stay."

"Thanks, Granny!"

"Thanks,' she says... Only your stayin' will not do you any good!"

"Why d'you say that?"

"I been watchin' you. That is no good way to look for 'a bloke' these days. Why you are up at dawn each day? What is the use? All 'a blokes' are still asleep that time of day. But *you* — you go to bed right early. Right when all this partyin' begins, this is when you decide to go to bed for each night! All those 'a blokes' keep partyin' 'til midnight, while you are in bed at ten. Besides, you dress like a nun, no makeup. That is no good way to find 'a bloke' today."

"I'm preparing my body, you see, Granny, for my encounter with my intended. And so I try to maintain a strict daily routine. I don't make myself up so that he can recognise me."

"Recognise?! You, girl, you sound like you are 'a mite daft in the head!'"

"That's what my Mama says, too. But there's nothing I can do about it. I often have dreams about him looking for me all over the globe and not being able to find me."

"Dreams? You have been dreamin'? Here too?"

"Yes, twice already. Once it seemed I was walking in a huge garden, and he was there, too, only there was no way we could approach each other. And it seemed as though I could hear

his voice, calling to me over and over: 'Where are you? Where are you?'"

"You heard? A voice? You know, you probably ought go see a doctor, girl. What is all this about an 'intended' bein' pounded in your head? To a point where you even hear voices, in your dreams?!"

"Sometimes I dream that I lived with him once a long, long time ago. And we had children and grandchildren."

"Once upon a time? Well, girl, next thing you be tellin' me you can say what he look like!"

"Yes, I can: he's half a head taller than me, with light brown hair. And hazel eyes. And a kindly smile, only a little gap between two of his teeth. And he walks in a proper, dignified fashion."

"A gap between his teeth? His walk? But what if someone else should come?"

"They've come. My Mama's always after me about that at home, saying that my dreams will keep me an old maid forever."

"An old maid? Of course, 'an old maid'. You will never find your 'bloke' that way, not with those dreams of yours. You know, girl, I will tell you something. Here, take my rainbow shawl. Put it over your shoulders, and tie it just little more fashionably. And go walk along the embankment later tonight."

"Thank you, Granny, for your concern. But I can't cover up my blouse with a shawl. You see, I did the embroidery myself. It came to me in a dream. And it seems as though at some time in the past I was wearing this embroidered blouse when I was taking a stroll with my intended in the garden."

"Embroidered? Takin' a stroll? Well, girl, you... Well, God be your judge. There is some milk there on a table, and I have made scones. Have a bite to eat! I will just scoot to my neighbours' for a bit."

The old woman hobbled off with a groan, muttering all the while to herself: *She will put me in my grave yet. I must be daft. I took her in, and now I cannot help worry about her. I will go talk to my neighbour's son, see if he will show her some attention. Yes, he will show her some attention. He is dark-haired, and she wants light brown with a gap between his teeth, but there is nobody like that among my neighbours. She will put me in my grave!*

That morning Liuba began wandering around the public garden. She picked up a *pirozhok*³ with potato filling for lunch. As she was walking past a restaurant, a group of men were just coming out of the door. They were laughing and chatting away in some foreign tongue. When they saw Liuba, they spoke to her in their own language. Liuba didn't understand and walked on past. Right off the men began talking with other girls.

Then, all of a sudden, without turning around, she could feel someone detach himself from the group of cheerful foreigners and come after her. She knew for certain that *she* was his specific target. She even counted his footsteps without quickening her own pace, and for some reason her heart started to tremble. She could feel his breath behind her, and all at once the foreigner began addressing her in a language she couldn't understand:

*"Mit dir, die wunderschöne Göttin, dürfte ich den ewigen Raum der Liebe schaffen."*⁴

Liuba could not decipher the German words. But for some reason she found herself whispering:

³*pirozhok* (pron. pee-ra-ZHOK) — a Russian pastry with a meat, vegetable or fruit filling, akin to a Ukrainian pierogie. See footnote 2 in Book 2, Chapter 11: "A sharp about-turn".

⁴*Mit dir ... schaffen* — German for: 'With you, marvellous goddess, I could create an eternal Space of Love'.

"I'm ready to help you in your grand co-creation!" and she turned around to look at the stranger.

There before her stood a young man, half a head taller than she. Light brown hair, hazel eyes, a kindly smile and a small gap between two of his teeth. He held out his arms to Liuba, and without realising quite what she was doing, Liuba snuggled her head against his chest. He hugged her trembling body as though he had known her for an eternity.

The unseen planets in the heavens began to quiver for joy. Oh, how many events did they need to create to arrange the threads of destiny for the ages! But it worked! They met and they embraced!

Radomir with his marvellous Liubomila! And even if they don't remember the past, their souls will create a future to marvel at.

People on the beach couldn't figure out why the young couple were creating some kind of design or sketch in the sand. They were speaking different languages, but it seemed as though they understood each other. First they would discuss the drawing, then argue a bit, and then all of a sudden come to an ecstatic agreement.

Carried away as they were with the drawing, Liubomila and Radomir did not know, either, that they were sketching in the sand a design of the splendid family domain which they had created just before their wedding five thousand years earlier.

"There should be a pond here, a round one," said Radomir in his own language, and dug a little round hole in the sand to represent the pond.

"But not that shape," whispered Liubomila. "It should definitely be oval," she countered, changing the round hole to an oval shape.

"Yes, exactly, an oval pond is much better," Radomir agreed, as though suddenly remembering something.

That evening they came back to the house where Liubomila was staying. She asked her elderly landlady permission for her companion to drop in for the evening. The landlady agreed.

With a smile on her face, Liubomila drifted off to sleep in the hammock, while he sat on the bench, gently rocking the hammock and delicately fending off flies with a small tree-branch. And he sang something very, very soft.

From a window in the house, the old woman peered at them through a crack in the curtain, until just before dawn.

In the morning on the little table in front of the house stood milk and scones, covered with a white linen tablecloth. There was also a note, written in an ageing hand. Liubomila read it aloud:

“I have gone away on errands. Will not be back for couple of days. Look after house. To look after it, stay in my big room. There is food in a fridge...”

Liubomila and Radomir left town together. But where did they go? The ages will show where their family line will be reborn.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE



Anastasia's wedding

As I bade farewell to Anastasia's grandfather, I said to him:

"You'll have to forgive me for my misunderstanding back in the taiga, when we were talking about the party's goals and activities. Now I realise that the stronger the family's role in the State, the more loving families will be living in it, and the more order there will be in the nation as a whole.

"We must restore the customs and rites which our ancestors thought through. They only need to be somehow adapted to our modern age. Anyway, I'm beginning to realise that they are not even 'rites' in the traditional sense of the word. They constitute the great science of life. And the wise-men were the greatest scholars and wisest teachers of all.

"Apart from that, you know what I'm regretting right now? I'm regretting that I knew nothing of these rites back before my first encounter with Anastasia. About how they help in using the planets for the benefit of families. I didn't know that, and so Anastasia had to bear a son, and then a daughter, without being wedded."

Anastasia's grandfather gave me a sly look and, smiling through his grey moustache, said:

"And so, now you know that, you're concerned as to whether Anastasia bore her son and daughter by you?"

"No, I wouldn't say I'm terribly concerned. But still, it wouldn't hurt for Anastasia and me to go through the appropriate rite."

"It's a good thing, Vladimir, that you have these regrets. It means you're beginning to understand the essence of being,

and where human society finds itself at the moment. But you need not feel regret when it comes to Anastasia. She was married before you spent that first night with her."

It was several minutes before I could get over the shock and regain enough composure to speak. Finally I sputtered:

"To whom? I didn't go through any wedding ceremony. I remember that for certain."

"You didn't. It was enough for us that she went through it alone. For three days my father couldn't get over her weird behaviour. It was the kind of gaffe that not a single man of wisdom could have thought up in a million years. But the upshot is, she's married."

"To whom?"

"Maybe, to you."

"But I never went through a wedding. And what's this about 'maybe'? What, you don't know for certain?"

"What she did, Vladimir, nobody can evaluate, at least not yet. It's entirely possible she created this magnificent rite herself and thereby offered all women the opportunity of making their illegitimate children legitimate. It's entirely possible she created something in Heaven, besides. What she has created, perhaps only a wise-man would be in a position to evaluate. I'd better tell you everything in order."

And Anastasia's grandfather recounted to me the following:

That first time you came with Anastasia to her glade and were getting ready to go to bed in the dugout, *we* had to come to our granddaughter's glade, too.

"Why?" you might ask.

She summoned us. We felt her summoning us and my father and I came to the lake.

Anastasia was standing on the shore, holding in her hands a crown of flowers woven together. She was all prettied up in

her very best, just like a bride. As we approached, my father asked her in a rather severe tone:

"Anastasia, what events prompted you to prevent the flow of our evening thoughts?"

"Oh, Grandpakins and Great-Grandpakins, I have no one else to present myself to but you. You alone are capable of comprehending me."

"Then speak," allowed my father.

"I am now about to get married, and I've summoned you as my witnesses."

"Get married?" I queried, "*get married?* And where is your bridegroom?"

I was not supposed to speak when Father was leading the dialogue. He gave me a stern look. She didn't respond to *me*, but to him as the elder:

"When the wedding rite is performed, the young couple are first asked how they will set up their life, what Space they will co-create."

Father knew about that, and agreed, without violating any rules. But here, it seems, our granddaughter somehow managed to 'switch off' our consciousness, as you say in your language — either that or she charmed us as in a marvellous dream.

Anastasia began talking about her future neighbours. You know how she can create holograms with her thought, don't you, Vladimir?... Yes, I thought so.

Only this time over the surface of the lake she changed the pictures of the future of the Earth at an incredible rate of speed. Her pictures were incredibly clear and involving.

In one scene there were people walking along flower-lined allées, self-confident and with dignified smiles. Another portrayed angelic-looking children running through a meadow to a river. In a third, we seemed to be looking down on a lake from a great height and seeing the reflection of the whole planet.

And there were a great many scenes and episodes showing marvellous landscapes of extraordinary beauty.

And all at once a single Man appeared over the lake, as though out of a mist. And everything else suddenly disappeared. This Man stood in the middle of the lake all by himself, looking at us. Presently, another man approached from his right, then a maiden of extraordinary beauty, then a second, and a third. After that they were joined by two little twin boys holding hands. A whole lot of people were standing around, all tall and slim. They looked at us with kindly smiles, which made a pleasant feeling of warmth run through our bodies. At that very moment we heard the voice of our granddaughter:

"Grandpakins and Great-Grandpakins, look: these are your descendants thinking about you with warm smiles on their faces. Look, Great-Grandpakins Moisey — you see the boy standing at the end, he looks like you and his gaze is radiant with your soul."

When all the holograms disappeared, leaving us standing there with extraordinary feelings, Anastasia all at once said:

"What do you think, who can place the crown upon my head?"

And my father, feeling absolutely no sense of subterfuge, enquired (as was customary in the wedding rite):

"Maiden, who may place the crown upon your head?"

And she replied:

"I place the crown upon my own head in the sight of you, of Heaven and of my own destiny." And with that she placed the crown upon her own head.

"And where is the one you have chosen to wear the crown?" Father asked.

"He is getting ready to go to sleep. But even when he is awake, he is sleeping, too. He knows nothing about our rites. You will need to ask him again, after several years sweep by."

"You have violated the rules, Anastasia," said Father, sternly. "The ancient science of the wise-men. Two people ought to take part in the rite. People can only get married to each other. The wedding rite has not taken place."

"Believe me, Great-Grandpakins, it has. I am now married in the sight of Heaven. Two people *should* take part in the rite. But, after all, it is customary to ask one first, and then the other, as to their desire to be wed.

"I was asked, and I gave *my* consent for all to hear. My chosen one is still thinking about his, and he can think for as long as he likes as the years go by. Nobody has ever defined how much time is permitted between the two questions. It could be a moment, it could be ten years. But even if in the negative might be his reply here, I shall remain married in my own sight. And the covenant of the ages I shall not defy."

Father wanted to say something more. He had even started speaking when a huge peal of thunder resounded from the sky, drowning out all his words. And he turned and started walking off, paying no attention to the path under his feet, as he was wont to do when he got agitated about something. I could just barely keep up with him as he walked, but I heard how fast he was talking, as though to himself:

"She's a stubborn lass, cunning and clever, not an easy one to countermand. It seems that she is being eternally pandered to by Heaven itself. She is changing the very correlation of the planets. Does that mean women now have the opportunity of wedding themselves and begetting their children on a lawful basis? We must figure out what Anastasia has done, but first, all ought be returned to the existing laws of being. They have not endured these many ages for nought. To do this, we must come up with a weighty objection. But I was not able to: she's greatly cunning and clever, but I... Aha, I've discovered a way to object and make her wedding rite of none effect."

All at once Father did a sharp about-turn and headed for the lake. As we approached the shore, but had not yet emerged from the bushes, we saw over the lake an extraordinary light, albeit barely noticeable — and the stars reflected in the water. It looked as though they were falling into the lake in a shower. And there was our granddaughter, sitting all by herself on a fallen pine log, wearing her floral crown. She was looking in the direction of the dugout where you were sleeping, and softly singing.

My father did not emerge from the bushes. He listened to her song, and then said:

“She is wedded.” And he tapped with his staff on the ground, adding: “Nobody has the power now to annul her marriage. In terms of strength it knows no equal, and... whether she was married by Heaven or by herself on her own, it makes no difference.”

“And what did Anastasia sing?” you ask, Vladimir. “What song?” It was this one:

*By my own hand in wedlock I am crowned —
And now to be your woman I am found.
You are, you know, the only man for me.
Our dreams shall all be brought to life, you'll see.
On Planet Earth, our Terran world of blue,
Our son will happy be with me and you.
Our daughter will be fair and quick of mind,
To many a Man they will be good and kind.
By Heaven I am joined with you together.
You know I am your woman now for ever.
The grandchildren we have will live afar —
We'll see them on that big, bright, distant star.*

To be continued....



A voyage of self-discovery

Translator's Afterword

*And the Lord said unto me,
Arise, take thy journey before the people...*
— Moses (Deut. 10: 11)

It has been a long and interesting journey indeed. This journey began for me in the autumn of 2004 — in a manner of speaking, aboard ship. The ship was the *Patrice Lumumba*, and belonged to one Vladimir Nikolaevich Megré, a seasoned entrepreneur who traded up and down the Ob River in Western Siberia, selling produce and manufactured goods brought from southern cities to northern villages and buying up local handicrafts in return. As with the vast majority of Megré's readers, the description of the *Lumumba* in Book 1, Chapter 1 ("The ringing cedar"), served as my first introduction to the much more powerful (mentally speaking) literary vessel known as the *Ringing Cedars Series* (RCS).

I was invited on board the RCS by its editorial 'Captain', Leonid Sharashkin, who had in turn been commissioned by 'Admiral' Megré to sail across the seas and bring the ship's precious cargo of ideas to the land of Anglophonia. I was hired as an English-speaking 'navigator' familiar with this new land's linguistic waters, and equipped by forty years' experience in Russian-English translation to present these ideas in a format capable of reaching the hearts and minds of Anglophones. The adventure sounded promising, and, admittedly impelled by a sense of divine guidance, I gladly signed on, eager to set sail with a *Yo-heave-ho!* (or *Ey-ukhnem!* — as the Volga boatmen

were said to chant). Eight times (count them!), no sooner had we delivered a shipment to its destination than we went back for more.

Now, as we approach a layover of indefinite duration (following the completion of our ninth voyage), I can look back and honestly say that the experience really has delivered on its promises — these trips have been truly rewarding in terms of both excitement and education,¹ and I am actually going to miss the many ups and downs that my editor and I have been tossed about by in this particular venture in literary navigation. Part of me will be sad, at last, to disembark onto terra firma (safer, perhaps, but not nearly as exciting), but I shall content myself with the 'glad' part — watching from afar as the nine shipments of ideas we helped deliver begin bearing fruit in the consciousness and lives of Americans, Australians, Britons, Canadians, New Zealanders, South Africans and countless others who for some reason have had the English edition of the *RCS* land in their hands.

From a translator's point of view, each of the linguistic shoals, sandbanks and icebergs we met along the way (not to mention the occasional typhoon!) offered a particular challenge. Some of these challenges were more formidable in appearance than others. My editor and I soon discovered that the task at hand was not just a matter of translation, pure and simple, for we were soon confronted in our journey by a whole host of cultural phenomena (references to people, places, institutions, historical events and cultural traditions) that would not be as familiar to Westerners as they were to native Russian readers of the Series, and hence required (sometimes substantial) research and documentation.

¹One of the 'educational' rewards was a 'side-trip' around to the other side of a 'mountain', which provided fresh insight into my own beliefs and faith. See Translator's Afterword to Book 6.

Mindful of the lessons of the *Titanic*, I hope we were at least moderately successful in resisting the temptation to place too much trust in technology or to become over-confident and over-reliant on our own previous professional experience.² The above-mentioned challenges, both large and small, were met through constant reference to both paper-published and on-line 'charts' (Russian and English dictionaries, thesaurus-es, encyclopædias and Google searches) — sometimes it came down literally to 'phone a friend', and on several occasions to a prayer for more of that 'divine guidance' that had urged me to climb aboard in the first place! Not only that, but results were checked over and over again before being entered into the final 'log'.

On occasion we even found ourselves exploring hitherto uncharted waters and had to navigate, as it were, by the seat of our pants. For example:

How to describe a Russian *dacha* and its primary function as a vegetable-raising centre to North Americans (and other anglophones) raised on vacation cottages with their swimming, boating and sundry recreational facilities?³

How to select a suitable English equivalent for the word *chelovek* — a Russian word that still designates a human being of either gender — when faced with a choice between (a) *human*, derived from words associated with lower concepts (like the ground) and (b) *man*, which originally (like *chelovek*) described a 'thinking, intelligent being' of either gender but has since become narrowed in meaning to include (in popular parlance, at least) only half the human race?⁴

²Certain aspects of technology, I admit, were most definitely a time-saving boon. Thank goodness for e-mail and the Internet!

³See Translator's Preface to Book 1.

⁴See Translator's Preface to Book 1 (especially the 2nd edition).

How to portray *dolmens* and other ‘sacred sites’ to a culture more accustomed to high-rise construction sites and Internet web sites?⁵

How to put across the concept of one’s millennia-old *Rodina* (‘Motherland’) to readers whose roots in their current place of residence may go back no more than a few years or even mere months?⁶

How to express concepts of the pre-Christian Vedic Russian culture in an intelligible manner to English-speakers, when such concepts are still unfamiliar to many Russians themselves in their native tongue?!⁷

How to reproduce the author’s plethora of writing styles (from ‘choppy novice writer’ to authentic-sounding ‘blue-collar dialogue’ to the ‘poetic prose’ of Anastasia’s metaphorical descriptions — not to mention poetry itself) in such a way as to convey to the reader not only the semantic meaning, but, just as importantly, the *literary feeling* of the original work?⁸

It is the RCS’s readers (even more than its literary critics) who will be the ultimate judges of our success in meeting these challenges.

Then, beyond the translation questions (which, after all, can sometimes get bogged down in the nitty-gritty of historical etymology and psycholinguistic nuances), lies the broader issue of how the Series as a whole is reaching an anglophone readership far more attuned to Gene Roddenberry’s *Star Trek* or J. K. Rowling’s *Harry Potter* than to the *Holy Bible* or the

⁵See Translator’s Preface to Book 2.

⁶See Translator’s and Editor’s Afterword to Book 4.

⁷See Book 6, Chapter 5: “The history of mankind, as told by Anastasia”.

⁸Again, see Translator’s Preface to Book 1.

*Bhagavad Gita*⁹ — a readership that is only too ready and willing to embrace phenomena that lie outside traditional physical perception, provided that the works presenting them are duly confined to the 'Fiction' or 'Occult' shelves of their local library, bookshop or video store.

After all, one doesn't have to read too far into the *RCS* before encountering passages that look as though they might be right at home in a *Star Trek* episode or a sci-fi novel — Anastasia's telepathic ray,¹⁰ for example, or the "fiery sphere" described to the author as watching over Anastasia as a baby.¹¹ Or her later reference to the not-so-mythical fire-breathing "Gorynych Serpent".¹²

It is all too easy, on the basis of such examples, to dismiss the whole Series as just another (albeit very intricately woven) sci-fi yarn. It is all too easy, *upon first glance*, to classify Anastasia's descriptions (in this present volume, for example) of so-called 'pagan' rites in the pre-Christian Vedic Russian civilisation as just another fanciful foray into the esoteric, or the occult. Or to pass off the *RCS* as yet another entry in the 'wishful thinking' category, where a number of critics have pegged recent 'feel-good' films such as *The Secret*.¹³

What distinguishes the *RCS* from science fiction (or, at least, from the vast majority of science fiction works) is the

⁹*Bhagavad Gita* — a sacred Hindu text written in Sanskrit; the name literally means 'Song of the Divine One'.

¹⁰See Book 1, Chapter 7: "Anastasia's ray".

¹¹See Book 2, Chapter 27: "The anomaly".

¹²See Book 4, toward the end of Chapter 3: "The first appearance of you".

¹³*The Secret* — a film produced by Rhonda Byrne for PrimeTime Productions, directed by Drew Heriot. Since its release in 2006, the film has stirred up a good deal of excitement along with a heavy barrage of criticism. In my view, this work does indeed hint at a great truth, but one with much deeper ramifications than suggested by the superficial treatment presented on screen (which seems to be focused more on effects than underlying causes).

fact that it attempts to show how even such ‘far-fetched’ accounts as those mentioned above could actually refer to naturally occurring, scientifically explainable phenomena rather than just mere literary inventions or the occult fantasies of the human mind.¹⁴ After all, in 1865, Jules Verne’s *From the Earth to the Moon* was written and received as a science-fiction classic, only to turn into scientific reality a little more than a century later with the success of the Apollo XI Moon mission on 20 July 1969.¹⁵ As for the charge of ‘occultism’, Anastasia (through the author) takes great pains, especially in Book 6, to distance her concept of the Universe from any kind of occult phenomena. These only lead mankind, she says, to being “completely disoriented as to the Space created by God”.¹⁶ And in regard to the “rites of love” in particular (described in

¹⁴See, for example, the technical explanation of the ‘flying saucer’ phenomenon presented in Book 1, Chapter 16: “Flying saucers? Nothing extraordinary!”. The above-mentioned Book 1, Chapter 7, includes a reference to experiments on ‘rays’ by the Director of the Russian Academy of Natural Sciences’ International Institute of Theoretical and Applied Physics. And the account of the ‘fire-breathing serpent’ in Book 4, Chapter 3, also includes a logical explanation for what is generally dismissed as a mythical phenomenon.

¹⁵It is interesting to note, too, that a number of *Star Trek*’s ‘inventions’ have already become ‘science fact’, within mere decades of their presentation as ‘science fiction’ — the ‘medical tricorder’, for example — a *Star Trek*-inspired device under development at the University of Alberta. See: Jodie Sinnema, “Scientists test ‘tricorder’ to root out disease”. *The Edmonton Journal*, 16 September 2005, p. B1. In fact, a whole array of books may be found dealing with the factual aspects of *Star Trek* — e.g.: Lawrence M. Krauss, *The physics of Star Trek*. With a Foreword by Stephen Hawking. New York: Harper Collins, 1995. Still another ‘science fiction’ TV series of the 1990s (this one all too short-lived) — *SeaQuest DSV* — featured a commentary at the end of many of its episodes by Dr Robert Ballard, Scientist Emeritus in the Department of Applied Ocean Physics and Engineering at the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, relating the series’ science fiction to science fact.

¹⁶See Book 6, Chapter 8: “Occultism”.

the present book), Anastasia's grandfather assures the author: "None of these rites was characterised by occult superstition, as today. Each one served as a school of higher learning, an examination by the Universe."¹⁷

'Anastasia says...' 'Anastasia's grandfather does...'

Yes, in almost any discussion of Vladimir Megré's *Ringed Cedars Series* among its readers, phrases like these tend to trip off the tongue without a second thought, leaving many outsiders (and even some 'insiders') to wonder: *Who is this Anastasia?* Which brings us to what may be the most frequently asked readers' question of all — one which Québec writer Mado Sauvé chose as the opening sentence of her review of the Series in the Spring 2007 issue of *Le Journal Vert*:

"Anastasia existe-t-elle ?" (Does Anastasia exist?)

I have a feeling Sauvé expresses what is on many readers' minds as she continues:

Does she really live in the Siberian taiga or was she born of the imagination of a clever entrepreneur? Even after reading the first four [books] of the Series ... it is still difficult to answer this question.¹⁸

A broad range of opinion on this issue has indeed been expressed to date by *RCS* readers collectively — from those who dismiss her as a mere figment of the author's imagination to those who see her as the reincarnation of some ancient

¹⁷Quoted from Chapter 1: "Love — the essence of the Cosmos".

¹⁸Original: "Vit-elle vraiment dans la taïga sibérienne ou est-elle née de l'imagination d'un habile entrepreneur? Même après avoir lu les quatre premiers [livres] de la série ... il est encore difficile de répondre à cette question." — Mado Sauvé, "Le mystère de la déesse russe". *Le Journal Vert* (printemps 2007).

prophet. But to me this only begs a further set of questions: *What does it mean, to 'exist'? Is 'existence' an objective or a subjective state? Is 'existence' confined to material perception, or can it be determined by non-material criteria (faith, for example)?* Megré quotes Anastasia herself as saying:

"I exist for those for whom I exist."¹⁹ What could that possibly mean?

In pondering the question of the existence of Megré's Anastasia and her family, it might be worthwhile considering a few other personages whose existence has been a subject for questioning over the ages — names like Shakespeare, Santa Claus (Father Christmas), Job in the Old Testament and even Christ Jesus in the New. In a civilisation so reliant upon physical, material evidence as the primary, if not the only criterion for proof of existence, perhaps it is little wonder that sometimes figures with a larger-than-life reputation fall prey to public suspicion as to their very existence. Are we not almost globally educated to be sceptical about anything that departs from a society-defined, materially determined norm?

Such is the case with the man considered to be the greatest writer the English-speaking world has ever produced. No simple village-dweller, some have said, could have possibly produced all the time-tested plays and sonnets credited to the Bard of Avon.²⁰ And yet few today would deny that the

¹⁹Quoted from Book 1, Chapter 26: "Dreams — creating the future".

²⁰For a sampling of the controversy surrounding Shakespeare's authorship, see: George McMichael & Edgar M. Glenn: *Shakespeare and his rivals. A casebook on the authorship controversy*. New York: Odyssey Press, 1962; H. N. Gibson, *The Shakespeare claimants: a critical survey of the four principal theories concerning the authorship of the Shakespeare plays*. Oxford & New York: Routledge, 2005; Mark Anderson, *'Shakespeare' by another name*. New York: Gotham Books, 2005.

writer universally known as *Shakespeare* actually existed in some form. After all, his masterpieces did not magically appear one day out of a vacuum!²¹

Many people today, not only in America but elsewhere in the world, are familiar with the appeal of a little eight-year-old girl named Virginia O'Hanlon to the editor of the New York's *Sun* newspaper in September 1897:

"Some of my little friends say there is no Santa Claus. Papa says, 'If you see it in THE SUN it's so.' Please tell me the truth: is there a Santa Claus?"

And few can forget the key phrase (italicised below) from veteran newsman Francis Church's memorable reply, even if they are not as familiar with the writer's name or his remarkable justification for this reply:

Virginia, your little friends are wrong. They have been affected by the skepticism of a skeptical age. They do not believe except [what] they see...

Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus. He exists as certainly as love and generosity and devotion exist, and you know that they abound and give to your life its highest beauty and joy...²²

²¹The thought has often come to me over the past few years that, given the powerful ideas and intricately crafted literary structure evident throughout the *RCS*, if it should somehow turn out that the whole story of Anastasia was entirely the author's invention, then Vladimir Megré would have to be considered one of the world's cleverest and most gifted writers since Shakespeare! Even if most of his information were drawn from a variety of secondary sources, weaving them all together into a plausible plot-line over two-thousand-plus pages of text could be considered nothing short of a major literary feat. On the other hand, it would be no denigration of Megré's writing skills to accept that he has simply described pretty much what he actually witnessed, *in some form*, from experience.

And lest anyone hasten to dismiss Santa Claus (in contrast to Shakespeare) as a completely mythical figure, it should be remembered that St Nicholas was indeed a real human being in the flesh. He was the Bishop of Myra in what is now western Turkey, back in the 3rd century C.E. It was his reputation for secret giving to the needy that eventually evolved into the popular story of the world's ultimate holiday gift-giver.

A similar question hangs over the Old-Testament character of Job in the Bible. According to Dummelow's Bible commentary:

It has always been a question whether the book of Job is to be regarded as history or parable. Among the Jews themselves the prevailing opinion was that it was strictly historical, though some of their Rabbis were inclined to think that the person of Job was created by the writer of this book in order to set forth his teaching on the problem that was vexing human thought. ... The opinion of Luther is probably the correct one, viz. that a person called Job did really exist, but that his history has been treated poetically.²³

²²Francis Pharcellus Church, editorial in *The Sun* (New York City), 21 September 1897 (*italics—JW*). (The full text of the editorial is available in many on-line sources.) Many books and cinema films have echoed Church's thesis in different ways, notably director George Seaton's 1947 film classic *Miracle on 34th Street*. In the 1994 re-make under the same title (this one directed by Les Mayfield), Santa's existence is 'proved' in a court of law by reference to the phrase *In God we trust*, which appears on the reverse of every American one-dollar banknote. This is cited as evidence of the United States government's endorsement of the existence of an entity based on faith alone.

²³Rev. J. R. Dummelow, *A commentary on the Holy Bible*. New York: Macmillan, 1908, p. 292. According to Dummelow, *Daniel* is another biblical figure whose historical existence is a matter of some controversy (see *Commentary*, pp. 525–526).

Can we expect a similar commentary to be written about the person of Anastasia a millennium or two hence?

While *Job* may indeed have been mainly an allegory written for moral instruction, what of that most celebrated among the human figures of the Bible — namely, *Christ Jesus*,²⁴ whose life and works form the very foundation of the whole movement of Christianity? Many Christians believe Jesus to be the earthly incarnation of God Himself; others accept him, rather, as God's Son and messenger to mankind, but there are few indeed who deny his historical existence. And yet the authenticity of the Gospel records is occasionally called into question, and not just by atheists.

It is instructive to examine the writings of two late-nineteenth-century spiritual thinkers on this point — one of them a peasant philosopher in Russia and the other the founder and leader of a world-wide Christian movement headquartered in America. While neither of them actually question Jesus' existence themselves, both shed a non-traditional light on the ultimate significance of that 'existence'.

On 12 May 1888 the Molokan²⁵ peasant writer Fedor Alekseevich Zheltov (1859–1938), a deeply committed Christian, sent a treatise he had just written to Leo Tolstoy (whom he regarded as a mentor), entitled "On life as faith in Christ".

²⁴While *Christ* and *Jesus* are often used synonymously, the two words are quite distinct in meaning. *Jesus* (*Iesous*) is a Greek adaptation of the Hebrew first name *Yhōwshūa* (lit. 'Jehovah saves'), identical to the Old-Testament name *Joshua*, while *Christ* (*Khristós*) is the Greek translation of the Hebrew *Māshîyakh* ('Messiah', or 'the anointed one'), and can be thought of more as Jesus' title, or the spiritual, immortal idea he embodied (the message itself as distinct from the messenger). For a further explanation of the distinction, see: Mary Baker Eddy, *Science and health with Key to the Scriptures*. Boston: Trustees under the will of Mary Baker Eddy, final English edition 1911, p. 333.

Toward the end of the treatise he makes a rather startling declaration:

None of the actions and events accompanying Christ's sermon are a stumbling-block for me — I do not rely upon them as a basis for understanding truth, and it makes no difference to me whether they happened or did not happen, or how they happened, whether they were imaginary or real, whether the Gospels were written by the apostles or by someone else — none of that makes a difference nor is it dear to me. What is dear to me is only the truth which Christ imparted — it in itself is a precious jewel and my task is to know its price and to know why it is so precious.²⁶

About two decades later, on 1 December 1906, the discoverer of Christian Science,²⁷ Mary Baker Eddy (1821–1910), published a statement²⁸ in the weekly magazine she had

²⁵*Molokans* — a Christian sect which broke away from the Russian Orthodox Church in the mid-16th century, rejecting ecclesiastical hierarchy and its alliance with government and militarism and insisting God must be worshipped primarily in one's heart and mind. They left their initial alliance with the Doukhobors, who, unlike the Molokans, preferred oral Scriptural traditions over written texts. Toward the end of the nineteenth century many Molokans went to America, while large numbers of Doukhobors emigrated *en masse* to Canada, their trip financed largely by Leo Tolstoy and his followers. Interestingly, like the Doukhobors, the Vedic 'wise-men' Anastasia describes also favoured an oral method of teaching; they were able to sum up volumes of detail in just a few words and a single easily remembered rite — see the first section of Chapter 6 ("Into the depths of history") in the present volume.

²⁶In: Ethel Dunn (ed.), *A Molokan's search for truth: the correspondence of Leo Tolstoy and Fedor Zheltov*. Translated by John Woodsworth. Original editor: Andrew Donskov. Berkeley (Calif.), USA: Highgate Road Social Science Research Station and Ottawa, Canada: Slavic Research Group at the University of Ottawa, 2001, p. 48.

²⁷*Christian Science* — see footnote 1 in Book 6, Translator's Afterword.

founded, the *Christian Science Sentinel*, detailing her professional relations with Rev. James Henry Wiggin (whom she had hired as a publishing consultant) and refuting public allegations that he had had a hand in the authorship of her seminal work *Science and health with Key to the Scriptures*. In this statement she reports Rev. Wiggin as asking her the question:

“How do you know that there ever was such a man as Christ Jesus?”

To which she replies (in part):

I do not find my authority for Christian Science in history, but in revelation. If there had never existed such a person as the Galilean Prophet [i.e., Jesus], it would make no difference to me. I should still know that God's spiritual ideal is the only real man in His image and likeness.

It is evident that for both Zheltov and Eddy it was not the *person* of Christ Jesus that was sacred and significant, but the *ideas* (the ‘Christ ideas’, one might say) that Jesus presented to the world — ideas which could be effectively practised in our age and their practice taught to others, as Eddy proved not only by her own remarkable works of healing, but, more importantly, by the thousands upon thousands of spiritual healings brought about by her students, their students and students of their students, right up to the present day.²⁹ For

²⁸Reproduced in: Mary Baker Eddy, *The First Church of Christ, Scientist, and Miscellany*. Boston: The First Church of Christ, Scientist, 1925, pp. 317–319.

²⁹Many of these healings have been verified by the medical profession or other eye-witnesses and published as testimonies. See especially: Yvonne Caché von Fettweis & Robert Townsend Warneck, *Mary Baker Eddy: Christian healer*. Boston: The Christian Science Publishing Society, 1998; *A century of Christian Science healing*. Boston: The Christian Science Publishing Society, 1966; Robert Peel, *Health and medicine in the Christian Science tradition: principle, practice and challenge*. New York: Crossroad, 1988.

these students, textbook study and class instruction, while an acknowledged help, inevitably have taken second place to individual prayer, to their own direct mental and spiritual connection to God as their ultimate Teacher and ultimate Healer.³⁰

And, lest there be any doubt as to how Eddy viewed her own role as a presenter of the science of spiritual healing to the world, in her later years she stated unequivocally: "Those who look for me in person, or elsewhere than in my writings, *lose me instead of find me.*"³¹

So now, perhaps, we can look at the *Journal Vert* reviewer's question "Does Anastasia exist?" in a new light.³² It was the same question Sauvé had put to me in an interview in preparation for her review, where she quotes my reply (in French) along these lines:

³⁰Eddy also makes some very similar statements to Anastasia's regarding occultism and mysticism. In *Science and health* (p. 569), she foresees an occult-free future for mankind: "The march of mind and of honest investigation will bring the hour when the people will chain, with fetters of some sort, the growing occultism of this period." And in the same work (p. 80), she observes: "[Christian] Science dispels mystery and explains extraordinary phenomena; but Science never removes phenomena from the domain of reason into the realm of mysticism."

³¹M. B. Eddy, *The First Church of Christ, Scientist, and Miscellany*, p. 119 (*italics—JW*). Similar sentiments are expressed in other places in her writings—see especially the article "Deification of personality" in her *Miscellaneous Writings* (Boston: The First Church of Christ, Scientist, 1925, pp. 307–310). Note also Eddy's statement in *Science and health* (p. 82) in her discussion of the importance of writers' thoughts and ideas over their personages: "Chaucer wrote centuries ago, yet we still read his *thought* in his verse. What is classic study, but discernment of the *minds* of Homer and Virgil, of *whose personal existence we may be in doubt?*" (*italics—JW*).

³²For one thing, in the 'club' of those with a questionable historical existence, these 'Siberian recluses' appear to be in pretty good company.

I believe that Anastasia certainly exists in some form, but not necessarily in a fleshly body visible to our material eyes, even though I would not rule that out. As I see it, there is no doubt that she exists as a very powerful idea and that she is a force of inspiration. She exists in the words, in the rich thoughts of feelings and promises as transcribed by Megré.

And today I would add (in the spirit of Zheltov): "She exists in the hearts of them who are ready to seek out and apply for themselves the ideas she presents, and this is what is truly dear to me."

Does that mean that the author's portrayal of Anastasia as a living human being is irrelevant or unimportant? Not at all. For some readers, accepting her as a bodily personage, at least to begin with, may be extremely helpful. By identifying with a figure who expresses what seem like incredible qualities of the Divine and yet still affirms "I am Man",³³ many readers may get their first glimmer of awareness of their own innate capacities. But the more they read — especially in a second or third examination of a text they have read before — their initial impressions may gradually evolve away from personage and more into idea.

When Francis Church identified the real Santa Claus with the spiritual qualities of "love and generosity and devotion", he did not thereby obliterate the image of a jolly old man in a sleigh from a young child's mind, but enriched her temporary image of 'Santa' with a new dimension, a new idea. As the child grew older and developed her reasoning capacities, she would have been able to retain this new idea in her thought even when she no longer clung to the old image of a personal gift-giver.

³³See (for example) the middle of Book 1, Chapter 26: "Dreams — creating the future".

In each of the cases we have looked at, we can witness the *evolution of an image* at work in individual human thought.³⁴ In Book 6, Chapter 6 (“Imagery and trial”), Anastasia describes the *image* as “an entity of energy invented by human thought, ... created by a single Man or by several together”, and further likens it to an actor’s portrayal of a dramatic *persona* on stage — a portrayal in which “the invented image acquires a temporary embodiment”. Note that the portrayal of one and the same *persona* will vary from actor to actor, and even from performance to performance by the same actor, especially as the actor gains new insight into the deeper dimensions of the character he is portraying.³⁵

But just as Zheltov’s image of the central figure of the New Testament evolved into one focused more on the truth itself than the person of its human embodiment, just as Eddy (a real-life historical figure who frequently found herself targeted by both adoring worshippers and malicious critics) finally urged her followers to stop looking to her as a person and start practising the truths she revealed by healing their own

³⁴Note also Megré’s observation in Book 7, Chapter 3 (“You create your own fate”): “*the power of the energy of thought has no equal in the Universe: everything we see, including ourselves, is created by the energy of thought.*” Yet he also relays Anastasia’s warning that the ‘energy of thought’ which we all possess is vastly underutilised. In Book 5, Chapter 12 (poignantly entitled “Do we have freedom of thought?”), after taking account of all the distracting subjects on which people tend to waste their thinking capacities, Anastasia concludes: “All told, the average Man spends only 15 to 20 minutes of his life reflecting on the mystery of creation.”

³⁵Anastasia goes on (in the same chapter) to show the effects of collective images held by members of a society — images of others, of themselves and of the world as a whole. And in Chapter 3 (“Why does love come and go?”) of the current book she points out the vital role played by *image* in finding (and keeping) one’s soulmate and how one’s image may change or stay the same independently of the real person (see especially the section entitled “False images”).

and others' mental and physical ailments, so Anastasia, whatever personal form she may possess, urges (through Megré) a similar charge upon her would-be followers.³⁶

In Book 2, for example, in reply to the author's query as to whether *she personally* might have been helping him in a particular situation, Anastasia tells him:

Everything in the Universe is interrelated. To perceive what is really going on in the Universe one need only look into one's self.³⁷

And in Book 3 when Vladimir expresses curiosity as to the extent of her abilities — “Can you answer any question confronting science today?” — Anastasia offers the following reply:

³⁶Does ‘practising the truths’ revealed by Anastasia mean that every single reader should start looking for a plot of land in the country with a view to setting up his or her own ‘family domain’? Anastasia herself recognised that this would not be feasible for everyone at the present time, although she does promote this option as especially suited to providing an ideal nurturing-ground for discovering one’s inner being, even if it starts off with just a simple flower-pot on the window-sill (see Book 5, Chapter 15: “Making it come true”). In Book 8 she outlines the benefits which the ‘domain’ movement will have even on those still living in the city (see the section “Let’s create” in Book 8, Chapter 10: “*The Book of Kin and A Family Chronicle*”). While I can definitely see the logic in Anastasia’s own recommended vehicle of expression for the ideals she shares, I would think there may be as many avenues for putting these ideals into practice as there are individual readers of her books. The important thing is to keep in mind that these ideals *are eminently practicable* in some form — i.e., they are like seeds destined to push their way above and beyond one’s mental soil into the fresh air and sunshine of one’s whole life (see Translator’s Preface to Book 2 for one small personal experience along this line). In many cases this will bring joy to others as well as to one’s self.

³⁷Quoted from Book 2, Chapter 6: “The cherry tree”.

Many of them, perhaps. But every scientist — *indeed, every Man* — can find the answers. Everything depends upon the purity of one's thoughts, and the motive for asking.³⁸

Over and over again she emphasises that the ideas and powers she possesses are within the grasp of every individual on the Earth, because they all come from the same source, i.e., the Creator (God). Over and over again both she and her grandfather keep urging Vladimir (and, by extension, every reader of the *RCS*) to resist the temptation to rely upon *them* as a personal source of wisdom and seek instead to find and utilise the ideas within themselves.

"Try not to wallow in all your information and contemplations, Vladimir," Anastasia's grandfather exhorts in Book 4. "Decide what's real for yourself."³⁹

And in Chapter 1 ("Love — the essence of the Cosmos") of the current volume he accuses Vladimir of "laziness of mind" for constantly pestering him with questions when he should be looking for the answers within.⁴⁰ Subsequently he admonishes:

"I speak, and you listen, and instead of working out your own conclusions in your thought, you are merely taking note of mine."⁴¹

Similarly, time and again Anastasia urges Vladimir not just to accept her conclusions at face value, but to reason things through for himself by logical thinking — a capacity which (as

³⁸ Quoted from Book 3, Chapter 6: "Forces of light" (*italics*—JW).

³⁹ Quoted from Book 4, Chapter 33: "School, or the lessons of the gods".

⁴⁰ He teases Vladimir on this point: "So, there's not enough information out there and you've come to me to get it, eh?" Note also his advice to Vladimir regarding the problem of getting legislative approval for setting up family domains: "You ought to be deciding your own course of action, without any kind of advice" (Book 8, Chapter 9: "A fine state of affairs").

⁴¹ Quoted from Chapter 6: "Into the depths of history".

her grandfather points out), when not actively cultivated, is in danger of being lost by mankind.⁴²

She, too, warns the author against “laziness of mind”. In Book 8, Chapter 5 (“Divine nutrition”), when Vladimir confesses: “It’s still not too clear to me just how I should be thinking”, she gently assures him: “It will become clear if you are not too lazy to think.”

Again in Book 8, Anastasia cautions Vladimir to be wary of relying on words alone. When asked by Vladimir about the role of words, she replies:

...it is not the words that are important, but, rather, people’s conscious awareness. Words, of course, are necessary to bring it forth. A conscious awareness of eternal life will help perfect Man’s way of life.⁴³

Words are similar to outward appearances: they often play an important role in shaping one’s initial conscious awareness of an idea. But, like one’s early person-focused impressions, they tend to fall away as the image evolves in the direction of the Divine.

Hence, if one is truly to follow Anastasia, it would seem wise to heed her own advice and start seeking her out (as many readers are already doing) not in person, and not just in words about her (as fascinating as those may be), but in *idea* — the idea which, she says time and again throughout the Series, exists in every single one of us, if we are only alert enough to harness our mental capacities to discover our own innate

⁴²See the middle of Chapter 7 (in the present volume): “Russia erased”.

⁴³Quoted from Book 8, Chapter 13: “A new civilisation”. See the Editor’s Afterword to the present volume for a delightful illustration of the dangers of putting too much stock in printed books and words at the expense of one’s own logical thinking and feelings.

purity and power of thought in the likeness of our Creator. And then to start applying this idea to renewing and improving our day-to-day lives.

And because the evolution of an image is primarily an *individual* phenomenon (although yes, it may at times be collective, i.e., a shared individual experience), we shouldn't be surprised if our own discovery of Anastasia and her idea appears to evolve in a different way or at a different pace from that of other readers, or is different from the perception we ourselves had in a previous reading.⁴⁴ Like an actor honing a portrayal on stage from performance to performance, each one of us is evolving our own image of her as a *persona*. But the more we seek and find her not so much "in history, but in revelation" — the more we focus on the message rather than on the person of the messenger — and within our own hearts and minds, the stronger a position we shall be in to discover harmony within ourselves and with others, and the more deeply we shall be able to comprehend and appreciate her own beautiful self-declaration: *I exist for those for whom I exist*.

The power of the 'Anastasia idea' presented throughout this Series was certainly one of the reasons I signed on to these 'voyages' three years ago, and the fascinating concepts that have multiplied therefrom have indeed made the whole venture most worthwhile.

⁴⁴In a remarkable little book entitled *The five clocks*, former University of Toronto linguistics professor Martin Joos (pron. *Yōse*, rhyming with 'dose') states that one of the hallmarks of great literature is the capacity to convey a variety of different meanings to different individuals, or to the same individual upon each successive reading. The dedicated writer, he says, can enable the searching reader "to educate himself indefinitely far beyond what the writer put into the text in the first place". — Martin Joos, *The five clocks*. New York: Harcourt Brace, 1967, p. 42. There is no question, to my mind, that this 'capacity' Joos describes is eminently inherent in the writings of Vladimir Nikolaevich Megré concerning Anastasia.

Anastasia's (and her grandfather's) emphasis on the need for logical thinking and a conscious application of universal ideas to one's life-practice is a clear example of how the *RCS* eminently transcends what is popularly classified as *science fiction*. In my Translator's Preface to Book 1, I described the work (and, by extension, the Series) as a *chronicle of ideas* — a metaphysical treatise

...set forth with both the supporting evidence of a documentary account and the entertainment capacity of a novel. In other words, it can be read as any of these three in isolation, but only by taking the three dimensions together will the reader have something approaching a complete picture of the book. And all three are infused with a degree of soul-felt inspiration that can only be expressed in poetry.

Having completed the whole Series, I would now add that it is a chronicle which touches upon very many of the disciplines traditionally defined as 'academic', but in the context of their interrelation with each other and their application to our daily human life. As I look back over the *RCS*, apart from its obvious focus on ecology and environmental science, I can think of references to astronomy, biology, chemistry, physics, forestry, agriculture, horticulture, geology, archæology, engineering, architecture, medicine and the healing arts, psychology and psychotherapy, sociology, criminology, political science, economics, philosophy, religion, drama, literature, music and poetry, linguistics, foreign languages and quite possibly several more — all presented with a view to their application to everyday life, including work and leisure activities, along with love, marriage, family and other interpersonal relationships. The voyage of the *RCS* has taken in all these 'ports of call' along the way, and not just from a sailor's point

of view (try an astronaut's perspective!). The voyage, indeed, reaches unto the very stars!

In line with the 'Moses' epigraph above, I have now taken my journey. And by the time you read this, you may well have already taken yours, at least once. But I trust the ideas you have *taken in* along the way will stand you in good stead for many ages yet to come.

As your English-speaking 'navigator', I salute you and wish you a hearty *Bon voyage!* as you set out on (or continue) your own voyage of self-discovery in the likeness of the Creator.

See you on a star! *On a star see ya!*⁴⁵

Ottawa, Canada

31 December 2007

John Woodsworth

⁴⁵An approximation of the Russian pronunciation of *Anastasia* — see footnote 5 in Book 7, Chapter 28: "To the readers of the Ringing Cedars Series".



The Book of Happiness

Editor's Afterword

"Papa, which do you like better — your computer or us, your family?" my daughter Lada enquired of me one morning as I was sitting at work in my home office.

"What? Of course I like *you* better. Why?" I replied, still glued to the screen.

"It's just that you spend all day long in front of computer, but I'd rather you played with me, or come see the pumpkins Mama and I've planted. Even when we go for a walk all together, all you do is think about your work — you barely notice us!"

"Well, that's true" I admitted. "But I do need to earn money, too — to pay for the piece of land we plant our garden on, for example. In other words, to afford things that are important in life."

"Nonsense!" she protested. "It's all arranged like that on purpose — so as to make you think that everything important in life you can buy for money — to make you think money's the most important thing of all."

As I turned to face her, Lada looked me straight in the eye and added, tugging at my sleeve:

"You know, Papa, I really feel you need to come with me to my tree house. I'll teach you three lessons on how to live happily ever after... without money."

Seeing the seriousness of the issue, I rose from the desk. Lada took me by the hand and escorted me to her green 'class-room'.

Half an hour later, as she finished delivering her three lessons and made sure I grasped their key concepts, Lada surprised me with a fresh demand:

“And now, before you go, you must promise me that you shall never ever share what I have just taught you — with anybody.”

“How come?” I queried. “If the path you outlined to me can really lead people to happiness, I thought you would encourage me to tell others about it!”

“Don’t you know about what happened with *The Book of Happiness*?”

“What *Book of Happiness*? Never heard of it.”

Lada crossed her hands on her knees, sighed, and began telling me the story.



Once upon a time, in a large city with dirty, polluted air, there lived a man who had lost his happiness. It seemed as though he had searched for it everywhere — including behind the sofa and under his desk — but happiness was nowhere to be seen. It occurred to the man that his cat might have taken his happiness outside and hid it somewhere — so he searched all around his apartment block, but found nothing.

Exhausted by the search, he decided to spend the following day — his day off — in the woods, picking mushrooms. And so he did — he put on his big rubber boots and his backpack, took a knife and a large basket woven out of willow twigs — and headed off.

He had a very good day, and even forgot his grief over the lost happiness. By the time the Sun was setting, his basket

was so full of beautiful large mushrooms it was hard to lift off the ground. The man was ready to go home, but now he couldn't find his way out of the forest. There was no visible path. He tried going in one direction — which he hoped would lead him out onto the paved road — but ended up in a swamp. He had no electric torch, no flashlight, and in the fading twilight it was hard to see the way, so the man decided to spend the night in the forest, and try to find his way home the following day.

He made a bed out of dry pine needles under a tall pine tree, put his backpack under his head for a pillow and tried to go to sleep. But the mosquitoes attacked him, putting sleep out of the question. So he just lay there, immersed in his thoughts. Finally he drifted off into a dream.

The man awoke suddenly in the middle of the night. The forest was dark and quiet all around, but far off in the distance, over to one side, he could make out what seemed to be a light glistening midst the branches. Thinking it could be a house, or a lamppost on the road, the man picked himself up and walked in the direction of the light, slowly making his way through the darkness.

After a while he found himself emerging from the dense bushes into a glade. There was no house or lamppost anywhere in sight, but in the centre of the glade there was a moss-covered hillock radiating a soft, golden light. As the man approached the hillock, he saw an old book in a leather binding lying on the top. The light was coming from the book!

The gold lettering on the cover read: *The Book of Happiness*. He opened it and began to read.

The book opened with a promise to show the reader how to find his happiness.

Wow, this is exactly what I need! thought the man as he hefted the heavy tome from the moss and hurried out of the glade, taking the book with him.

Perhaps it was the light coming from the book, or perhaps his own insight, but he now felt confident as to which way he should go. And, indeed, it wasn't long before he found the path, then the paved road, and began walking along the empty night-time highway in the direction of the town, his mushroom-filled basket in one hand and *The Book of Happiness* in the other.

Dawn was breaking in the sky when he reached the outskirts of the city and, soon afterward, his home. Despite his heavy load he felt neither tired nor sleepy. He put the basket down by the front door, took off his rubber boots, plunged onto the sofa and immersed himself in reading.

He finished the whole book that same day and it delivered on its promise. It brought him his happiness back. His happiness turned out to be lying behind the bookshelf — the only place he had not looked when searching for it. Presently he remembered that at one time he had indeed put his happiness on top of this bookshelf to save space in his small flat. Then he had added more books on top, which had apparently pushed the happiness over and caused it to fall behind.

When the man — following the instructions from the Book — regained his happiness, it was all covered in dust, hair and cockroach feces, but he wiped it clean and it began to look like new once more.

So as not to lose it again, he decided to carry it with him all the time. He attached it to a watch chain he bought specifically for this purpose, and now carried his happiness in his pocket.

For days and weeks he found himself in a state of bliss and joy. But seeing the unhappy people all around him — on the sidewalks of the streets, in offices and shops — he could not help but go back in his thought to the very last statement contained in the Book, namely:

You shall not show this book to others.

But just why, he thought, can't I share The Book of Happiness with others to make them happy? This can't be fair — seeing how much suffering and injustice there is in the world!

Gradually, as he contemplated the world around him, his feeling of happiness began to give way to a sense of disquietude, which over time became unbearable. Eventually the man resolved to try sharing the Book with just one man — a fellow-worker who had spent his week compiling some sort of production reports on his computer and who looked particularly lean and unhappy.

And so one day he brought the Book with him to work and, toward the end of their shift, entered his workmate's cubicle. Explaining its significance, he lent the Book to him for just one night, on his earnest promise that he would return it the next morning. That night, as he was going to sleep, lying in his bed and clasping his chained happiness to his chest, he felt blissful and fulfilled once more at the thought of sharing the path to happiness with even one fellow-human being.

The next morning, however, a sticky feeling of unease crept into him when he saw that his workmate he had lent the book to the night before was not in his office. The man managed to bear this uncertainty until noon, trying to console himself with the thought that his friend must be finishing the last page of the Book at home and would appear at the end of the corridor any moment.

As this did not happen by the lunch break, the man obtained his colleague's home address from the manager (who had been trying to reach him by phone the whole morning, without success) and ran over to his place. There, he found the door of the apartment wide open, and his workmate gone. With him was gone, too, *The Book of Happiness*.

At first the man found it hard to live with the nagging thought that he himself had not heeded the Book's warning and was now to blame for its disappearance. But as the days

turned into weeks and weeks into months, the sensation of loss gradually wore down, and life returned to normal.

Then one morning a year later, as the man was walking to the office, he sensed a strange agitation in the air. Everywhere people could be seen shouting and running, and a huge queue had formed in front of the neighbourhood bookstore. With a dark feeling of foreboding the man made his way through the crowd to the bookshop window where, lo and behold, a hundred copies of the latest sensational release were on display. He gasped as he read, in large golden letters on the cover of each book — *The Book of Happiness*.

At this moment the store window lost its ability to withstand the pressure of the human bodies leaning against it and it shattered. Pieces of broken glass showered down on the crowd. A moment later a flood of people rushed to the display case and emptied it. Dozens of people were now running away from the bookstore, each clasping a volume to their chest. One of these people was the man who had found this book more than a year ago in the forest.

He rushed back to his apartment and leafed through his prize. There was not a shred of doubt left — this was an exact reprint of *his* Book, apparently made from the copy stolen a year earlier by his workmate. Strange as it may seem, though, the man did not feel angry at him, but rather quivered in excited anticipation as to what would come next.

For the next few days the whole city was caught up in a reading frenzy. Nobody seemed to go to work or even go outdoors. The whole populace, young and old, were staying home and reading the amazing yet simple revelations of *The Book of Happiness*. And yes, more than one soul puzzled over the last sentence in the Book:

You shall not show this book to others.

They questioned themselves as to why this restriction was imposed and, more importantly, why the Book had gained such tremendous circulation despite this reservation. But the general welfare resulting from the wide distribution of the Book and its ideas was so palpable that these questions were soon forgotten.

For the next two weeks, few businesses were open in the city, as all citizens joined in a spontaneous festival to celebrate their new awareness and congratulate each other on the new era that the discovery of this remarkable book had ushered in upon them.

And when the people did return to their workplaces, they were so overfilled with happiness that they took to their routine tasks with joyous enthusiasm. The bakers were baking tastier bread, the builders were laying stronger foundations for new buildings, and the policemen became more polite than ever before (!) — while not just crime, but even traffic accidents seemed to completely disappear overnight.

Weeks passed, and the whole city and the surrounding countryside were transformed in such a remarkable, beneficial fashion that everyone was going to bed with smiles on their faces in excited anticipation of what new joys the next day would bring. And only the man who had originally discovered the Book seemed to have any recollection of the warning it contained in its final line. Yet the warning, even for him, seemed to pale into insignificance.

Months went by. As he came out of his apartment block one morning into the blossoming of the Spring, his ears were blasted by the sound of nearby police-car sirens, which no one had heard for a very long time. He hurried around the corner just in time to see two policemen shove an arrested felon into a patrol car and take off. The elderly lady left standing on the pavement was explaining to passers-by that a young delinquent had assaulted

her and tried to wrench her happiness from her. Her attacker had complained that she possessed more of it than he himself..

The next day similar incidents started to take place all over the city, as more and more people began to suspect their neighbours, colleagues or just passers-by of usurping a larger portion of happiness than they were entitled to.

Before long, all hell broke loose. Shooting began in the streets and neighbourhoods. People were murdered for the tiny pieces of happiness they were desperately trying to cling on to. The police department was overwhelmed. Days later, the police themselves joined the trend and raided homes to carry out whatever happiness remained — “for government needs”. Rumours had it, however, that police were keeping the confiscated happiness for their personal greed, and even fighting over it amongst themselves.

A large portion of the populace fled the distressed city, most of the businesses closed, and of the few individuals who remained, nobody so much as cared even to remove the rotting corpses of the slain men, women and children from the streets and squares that just a few weeks ago had been home to — as it had seemed at the time — boundless happiness.

As the man who had originally found *The Book of Happiness* in the woods was making his way stealthily along a completely deserted avenue leading to the city’s main square, he suddenly heard the squeaking of brakes, a lone gunshot, the clapping of car doors, and the receding noise of a motor. When it finally died away in the distance, he mustered his strength and turned the corner into the plaza where the incident had happened only moments earlier. There, by the fountain, lay the man who had stolen the original of the Book a year ago and — in a pool of fresh blood nearby — the hefty leather-bound volume, opened to the last page.

You shall not show this book to others — read the final line.

Centuries went by. Wind and water had eaten away stone, concrete, and metal; paved streets and squares had given way to trees and meadows. Virtually nothing now betrayed the traces of the former city, concealed as it was in a lush, dense forest. The few ruins that remained had been fenced off and designated as historical monuments, occasionally drawing the odd tourist group from a faraway urban centre.

One day a visitor with a basket woven from willow twigs separated from his group and, lured by the most beautiful mushrooms he had ever seen, wandered deep into the forest, off the beaten path. Late in the afternoon, as he was crossing a large glade on his way back to the tourist camp, he stumbled over something in the high grasses. He reached down and brought up a thick book in a leather binding with gold lettering. *The Book of Happiness*, read the title.

Wow! thought the man. *This must be a real oldie — and probably worth a fortune.* Hiding it from his companions, he returned to the camp and when alone in his tent, took out the book, opened it and started reading.

He read all through the night, feeling no drowsiness nor fatigue. When he emerged from his tent in the morning, the world presented itself to him in a new and happy light. *There's only one thing I cannot grasp*, he thought as he watched his fellow-campers busying themselves around a fire. *Just why does it say: "You shall not show this book to others"?*



Lada finished her account, and we spent some time sitting there quietly without saying a word, listening to the breeze rustling through the treetops and the crickets chirping in the grass.

"Do you know what the surest way to keep a secret is?" Lada finally asked, breaking the silence.

"No idea," I confessed. "What is it?"

"To forget it!"

Then she opened the palm of her hand in which, it turned out, she had been clasping all the while three little round clumps rolled from some kind of herb.

"But I have an even better solution, one especially for you," she continued. "This is a special kind of grass that helps keep secrets. You go ahead and eat these clumps. If you eat enough of them, you will still be able to remember the three lessons I taught you, but you will not be able to share them with others. But if you eat too many of them, you will forget everything I told you — either way you won't be able to share them with others."

"And how much is 'enough'? If I eat all three, will I still remember the lessons myself?" I enquired.

"That," Lada observed, "you will find out for yourself after you've eaten them!"

Noticing our prolonged absence, my wife Ira came looking for us in the far corner of the garden.

"And just what might you be doing here?" she asked with a smile, finally spotting us under the tree.

"We... ah..." I hesitated, looking at my wife and daughter by turns as I swallowed down the last bit of the third clump. "We... were playing tree house!"

"Aha, I see," Ira gave me an understanding look and started on her way back to the house. "Come when you're

hungry, lunch is ready. Though I gather you've just had some snacks!"

"Hey, Mama!" Lada called out after her. "D'you happen to know, what's the most important thing in life?"

Ira turned and confidently replied:

"Life is!"

"Wow, you got it right this time!" Lada jumped up and clapped her hands for joy. Then she turned to me, beaming with pride and delight at the degree of mutual understanding our family had achieved.

I hope the three clumps were just enough.

Maui, Hawaii, USA

19 December 2007

Leonid Sharashkin

THE RINGING CEDARS SERIES AT A GLANCE

Anastasia, the first book of the Ringing Cedars Series, tells the story of entrepreneur Vladimir Megré's trade trip to the Siberian taiga in 1995, where he witnessed incredible spiritual phenomena connected with sacred 'ringing cedar' trees. He spent three days with a woman named Anastasia who shared with him her unique outlook on subjects as diverse as gardening, child-rearing, healing, Nature, sexuality, religion and more. This wilderness experience transformed Vladimir so deeply that he abandoned his commercial plans and, penniless, went to Moscow to fulfil Anastasia's request and write a book about the spiritual insights she so generously shared with him. True to her promise this life-changing book, once written, has become an international bestseller and has touched hearts of millions of people world-wide.

The Ringing Cedars of Russia, the second book of the Series, in addition to providing a fascinating behind-the-scenes look at the story of how *Anastasia* came to be published, offers a deeper exploration of the universal concepts so dramatically revealed in Book 1. It takes the reader on an adventure through the vast expanses of space, time and spirit — from the Paradise-like glade in the Siberian taiga to the rough urban depths of Russia's capital city, from the ancient mysteries of our forebears to a vision of humanity's radiant future.

The Space of Love, the third book of the Series, describes author's second visit to Anastasia. Rich with new revelations on natural child-rearing and alternative education, on the spiritual significance of breast-feeding and the meaning of ancient megaliths, it shows how each person's thoughts can influence the destiny of the entire Earth and describes practical ways of putting Anastasia's vision of happiness into practice. Megré shares his new outlook on education and children's real creative potential after a visit to a school where pupils build their own campus and cover the ten-year Russian school programme in just two years. Complete with an account of an armed intrusion into Anastasia's habitat, the book highlights the limitless power of Love and non-violence.

Co-creation, the fourth book and centrepiece of the Series, paints a dramatic living image of the creation of the Universe and humanity's place in this creation, making this primordial mystery relevant to our everyday living today. Deeply metaphysical yet at the same time down-to-Earth practical, this poetic heart-felt volume helps us uncover answers to the most significant questions about the essence and meaning of the Universe and the nature and purpose of our existence. It also shows how and why the knowledge of these answers, innate in every human being, has become obscured and forgotten, and points the way toward reclaiming this wisdom and — in partnership with Nature — manifesting the energy of Love through our lives.

Who are we? — Book Five of the Series — describes the author's search for real-life 'proofs' of Anastasia's vision presented in the previous volumes. Finding these proofs and taking stock of ongoing global environmental destruction, Vladimir Megré describes further practical steps for putting Anastasia's vision into practice. Full of beautiful realistic images of a new way of living in co-operation with the Earth and each other, this book also highlights the role of children in making us aware of the precariousness of the present situation and in leading the global transition toward a happy, violence-free society.

The book of kin, the sixth book of the Series, describes another visit by the author to Anastasia's glade in the Siberian taiga and his conversations with his growing son, which cause him to take a new look at education, science, history, family and Nature. Through parables and revelatory dialogues and stories Anastasia then leads Vladimir Megré and the reader on a shocking re-discovery of the pages of humanity's history that have been distorted or kept secret for thousands of years. This knowledge sheds light on the causes of war, oppression and violence in the modern world and guides us in preserving the wisdom of our ancestors and passing it over to future generations.

The energy of life, Book Seven of the Series, re-asserts the power of human thought and the influence of our thinking on our lives

and the destiny of the entire planet and the Universe. It also brings forth a practical understanding of ways to consciously control and build up the power of our creative thought. The book sheds still further light on the forgotten pages of humanity's history, on religion, on the roots of inter-racial and inter-religious conflict, on ideal nutrition, and shows how a new way of thinking and a lifestyle in true harmony with Nature can lead to happiness and solve the personal and societal problems of crime, corruption, misery, conflict, war and violence.

The new civilisation, the eighth book of the Series, is not yet complete. The first part of the book, already published as a separate volume, describes yet another visit by Vladimir Megré to Anastasia and their son, and offers new insights into practical co-operation with Nature, showing in ever greater detail how Anastasia's lifestyle applies to our lives. Describing how the visions presented in previous volumes have already taken beautiful form in real life and produced massive changes in Russia and beyond, the author discerns the birth of a new civilisation. The book also paints a vivid image of America's radiant future, in which the conflict between the powerful and the helpless, the rich and the poor, the city and the country, can be transcended and thereby lead to transformations in both the individual and society.

Rites of Love — Book 8, Part 2 (published as a separate volume) — contrasts today's mainstream attitudes to sex, family, childbirth and education with our forebears' lifestyle, which reflected their deep spiritual understanding of the significance of conception, pregnancy, homebirth and upbringing of the young in an atmosphere of love. In powerful poetic prose Megré describes their ancient way of life, grounded in love and non-violence, and shows the practicability of this same approach today. Through the life-story of one family, he portrays the radiant world of the ancient Russian Vedic civilisation, the drama of its destruction and its re-birth millennia later — in our present time.

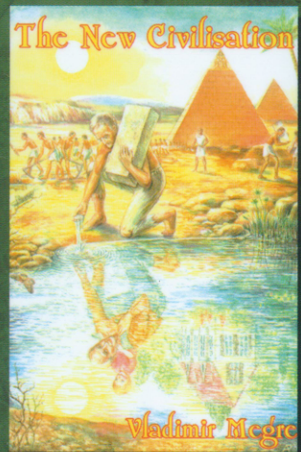
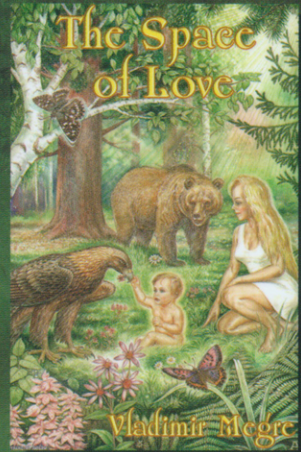
To be continued...

Rites of Love by Vladimir Megre

Spirituality /
Childrearing

Book 8 (part 2) of The Ringing Cedars Series

This book contrasts today's mainstream attitudes to sex, family, childbirth and education with our forebears' lifestyle, which reflected their deep spiritual understanding of the significance of conception, pregnancy, homebirth and upbringing of the young in an atmosphere of love. In powerful poetic prose Megre describes their ancient way of life, grounded in love and non-violence, and shows the practicability of this same approach today. Through the life-story of one family, he portrays the radiant world of the ancient Russian Vedic civilisation, the drama of its destruction and its re-birth millennia later — in our present time.



RINGING CEDARS PRESS

www.RingingCedars.com

1-888-DOLMENS

US\$14.95 CAN\$19.95 AU\$24.95

ISBN 978-0-9763333-9-5



9 780976 333395

5 1495



New
Updated
author's
Edition!

Vladimir Megre

ANASTA



Megre

Volume X
of *The Ringing Cedars of Russia* book series

A New Updated author's Edition!

© *Vladimir Megre*

All rights reserved. This book or any portion thereof may not be reproduced or used in any manner whatsoever without the express written permission of the publisher except for the use of brief quotations in a book review.

www.vmegre.com/en

Russia,

First published in 2010

Translation by: Susan Downing

We seek the cooperation of translators and publishers.

For inquiries and suggestions please contact us at:

PO Box 44, 630121 Novosibirsk, Russia.

E-mail: ringingcedars@megre.ru

Phone: +7 (913) 383 0575

Skype: rc.press

ANASTA

It was the year 2010 according to the Gregorian calendar. On the planet Earth, the first humans were awakening from a ten thousand-year sleep. What lay ahead of them was to see what had happened to the Earth while they slept, to understand the reasons for it, to engrave a record of what had happened into their memory as an anti-virus, so that nothing like this would ever happen again.

They engraved the many car accidents and wars. They engraved the stench in the air of the cities and the extensive pollution of the water. They engraved the numerous illnesses that had befallen humans' physical bodies while humanity was in this sleep state. They engraved...

But for the moment, they were unable to formulate the causes. But they will be able to. Of course they'll be able to! They'll return to the earth its primordial nature.

A small child is walking through a glade in the heart of the vibrant Siberian taiga, smiling. Nothing frightens him, no one attacks him. On the contrary, the beasts are ready to rush to his aid at the first sign of trouble. The small person walks like a royal successor walking through his kingdom. He finds it interesting to observe the lives of the bugs, the squirrels and the birds. To study flower blossoms and see how the blades of grass and the berries taste. He'll get a bit older, and then he'll perfect this beautiful world.

And where is your child at this moment in time? What kind of air is he breathing? What kind of water is he drinking? How will he occupy himself when he grows up?

But first things first.

THE BEGINNING

I decided to start this book by reminding the reader of the events that took place in Siberia more than fifteen years ago, so as to make the book easier to grasp for people who haven't read the earlier books in the "Ringing Cedars of Russia" series. I'll try to introduce some additional information about my first meeting with the unusual Siberian hermit Anastasia.

Anastasia lives in the heart of the Siberian taiga, in the same spot where her parents and her ancestors once lived. The distance from the spot where she lives to the nearest god-forsaken Siberian village is about twenty-five to twenty-seven kilometers. There are no roads and not even any paths. You'd have a very difficult time managing a trip like that without a guide. The actual glade where she lives doesn't differ much from all the other taiga glades. Except in that it looks somewhat cared for, and in the number of flowers. There are no structures in Anastasia's glade, no fire pits. But it's precisely this spot that Anastasia considers her family space.

The first time I met Anastasia, in 1994, she was twenty-six years old.

The Siberian woman Anastasia is a very beautiful woman, even extraordinarily beautiful. The words "extraordinarily beautiful" are not an exaggeration. Imagine a young woman, a bit more than a hundred seventy centimeters tall, with a good figure – not waiflike, like contemporary models – but genuinely well built, and lithe, as if she were a gymnast. She has regular facial features, gray-blue eyes, and hair the color of golden wheat spikes that cascades to her waist.

Perhaps you could see a woman anywhere who looks like her – on the outside. But I don't think you'd ever come across the other, special qualities deep inside her that make the taiga-dwelling Anastasia extraordinarily beautiful. Everything about her external appearance speaks of ideal health – it comes through in the fluidity and lightness of her gestures, in the springy way she walks, as if she were flying. You get the impression that her body contains within it some kind of other-worldly energy, whose abundance warms the surrounding space with invisible rays.

Your body warms up slightly when Anastasia looks at you, and by squinting at you with some kind of special gaze, she can heat up your body to such an extent at a distance, that your whole body begins to sweat, especially around the feet. Toxins leave the body, and afterwards, you feel significantly better.

In general, I surmise that Anastasia's knowledge of the properties of the taiga plants and some kind of internal energy enable her to cure a person of absolutely any illness. At least, she cured my ulcer with her gaze in the course of a few minutes.

However, she categorically refused to do any subsequent healing.

“Illness is a serious conversation between God and man,” says Anastasia. “Through this pain, which is both yours and His at the same time, He’s letting you know that you’re living in some unacceptable way. Change the way you live, and the pain will pass, the illness will recede.”

Anastasia has one extraordinary ability: when she’s telling a story about something, pictures of the events she’s narrating arise in the listener’s consciousness, or in actual space. And the images she shows are much more picture-perfect than any modern television picture. They’re three-dimensional, complete with the smells and sounds of the time she’s describing.

It’s quite possible that at one time many people possessed these capabilities. If you bear in mind that in our technocratic time, man hasn’t invented anything that wouldn’t have existed in nature, then it’s possible that something perfectly analogous to our modern television and telephone also existed in early human civilization.

Anastasia has shown me pictures from the lives of people of a variety of periods, starting from the very creation of the world. Pretty much all of the events she shows are connected with her ancestors.

If you were to try to characterize Anastasia’s capabilities in one phrase, here’s what you could say: the taiga-dweller Anastasia preserves the experiences and emotions of the members of her extended family – starting with the creation of the very first human – in her genetic memory, and she is able to call them up at will.

She can also model pictures from the lives of people in the future.

Anastasia’s life in the Siberian taiga differs significantly from the lives of people in modern cities. So that you’ll be able to understand the conditions in which she lives out her life, I have to say a few words about what the Siberian taiga is. It’s Russia’s largest expanse of open land, ancient and snow-covered. In European Russia, it extends for 800 kilometers, while in Western and Eastern Siberia, it stretches out for 2150 kilometers. As you can see, this is an impressive land mass. Today the taiga is considered the Earth’s lungs, and rightly so – it produces the majority of free oxygen.

You have to bear in mind that the taiga zones began forming even before the onset of the glaciers. So, by studying life in today’s taiga zone, we can learn about life on the planet Earth before the Ice Age.

Remains of a well-preserved baby mammoth, now kept in the Zoological Museum in Saint Petersburg, were discovered in the permafrost.

It’s hard for us to get a good idea of the animal world in taiga zones before the Ice Age. In today’s taiga, lynxes, wolverines, chipmunks, sables, squirrels, bears, foxes and wolves are numerous and widespread. The ungulates you’ll encounter include

noble and northern deer, elk and roe deer. There are numerous rodents: shrews and mice.

Among birds, woodgrouse, hazel-grouse, nutcrackers and crossbills are ubiquitous.

During the winter, the great majority of animals settle into anabiosis or hibernation. This state of living organisms has been little studied by scientists and is generating greater and greater interest among those who study outer space.

As far as the plant world is concerned, various types of bushes grow in the taiga: juniper, honeysuckle, currant and willow, and others. You find bilberries, cowberries, cranberry and cloudberries, all with marvelous vitamin content. Among grasses suitable for consumption, sour grass, wintergreen and ferns predominate.

You'll find majestic trees reaching forty meters in height: spruce, fir, larch, pine and a tree with unique qualities – the cedar, which scientists sometimes call cedar pine. I'll say right off that, in my opinion, they really shouldn't call it that at all. But what can you do? Let science focus on the pine they mistakenly call a cedar – I'm going to talk about the incomparable Siberian cedar. Why is it incomparable? Because the cedar gives unique fruits – cedar nuts – and deserves its own, separate name. The quality of the fruit of the Siberian cedar, these cedar nuts, greatly surpasses that of the nuts of cedars in other climate zones on the planet. Way back in 1792, the academic Pallas wrote about this in a letter to the Russian Empress Catherine the Great.

Cedar wood possesses special phytoncidal properties even once it's been cut, so a moth will never take up residence in a closet made of cedar.

And the Old Testament's King Solomon, who also seems to have known of cedar's mysterious properties, built a temple out of it, having given away several entire cities of his kingdom in exchange for certain specially chosen cedars.

But the priests were unable to perform services in the temple because a cloud formed inside it. (3rd Kings, 8:11.)

After having pored over a multitude of sources that talk about the Siberian cedar, I'm inclined to suggest (and not without basis) that the cedar is a representative of the Pre-Ice Age plant world, and that it may be an envoy to us from a different, more developed civilization (in the biological sense.)

How was it able to survive the planetary catastrophe and come to life anew in our world?

Cedar seeds can survive frost and are able to hold out for an extended period of time, so that they can come up during more favorable climatic conditions and adapt to a new environment. This adaptation continues up to the present day.

What is so unique about the fruit of the cedar? Why is it that today we can state

with certainty that they are the most ecologically pure and healing food product of our time?

The cedar nut kernel contains the entire necessary complex of vitamins. Scientists from the university in Tomsk who have studied the properties of cedar oil added it to the diet of people who had served as responders to the accident at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant and who were suffering from radiation poisoning. The results of the experiment showed that the test subjects' immunity began to increase.

There are no contraindications for the use of cedar oil – even pregnant women and nursing mothers can use it.

There's one other mysterious fact about the cedar nut kernel. During periods when cedars do not bear fruit, the females of certain fur-bearing animals don't allow males to come near them and don't conceive. It's still unclear how the cedars let the animals know that they won't bear fruit in a given year. After all, the animals mate in the spring, but cedar fruits ripen only in very late fall, and it's very difficult to tell, just by looking at a cedar tree, that it's not going to bear fruit.

There are a great many other plants in the taiga for the entire taiga animal world to feed on. Similar taiga-dwelling animals in Russia's central zone get along entirely without cedar nuts. So why do females who have fed on cedar nuts consider it impossible to conceive and bear young without this food?

It's been noted that the fur of taiga-dwelling animals, particularly those from regions where cedars grow, is of much higher quality than the fur of all other animals. No matter how scientists and specialists fine tune the diet of the animals they're raising on fur farms, they can't manage to achieve fur of anywhere near the same quality. The fur of the Siberian sable from the regions where cedars grow has always been the highest quality fur in the world.

It's well known that the condition of fur-bearing animals' fur reflects the condition of their organism as a whole. So, if their condition improves when they consume cedar nut kernels, then the same should be true for humans, especially pregnant women. Our women might not be getting enough high-quality food products to enable them to bear healthy fetuses, and this situation can't help but degrade society.

The fruit of the Siberian cedar disproves scientists' opinion that agriculture is the great achievement of humans, evidence of their development. I think that agriculture came into being because human civilization lost its knowledge of nature and because people's way of life changed. As a result, man began sweating in the fields to get his daily bread. You can draw your own conclusions.

Let's imagine that there are two fruit-bearing cedar trees growing on a parcel of land where a family of three people lives. You can be absolutely certain that the family that owns that parcel of land where the two cedars grow will never go hungry, even in the years with the worst harvests. And it isn't just that they won't go hungry, won't live

from hand to mouth – they will feed on the best, most refined food there is.

One cedar alone is capable of producing – in one year – up to a ton of cedar nut that can be used as food, once they're shelled. But that's not all, not by any means. You can extract cedar milk from the kernel of the cedar nut, which is not only suitable for human consumption, but which you can also successfully use to feed infants. You can get world-class cedar oil from the kernels, which you can add to salads and other dishes and also use medicinally.

After you express the oil from the cedar nut kernels, you're left with an oil-cake, which you can use to make excellent baked goods – bread, cookies, pastries, or crepes.

The cedar also gives us a sap that's recognized by official and folk medicine alike as a medicinal and prophylactic substance.

The Siberian cedar doesn't require any care at all by humans – you don't need to fertilize or till around it. You don't even need to plant it. Its seeds are planted in the earth by a little bird called the Eurasian nutcracker.

It starts to become clear why it is that our ancient ancestors knew nothing about agriculture. It's just because they knew much, much more.

Maybe someone will say, well, the cedar bears fruit only once in two years, and if the barren year comes along in the same year as a bad harvest, then how can the cedar remedy the situation? I'll tell you. It's true that cedars bear fruit once every two years, sometimes even less frequently, but its unique nuts can last from nine to eleven years if you don't remove them from the cone.

Of course, nothing is quite this simple today in our real life. The cedar has a hard time taking root near cities. It can't tolerate ecologically polluted zones. But there are also encouraging outcomes. Many sources indicate that the cedar responds to human emotions, that it can take in energy from humans and, having increased it, give it back. I had the chance to convince myself of this personally.

Seven years ago, twenty-five taiga cedar seedlings were sent to me. Together with the residents of the five-story building where my apartment is located, I planted these seedlings in the little wooded area bordering the building. I planted three of them along the edge of the plot of my country house. Before long, somebody dug up the cedars we'd planted in the wooded area. I wasn't too terribly upset by this – I figured that if somebody dug them up, that meant people knew about their properties and would most likely plant them somewhere else and take good care of them. But one seedling still remained there. It had been planted near the brick wall of the garages located in front of the building. The soil there was so, so far from fertile. For the most part, it was construction refuse covered over with a thin layer of fertile dirt. Nonetheless, the cedar took root and is still growing today. As far as its rate of growth and how smooth its trunk is, it's quite different from the cedars I planted at my country house. And it's about twice as tall. I got to thinking about why that would be, and I

began to notice that when the people in the city come out onto their balconies, they often look at the cedar, and sometimes they remark, “What a beautiful tree we have.” And I, too, when I walk or drive by, happily admire it. In this way, the cedar growing by the garages receives human attention and strives to be worthy of it.

Now, especially since the “Ringing Cedars of Russia” series of books started coming out, there are many companies that put out cedar products, including cedar oil.

I also asked my daughter and her husband to set up cedar oil production. I told them about the ancient technique I’d learned of from Anastasia.

Polina’s husband Sergei made every possible effort to work in accord with both ancient techniques and today’s requirements for producing food products. We arranged for the production to take place at a medications factory under the control of experienced specialists. The expression was carried out using the cold pressing method, which is supposed to preserve the greatest amount of the oil’s beneficial substances, and using wooden blocks. It was necessary to do this, because the cedar nut kernel and oil contain the entire periodic table, and certain elements can oxidize if they come in contact with metal. In addition, only glass containers were used during bottling. The oil we ended up with may also have been of better quality than if we’d produced it using other methods, such as hot pressing. However, it differed from the cedar oil I’d tried in the taiga. I got the impression that it contained less life force than the taiga cedar oil.

I won’t go into detail about our extensive attempts to find the reason for the differences. I’ll start by saying that we saw a change in quality as soon as we moved the whole production process – from nut storage up to the pressing of the oil and its packaging – to a village out in the taiga a hundred and twenty kilometers outside the city.

It turned out that you just can’t produce a high quality oil in an urban setting, even at a medications factory. At every stage of production, the kernel and oil come into contact with the air, and big city air is very different from air in the taiga, which is full of phytoncides.

As a result of moving production, the products of this small company, which was perhaps not very technically well-equipped according to today’s standards, were of higher quality than those produced by all other companies, not only in our country, I think, but in the world. I’m happy to have played even a small role in the appearance of this unique product – cedar oil. I think that this taiga company is really the only one that produces actual cedar oil, because the others produce the oil of the “cedar pine.”

A great many products in the world are marketed as “ecologically pure.” But I immediately ask myself where these products are from? Where were they grown? Can you really call any product ecologically pure at all if its raw materials are grown and produced in an area surrounded by highways or big and small cities? I don’t think any product produced in areas like that can be ecologically pure, even if no toxic chemicals,

pesticides or fertilizers are used to grow it.

The cedar grows deep in the Siberian taiga, hundreds and thousands of kilometers from large cities. There are no highways there, and you can only ship this unique product out by river. Of course, our civilization's filth can also end up there, but everything in the world is relative, and compared to giant cities, the air and water in the taiga really are immeasurably cleaner, and no one is pouring any poisons into the ground.

And so, I think that there is no more pure, beneficial or healing product in the world than the cedar nut kernel and the products made from it.

In telling about the Siberian taiga, I've given special attention to the cedar. But in the taiga region there are also many other food products that are of much higher quality than those we're already aware of. For example, cranberries, raspberries, cloudberries, currants and mushrooms. And to answer the question, what does Anastasia eat out there in the taiga, I can tell you that she eats world class ecologically pure food of a type that you can't possibly buy, not even for a million dollars.

Back in my first book I described how Anastasia lives out in the taiga and how astonished I was by her way of life. Now that so many years have passed since we first met, in thinking about her, I've come to the conclusion that the way people live in today's giant cities looks unnatural and absurd if you juxtapose it with Anastasia's life out in nature.

At first glance it seems extraordinary, the way the wild animals bring food to Anastasia when she gives them a certain signal. But even a hunting dog today will bring its prey to its master. And a falcon released to hunt also turns its prey over to its master. Goats and cows in a village farmyard are happy to feed their owners by giving them milk.

The wild animals inhabiting the area around the glade where Anastasia lives mark their territory, and within this territory they consider a person something like a pack leader. I think that over the generations, they were trained by Anastasia's forbears, and then they themselves trained their offspring.

Anastasia actually eats very little. She never makes a fetish out of food.

Many people have been asking recently about how Anastasia makes it through the severe Siberian winter – when the temperature reaches thirty-five to forty degrees below zero – if she doesn't have any warm clothing or a heated dwelling. I'll start by saying that if the air temperature out in the open gets down to minus thirty, it's always significantly warmer in the taiga, and there can be up to a ten-degree difference in temperature.

Anastasia has dug-outs at various locations in the taiga. The main one, where I

myself have had occasion to pass the night more than once, consists of a spot hollowed out in the ground, about two and a half meters long, two meters wide and also about two meters high. The entrance to the dug-out is narrow, about sixty centimeters wide and a meter and a half high. The entrance is covered over with cedar branches. The walls and ceiling of the taiga bedroom are woven of vines with bunches of dried grasses and taiga flowers stuffed into them. The floor has been carpeted with dried hay.

It's very comfortable sleeping in that kind of bedroom in the summer. No sounds penetrate it, to say nothing of all those radio and electrical emissions that a person living in a multi-story building is subjected to.

In late fall, Anastasia fills the entire area of her bedroom with dry hay and enters into an extended sleep similar to the state scientists call anabiosis.

Anabiosis as modern science explains it, is a state in which all of a living being's vital processes, including metabolism, slow down to such an extent that there are no visible signs of life.

Scientists have been focusing on this unique biological phenomenon as they develop plans for extended space travel. What primarily attracts them is the fact that creatures in an anabiotic or hibernation state use much less oxygen and do not need food. It's been proven that their resistance to negative environmental factors increases. So, for example, it's been shown that infectious diseases don't develop in such animals, even when they're artificially infected, and that many poisons which would be fatal for their organism under normal circumstances are entirely harmless to them when they are hibernating or in an anabiotic state. It's even been proven that if you subject such animals to a fatal dose of ionizing radiation, they will still survive, since their metabolism has greatly decelerated, and that once they awaken, their vital functions resume entirely normally.

But here's what's interesting. If a person – who is a thinking being – falls into a deep sleep in the winter, then what happens to his Soul during this period? I haven't come across any hypotheses at all about this in scientific writings. But it is an extremely interesting question.

One day I, too, had occasion to partially experience the unusual state of anabiosis for myself. This happened when I was in the taiga in late fall. Where Anastasia lives, the days at that time of year are very short. When it began to get dark, Anastasia suggested I take a rest. I immediately agreed. The accumulated fatigue of city life and my taxing journey through the taiga were already driving me toward sleep.

This time the dug-out was full of more hay than usual. Since I knew you don't get cold sleeping in hay even when it's below zero, I stripped down to my underwear and lay down, putting my jacket beneath my head.

"It's already time for you to be waking up, Vladimir," Anastasia said, waking me.

I felt her massaging my right hand, and I looked toward the entrance of the dug-out. Its opening was barely visible. That meant the sun hadn't yet come up.

"Why do I need to wake up? The dawn is just breaking."

"It's the third dawn since you went to sleep that's breaking, Vladimir. Should you not wake up, your sleep might continue for several months and even years. Your Soul, since it won't need to worry about keeping your body safe, will want to have a rest and wander around other worlds in the Universe. No one would be able to bring it back until it decides on its own that it wants to come back."

"So that means it wasn't with me while I was sleeping?"

"It *was* with you Vladimir, right alongside you. It was waiting for your sleep to become more even, and deeper, and then it would have been able to take its leave. But I decided to wake you."

"But why doesn't your Soul leave when you fall into a deep sleep?"

"My Soul leave, too, but it always comes back right on time. After all, I don't torment it."

"What do you mean? You mean I torment my soul?"

"Vladimir, every person who falls prey to harmful habits and thought patterns, and who consumes harmful food, brings torment first and foremost to his Soul."

"What importance does food have for the Soul? What, does it also consume the food a person eats?"

"The Soul doesn't feed on material food, Vladimir, but it is able to see, hear and actualize itself only through your body. If the body is unhealthy, if, for example, a person is drunk and his body is helpless, then the Soul, as if it were bound, has no way of manifesting and actualizing itself. It can only feel, only weep over the helpless body that has been destroyed by the harmful drink. It can only attempt to warm damaged organ of the body, and it will expend a colossal amount of energy as it does so. When the Soul's energy is exhausted, it becomes powerless and leaves the human body. The body dies."

"Yes, Anastasia. What you've said about the Soul is interesting and, it seems, accurate. Because there's a folk saying: when a person dies, they say that he 'gave up his Soul to God.' What we get in your interpretation is 'the Soul ran out of strength.' Hmm, I wonder – does my Soul still have strength left?"

"Since it came back, that means your Soul still has strength, Vladimir. But please, try not to torment it."

"I will try. But wait, doesn't a person's Soul get a rest when he's sleeping?"

“The Soul is energy, Vladimir. A living energetic complex. Energy doesn’t need rest.”

“But what do you think, Anastasia, where does the Soul go off to during sleep?”

“It can go off to other dimensions, soar among the planets of the Universe. And if the person wishes it to do so, it can gather information he needs. For example, if the person wants to learn something about the past or future, he can ask his Soul as he falls asleep to visit the time and place that interests him, and the Soul will fulfill his wish. But if the person sleeps an ordinary sleep that isn’t sufficiently peaceful, and if the environment is not ideal, then the Soul can’t go off anywhere. It has to guard his body.”

“From whom?”

“From all manner of hostile influences. You sleep in your apartment, Vladimir, and its walls are filled to bursting with electrical wires, and the wires give off radiation that adversely affects people. Sounds of the artificial world force their way in through the glass. The air in the apartment is not entirely healthy to breathe. Your Soul cannot leave you alone. It has to be able to wake you in the case of a critical situation.”

“I get it, Anastasia. This dug-out I slept in is actually a great deal more comfortable than the most elegant bedrooms in today’s hotels and apartments. It’s like some kind of hypobaric chamber. The air here is ideal, and there are no harmful rays and noise, and the temperature is stable. And so I sleep much better in it than I do in my apartment. I understand that, and I’ve experienced it for myself. But I don’t get why it is, when you fall asleep for a long time, that it doesn’t bother your Soul that your body is resting in a dug-out where the entrance isn’t even shut up. And if there’s some danger – say there are some intruders – there won’t be anybody to wake it up.”

“Vladimir, any time anyone makes the slightest attempt to approach the glade we’re in, no matter what their intentions, the entire space within a radius of three kilometers is put on its guard. The animals, birds and plants begin sounding the alarm. Those who are approaching will be gripped by terror, and if they succeed in overcoming it and aren’t thrown off course, then the space – by means of the animals – will wake the body and call the Soul back.”

“What about in the winter, when everything’s asleep?”

“Not everything is asleep in the winter. Besides, in the winter, it is easier for those who are awake to keep watch over what goes on.”

I don’t understand everything Anastasia said about the Soul during her winter sleep period, but I have had occasion to see for myself the way the wild animals and birds bring Anastasia troubling or happy news.

Now that I’m familiar with the way Anastasia thinks of sleep, I can draw the following conclusion:

Modern man and mankind as a whole don't have any opportunity to get enough good sleep. Besides the fact that modern bedrooms can't measure up to the natural one, we have to add one more factor that's also of some importance: modern man is continually caught up in a whirlwind of everyday worldly concerns, and he often keeps on thinking about them as he falls asleep. And if that's the case, then the question arises of how man is using the energy of his Soul – his Soul, which is capable of learning about other worlds when a person is sleeping and bringing him information about them when he wakes. Perhaps we need to construct our bedrooms so that no random sounds will penetrate it and so there are no wires and telephones in it. It's possible for us to achieve this. It's more complicated to manage the necessary air quality.

And so, Anastasia, the hermit of the Siberian taiga, has become the heroine of the "Ringing Cedars of Russia" series of books. She has borne me a son and a daughter. She now lives in the taiga, in my heart, and in the image of the heroine of my books.

I don't think I've been able to do this amazing woman's beauty, her intelligence and her extraordinary capabilities justice in my descriptions. Really, it's probably not even possible to do this using ordinary language.

Even now, I only sometimes see Anastasia as someone who is close to me, as a loved one. More often I see her as unattainable and mysterious, as someone who possesses an inexplicable strength of spirit that she can use to create the future.

Her characterization of our modern day reality and her story – or more precisely, the image she has created of the beautiful future of Russia and of the whole earth – have given birth to a beautiful phenomenon in society. Without waiting for decrees to be handed down from on high, or for government financing, tens of thousands of people have independently set about turning this image created by Anastasia into actual reality. You can understand the main idea for building our future country by reading the books in order. But if I were to try to briefly – not in its entirety – present the idea that is helping these positive transformations take place, I could characterize it using the following words.

Anastasia thinks that every family should have its own plot of land that's no less than one hectare in size. The family needs to transform this plot, which the taiga hermit calls a family homestead, into a heavenly living oasis that can provide for all of man's material needs. The external appearance of the person's living creation and the way the creator himself lives on it are indicators of the person's spiritual makeup. She considers it unacceptable to bury family members in a cemetery. They must be buried only on the family homesteads. Then the souls of relatives who have passed on won't suffer because their bodies seem to have been tossed into some deep hole in a cemetery, far away from their loved ones. People who are buried on the family homestead will – with their spirit – help and protect those living on it.

Cemeteries analogous to our modern ones did exist back in antiquity, too, but they were intended for animals that dropped dead from disease, criminals with no

family, and warriors who died in a foreign land.

Anastasia has told us how to set up our own family homestead so that we can free ourselves from physical ailments with its help.

She has talked in relatively great detail about the ancient and very lovely rite of marriage that helped newlyweds – along with the power of their thought – create the design for their future family homestead, and about how at the moment of marriage, with the participation of the parents, relatives and friends, what they had conceived in thought would materialize in the space of several minutes. I think that this rite is one of the greatest discoveries of our millennium. After all, by using it, newlyweds even today can acquire a house, a garden and a family homestead right during their wedding.

Anastasia also asserts that for newlyweds who create their family homesteads in this way, love never fades, but actually grows stronger over the years. And she explains why this happens: “When a husband looks at his wife, he subconsciously associates her with his glorious homestead, too, and also with his child, who must also be born on the homestead.” And one can believe in this. After all, the very best place on earth for each person is always his small motherland. His child will always be the most beautiful and best of all children.

And Anastasia also asserts that if all people, or the majority of them, begin consciously creating their own family homesteads and turning them into heavenly oases, then the whole earth will be transformed. Natural disasters and wars will not occur on earth. Man’s inner spiritual world will change, and new knowledge and capabilities will open up to him. Man will be able to create beautiful worlds resembling the earthly world on other planets.

She considers today’s technocratic method of exploring space and other planets a dead end, harmful for the planet Earth and the people living on it. The sensible way to explore the planets is through psychoteleportation. But if people are to be able to do this, they first have to demonstrate their ability to develop the Earth and express their spirituality in their way of life, not in words.

Official critics might respond to the subjects of the books and to the taiga hermit’s statements in any of a number of ways, but their opinions aren’t really so very important. The people – the most important critics – have already expressed their approval in tens of thousands of letters and hundreds of thousands of emails. They’ve expressed it not only in words, but in concrete actions, too, and the hundreds of large and small settlements that have arisen and continue to arise throughout all of Russia are a confirmation of this.

Now, here’s where a riddle arises, one that’s as yet insoluble and cryptic: if a mass movement has been set in motion solely by the statements of a taiga hermit that have been introduced in books, then what kind of power lies behind her phrases? Perhaps they’re constructed in such a way that the letters combine into some kind of code. Perhaps, a certain rhythm of her phrases has significance.

Anastasia usually tries to adopt the speaking mannerisms of those she's talking with, to use his lexicon and way of constructing phrases, but at certain moments she'll suddenly be speaking in some different kind of language that's emphatic and flowing and rhythmical. She pronounces each letter of the phrases she utters very precisely, and you clearly sense an extraordinary energy behind each sound. And then you remember what she's said verbatim, as if there's some recorder at work in your brain. And that's not all. Living pictures appear before the listeners, and the subconscious grasps the meaning of what's been said. By way of example, I'll give you an excerpt from Anastasia's retelling of a conversation between God and the first man, from the book "Co-Creation": "Where is the edge of the Universe? What will I do when I come to it? When I have filled everything with myself, when I create that which I have thought?" a man of the wellspring people asks God. And he receives this answer: "My son, The Universe is thought. A dream was born of the thought, and it is partially visible as matter. When you come to the edge of everything, a new beginning and continuation shall your thought discover. Out of nothing will arise the new, beautiful birth of you, and of the aspiration, reflecting in itself your Soul and your dream. My son, you are endless, you are eternal, your creating dreams are within you."

There are several theories regarding Anastasia's abilities. I'll share mine with you, too.

Anastasia's abilities, which seem extraordinary at first glance, were actually inherent in all or the majority of the wellspring people. The effect the taiga hermit's statements have had on many people's actions is due not to some mystical force, but rather to people's very own ability to embrace them with their heart and Soul. You get the impression that some memory has been preserved in modern day people's genes, or in their subconscious: a memory of the way individual families and human society as a whole lived, starting back in the time of the wellspring people, when Man still understood how to communicate directly with God.

This way of life – the wellspring people's – is significantly more advanced than today's. Maybe it's from those times when people still knew what heaven was. But I don't think these people's actions were connected to any specific religion.

All the homesteads that readers of the books are building turn out differently from each other. The houses they put up don't just differ in their external appearance. Some are two-story wooden houses, while others are one-story wattle and daub affairs. And the gardens, living fences and ponds are also constructed differently.

It's common knowledge that religious ritual requires all its participants to strictly observe standardized ways of acting and speaking. But here, we clearly see each individual's personal creativity in the way they realize this beautiful idea.

If people are thankful to Anastasia for anything, it's probably for the fact that she has awakened within their Souls the aspirations of a human-creator.

THE LITTLE TAIGA DWELLER

More than fifteen years have passed since I met Anastasia, the hermit of the Siberian taiga. And when I learned that she was going to bear my son, I took great pains to move Anastasia to the city of Novosibirsk, even going so far as to try to intervene physically. Back then, it seemed unacceptable to me for her to give birth in the taiga, and impossible to raise a child outside social institutions.

At first, Anastasia's way of life in the taiga seemed strange to me, to put it mildly. But now the way people live in today's giant cities seems even stranger.

And when she was pregnant with our daughter and stayed in the taiga, as she'd done before with our son, my soul was joyous and calm. My views of life had changed radically in the course of ten years.

Had Anastasia wanted to give birth somewhere other than the taiga – even if she'd been in the best maternity ward in the capital – I'd have fallen into depression and despair. And I'd probably have worried constantly about our child's future if he'd ended up being raised and educated within today's societal institutions.

I'd rethought my priorities and my views of life had changed.

Anastasia gave birth to our daughter in her family glade in the Siberian taiga. I wasn't present for the birth, and there were no qualified doctors at her side, no modern medical equipment. But in my soul I was calm. I knew that she was giving birth in one of the most perfect maternity wards on earth – in her family space.

When Anastasia gave birth to our daughter, she asked what I would like to name the newborn. Without thinking, I answered – Anastasia. And it wasn't because Anastasia had named our son Vladimir. It's just that by the time our daughter was born, I'd come to see Anastasia as a wise, brave and very kind woman. Her name had become synonymous for me with these qualities, and I wanted our daughter to inherit them. I couldn't imagine anyone other than Anastasia raising our daughter. Even though at many points her approach to childrearing looks like a total lack of a conscious approach to childrearing, that's far from the case. For example, here's what happened one time with our little daughter in the taiga.

This time when Anastasia met me, she was in a jolly mood, even playful, it seemed to me. She appeared suddenly when I was approaching the familiar glade where the three of them were now living. Wearing a light dress reminiscent of a Roman tunic, she stood on my path and smiled. I wondered where she'd gotten that dress. I

stopped, delighting in the unusual vision.

“It’s really something,” I thought. “So much time has passed, and she’s given birth to two children, but she looks just as young and extraordinarily beautiful as before. Look at me – I’ve grown old and gray, but she doesn’t age a bit.”

I recalled how, waking up early in the morning, she’d take joy in the coming day and set off racing against the she-wolf, performing elaborate somersaults. Would she be able to do that now?

As if she’d heard my silent question, Anastasia performed a double somersault with almost no running start at all, and then there she was again, right next to me.

Her voice rang out. “Hello, Vladimir.”

I wasn’t able to answer right away. A captivating aroma and extraordinary warmth radiated from Anastasia’s body. I shyly touched her on the shoulder. For some reason I hesitated to embrace her. And I responded lamely:

“And hello to you, Anastasia.”

She snuggled up against me, hugged me and whispered:

“Our darling little daughter is such a smart and beautiful little thing.”

Then Anastasia walked ahead of me barefoot through the grass. She stepped, putting one foot in front of the other, the way a model does on a runway. This wasn’t the first time she’d done this, but every time she does it, her gait looks hilarious, and it raises my spirits.

As we usually did, we headed straight to the lake to bathe after my trip. I already knew the purpose of this swim wasn’t just so I could freshen up after traveling. The main point of it was to wash away all the smells that weren’t native to this taiga glade. To do this, once I’d taken my first dip, Anastasia helped me give myself a brisk rub down with a paste she’d made of various herbs. Rubbing me all over, she joked:

“You’re having less and less good food and your tummy’s a little distended.”

“It’s dysbacteriosis. That’s what the doctors say. Practically ninety percent of the population has it,” I replied.

Anastasia laughed. “Or maybe the whole problem is that the tummies don’t have enough will power? You yourself say that ten percent of the population doesn’t have this dysbacteriosis.”

I had to walk around for a while with my body and even my hair coated with this green paste and then dive back into the water and splash myself with water. After I came out of the water and my body had dried off a bit, Anastasia removed her

tunic-like dress and held it out to me.

“It would be good for you to put this shirt on now.”

Anastasia stood before me, her breasts exposed. They were a bit larger than they’d been before. A tiny drop of milk appeared on one nipple.

“You’re still nursing our daughter?” I asked.

“I’m supplementing with milk,” Anastasia answered brightly. She squeezed her breast with both hands and splashed me in the face with a stream of milk, then laughed and wiped the milk over my face.

“If you put this on and belt it, it will look like a shirt on you. I’ve been wearing this shirt continually since I gave birth to our daughter. Sometimes she would sleep wrapped in it. She’s grown accustomed to its smell and to the way it looks. If you do what I tell you to do, it will be easy for our little girl to get used to you.”

“But what will you wear now?”

“Well, I have two very similar ones, and I’ve alternated wearing them. The one I’m offering you – that one I wore more. And I’d often fasten my hair with a little braid made of grass. Now I’ll go braid one like it for you, too, and meanwhile you can go observe our little girl a bit.”

“Just observe her a bit? You mean I’m not allowed to touch her or have contact with her?”

“Of course you’re allowed, Vladimir. Even so, it’s better just to observe her at first. Even though she’s little, she already an independent being, so it’s better if you just observe her first, without pestering her. You can acquaint yourself with her habits and try to get a sense of her world.”

“I know that when our son was born, I just observed him at first, too. Tell me, Anastasia, how long before I can pick her up?”

“You will feel when the time is right. Your heart will let you know.”

It seemed to me that Anastasia wanted me to observe our little daughter on my own and try to figure something out, and that’s why she’d come up with some urgent tasks of her own. And I wasn’t against this way of doing things, either. I really did need to find some way to study how our child behaves, because to my daughter, I was just some “uncle” she didn’t know. And then this strange uncle suddenly goes and picks the child up for no reason at all and starts with his sloppy sentimentality, squeezing her and cooing to her to make himself happy. But maybe the child hates being cooed at, not just by strange uncles, but in general, no matter who’s doing it. I asked:

“Anastasia, so where is our daughter now? If you go off to do your braiding, you

know, to braid the tie, how will I find her?”

“She’s somewhere around here, not far away,” Anastasia told me calmly. “Try to find her yourself. Let your heart tell you where she’s to be found.”

It seemed to me that I’d begun to understand a lot about life in the taiga glade. But each time something new would still amaze me.

How can you allow a child who hasn’t even turned two yet to walk or crawl wherever she wants through the taiga and not even keep an eye on her while she does? And this is the taiga, where there are no people. In the taiga, where there are a great many wild animals.

In the past I’d observed my newborn son and had seen him fall asleep against a she-bear’s belly, while the she-bear lay motionless, waiting for him to get a good sleep. I saw how the wolves would guard the infant and how the nimble squirrels would play with him. It was clear to me that the beasts living here in the glade or nearby it were like pets. Within the territories they’d marked, they didn’t fight and didn’t attack each other. A dog that lives in the same household with a cat might not touch the cat or might even become friends with it, but he might still attack a cat from outside the family. So it makes sense that here, too, the animals don’t attack each other within their defined territory, and they certainly won’t attack the human’s offspring.

They revere the human living on their territory, so naturally they’ll protect the human child and consider it an honor to look after him. All the same, this kind of situation was a little unfamiliar. For example, what might happen if the child were to go outside the marked territory? Other wild animals wouldn’t treat him the way his own do. Basically, in spite of the logic of it all, some unfamiliar feelings arose in me.

“But what if I come across some wild animal while I’m looking for our daughter?” I asked Anastasia as she was walking off. “I’m still not used to them and they’re not used to me, either.”

“They won’t do anything bad to you, Vladimir – you’re wearing the shirt, after all. You can walk around with complete confidence and not torment yourself with fearful thoughts.” Anastasia ran off to her little earthen home.

After I came out into the glade and didn’t find anyone there, I set off through the forest surrounding the glade, since I figured our daughter might be close by. I decided that if I walked in circles, gradually increasing the diameter, then I’d be sure to catch sight of her.

And I saw her before I’d even completed my first loop. Little Anastasia was standing alone between some currant bushes. She was holding onto one of the branches and examining some bug and smiling. I hid behind another bush and began observing her.

The little girl was dressed in a short shirt-like dress, her hair bound with a tie woven from the strands of some kind of grass.

Once she'd satisfied her curiosity about what was going on on the branch, she set off barefoot across the grass in the direction of the glade. Then her foot must have caught on a branch or in the grass, and she fell down. The little girl fell flat on her face on the grass, but she didn't cry. Without a word, she braced her little hands against the ground and sat up. Then she crawled a meter or two on hands and knees and then got to her feet once more and, stepping slowly, continued along her path.

Trying to remain unnoticed, I followed my daughter very cautiously. And suddenly, right before my very eyes, Nastenka¹ disappeared. At first, shocked, I just stopped and stood stock still for a bit. Then I quickly ran up to the spot where she'd just been walking and began looking all around, but she was nowhere to be seen – not behind the tree near where she'd disappeared, and not behind the bush. The little girl couldn't yet run fast enough to disappear from sight so swiftly.

I began circling around the tree near where she'd disappeared, increasing the diameter of the circle with each round, but I still couldn't see her. I stood for some time, trying to decide what to do, then I ran to the little earthen house where I figured Anastasia would be.

She was sitting calmly at the entrance, braiding a headband out of grass strands, and quietly singing. Not far away, a silver fox was rubbing herself against the tree trunk like an affectionate cat.

"Anastasia, our daughter's disappeared," I blurted out. "I was walking a few meters behind her, not taking my eyes off her. Then suddenly she up and ... it was like she dissolved into thin air. She's nowhere to be found."

Anastasia reacted with surprising calm – she didn't even stop her braiding as she answered:

"Don't worry, Vladimir. I think she's probably in the old fox den now."

"Who told you that?"

"Do you see the lazy way the fox is rubbing against the tree?"

"Yes, I see."

"That's her way of letting me know the child is in her den."

"But maybe she's trying to tell you something else?"

¹ **Translator's note:**

Nastenka (in Russian "Настенька", transliterated "Nasten'ka" and pronounced "NAH-steen-kuh") is a diminutive form of the name Anastasia (in Russian "Анастасия", transliterated "Anastasiya" and pronounced "Ah-nuh-stah-SEE-yuh"), used affectionately as a nickname.

“If she was telling me about something bad, then she’d be showing her agitation. She’d run off a bit, then come running back and try to get me to follow her to help.”

“All the same, you can’t be a hundred percent certain where our daughter is, especially since there’s no den at all in the spot where she disappeared – I looked around everywhere.”

“All right, Vladimir, then let’s go and have a look together and see where our clever little one has hidden.”

When we arrived at the spot where the little girl had seemed to dissolve, Anastasia pushed aside some grass, and I immediately glimpsed the den. Its entrance was partially collapsed, and a little hole had formed. I glanced inside it and saw Nastenka sleeping peacefully, curled up on the bottom.

“There! You see? She’s fallen asleep on the damp ground. And I don’t think she’ll be able to get out of there on her own.”

“The grass on the bottom is dry, Vladimir. And when our little daughter wakes up, she’ll be able to solve the problem of how to get out of her shelter all on her own.”

“How will she figure that out?”

“If you want, Vladimir, you just watch, and I’ll head back and finish what I was working on.”

I stayed put. After about thirty minutes, I heard a rustling sound in the hole. The little girl had awakened, but she was having a hard time scrambling out of the hollow on her own. But she wasn’t actually even trying very hard to do so. After making her first attempt and testing her own powers, she let out a sound, summoning someone: Yoo-hoo! Hey! Not a cry, but an actual summons. And right away, the vixen that had been hanging around Anastasia earlier appeared. First she stood at the edge of her former den; she looked in, sniffed, and then, turning her back to the den, lowered her tail into it. The vixen tensed her muscles and slowly pulled the little child who’d grabbed onto her tail out of the den. The little girl trailed along behind the fox for about half a meter. After that she let go of the tail, got up onto her hands and knees, and then stood up on her own two feet. Little Nastenka took a look around, smiled, as if recalling something, and then, stepping slowly, she set off, smiling, in the direction of the lake. I continued to follow her, unnoticed.

There were no wild animals around, and it seemed that no one in the taiga besides me was watching the little one. But a bit later on I realized I was wrong about that. It turned out that she and I were both being watched closely, and before long, I for the first time saw a conflict between my daughter and a wild animal in the taiga.

When Nastenka had made her way out from amongst the raspberry bushes, she stood where she was for some time and gazed at the mirror-like surface of the lake.

Then she took off her short little shirt and, stepping carefully with her bare feet, headed toward the lake. She was about five to six meters from the water when a tough-looking she-wolf suddenly sprang out of the bushes and, with several powerful leaps, put herself between the shore of the lake and Nastenka. The little girl slapped the beast on the back with her tiny hands, tugged at its fur and touched its snout. By way of reply, the she-wolf licked the child's foot, but that's where the mutual signs of attention or affection ended. Playing with the she-wolf evidently didn't enter into Nastenka's plans. She wanted to get to the water, which she first tried to do by taking three steps to the side and walking around the she-wolf that was standing at that spot. But as soon as the little girl tried to move ahead, the she-wolf once again blocked her path. Nastenka pushed against the beast's side with her hands, attempting to remove the obstacle, but the she-wolf didn't obey the child and stood there, as if rooted to the spot. Then Nastenka sat down on the grass, thought a bit and made an attempt to crawl under the she-wolf's belly. But this attempt did not meet with success, either – the she-wolf pressed herself to the ground.

Evidently Nastenka understood that the beast was not letting her get to the water and that she could not remove the obstacle using force. She sat on the grass for some time, pondering something, then started to crawl and even move away from the she-wolf and the lake.

Before long she stood up, a small twig in her hands. She walked up to the she-wolf's snout, ran the twig along it and threw it in the direction of the forest. The twig only flew about a meter and a half. The she-wolf jumped for the twig and grabbed it with her teeth. As this was going on, Nastenka set off running toward the shore of the lake, her legs pumping away. The she-wolf understood she'd been outsmarted, and with two headlong jumps, she caught up to the child at the water's edge and knocked her off her feet.

Nastenka fell onto her back, and her head touched the water. Pushing against the sand with her little legs, she tried to push herself further out, into the lake. The she-wolf grabbed the child's foot with her teeth. She was probably trying not to cause the child any pain – her grip was light.

Nastenka pushed her second leg into the she-wolf's nose, pulled the sole of her foot from the she-wolf's maw and, in high spirits, crawled off into the water. The shore in that spot dropped off sharply to the depth of almost a meter, and the little tot was submerged in the water up to her head, but right then she dove out. Working her little arms and legs, she kept herself on the surface of the water.

I didn't think our daughter could swim well. I ran out of my hiding place, intending to jump into the water, but when I got to the shore, I saw the she-wolf swimming up to the child. Splashing about in the water, the little girl nestled against the wolf's side and took hold of the fur with her little hands, and they swam along the shore in the shallows. Nastenka let go of the she-wolf as soon as she felt the lake bed beneath her feet.

The wet she-wolf came out onto the shore and shook herself, the splashing spray glinting in the sun. She didn't run away, but remained on the shore, attentively watching the child out of the corner of her eye and also – as it seemed to me – warily glancing at me.

And Nastenka, standing in the water up to her waist, smiled and eagerly kept calling the she-wolf to come over to her. She'd slap her little hands on the water, and beckon her with a wave, but the she-wolf didn't go to her. It's possible that the beast didn't like this watery business, or that the games in the lake seemed dangerous.

Nastenka suddenly turned her little head in my direction and froze. For the first time I felt my little daughter's gaze fixed on me, and I stood there beneath her gaze, powerless to move a muscle. I understood that she perceived me as some kind of baffling creature that had suddenly appeared in the territory she inhabited.

She looked me over for some time, then turned away and came out of the water onto the shore, taking her time, and walked up to the she-wolf lying on the grass. The she-wolf picked up the little dress in her teeth and gave it to the little girl. But Nastenka didn't want to put it on her damp body. She took the clothing and set off in the direction of the dug-out at the edge of the glade. I continued observing her path through the taiga and thinking.

A tiny child is walking, smiling, through a glade deep in the Siberian taiga, and nothing frightens her, no one attacks her. Quite the contrary – the wild animals are prepared to rush to her aid at a moment's notice. A tiny person is walking along, the way a royal heir walks through her kingdom. It's interesting for her to observe how the bugs and squirrels and birds live. To examine the flowers and test the blades of grass and berries to see how they taste.

But at this same time, some other little girl of the very same age finds herself in a space bounded by four walls, and within it, she's confined within four little playpen walls like some kind of little wild animal, and it doesn't matter that the walls are pretty. And her kind parents buy up all sorts of plastic toys for her, and she tests them to see how they taste.

Millions of little girls and boys in our world grow up in apartment-cages, like little wild animals. And then we want them to grow up into intelligent, free, and noble people.

Well, these individuals can't even imagine... freedom first of all means free thought, knowledge, and perception of the living universe.

A child will be told about this living universe in school when he grows up a bit. Of course he'll receive certain information about the great world of living nature, about the universe created by the great Creator, but he'll never be able to perceive it through his own experience. You can't replace the perceptions a person can receive in the first years of his life while living in harmony with the great world of the Creator, not

through exerting effort or straining himself, but conversely, through playing. There are no school lessons or university lectures at all that can replace this.

I'm not encouraging anyone to head out to the taiga with children. That would be idiotic. Even so, we have to do *something*.

WHO DOES OUR DAUGHTER LOOK LIKE?

In the evening, Anastasia was nursing Nastenka at the entrance to the little dug-out where the little girl sometimes slept on her own. I was sitting quietly alongside them, watching this interesting process.

I got the impression that the feeding as such, as a means of satiating the child's organism with mother's milk, was not the main point of it at all. Grabbing Anastasia's breast with her little hands, Nastenka smacked her lips and nursed for a bit, but then she came off the nipple and looked at her mother's face. And Anastasia didn't take her eyes off her child, either. She paid no attention to me or to her surroundings.

It seemed to me that it was as if mother and child became one during the feeding and communicated with each other non-verbally.

This went on for about twenty minutes, after which time Nastenka fell asleep.

Anastasia put our little daughter down in the dug-out on bedding made of hay and covered with fabric. She covered the sleeping child with the fabric's loose edges and created a cozy little nest by mounding up hay from the sides. Then, she knelt there by the entrance for a short while, looking at her sleeping daughter. When Anastasia stood up and finally turned her attention to me, I asked her:

"What do you think, Anastasia, who does our daughter look more like, you or me?"

"Like all parents, of course you'd like it if she looked more like you, wouldn't you, Vladimir?"

"Ah, you guessed wrong. Sure, I want my daughter to have something of me in her, too. But she's a little girl – she needs to be beautiful, and that means, she should look more like you."

"Does that mean you consider me beautiful compared to yourself, Vladimir?"

"I consider you beautiful compared not just with myself, Anastasia. I think you're the most beautiful person I've ever seen, even in international beauty contests. I've watched them on television. The contestants' beauty pales by comparison with yours. You're better than all of them."

"Thank you, Vladimir. What you said – is that a compliment? Or just an

explanation?”

“I’m complimenting you and explaining, too, and also marveling.”

“Thank you. That means it won’t sadden you then, Vladimir, if I tell you that in her external appearance, Nastenka’s little face looks a tiny bit like you, but her little eyes and eyelashes and her figure are mine, and she’ll also have hair like mine.

“When people resemble each other physically this also indicates that they resemble each other in their abilities, habits and in the affinity of their Souls. That means she’ll possess certain abilities and habits of yours. And certain ones of mine. But three components are always present in a newborn’s soul, Vladimir.”

‘Three? But who’s the third one from?’”

“The third component is a particle of the Soul that resided in the person’s body in his previous life – perhaps a hundred years ago, perhaps a thousand or a million years ago. In a harmonious person, this third component does not disintegrate into particles, but waits for its chance, for the instant when it acquires a new body, through whose eyes it can see the surrounding world and through whose ears it can hear the sounds of this world, touch it with its hands, and utilize its gifts.”

“But if our Souls have united into one whole in their new life, then does that mean they must know about all of each other’s lives?”

“Of course, they must. And they do. Otherwise it would be impossible for them to unite. They wouldn’t be able to become one united Soul.”

“Then it would follow that my Soul can see our daughter’s past life?”

“Of course, it can, but you will perceive and see this only if you are able to abide in harmony with your own Soul and if your thought isn’t thrown off by all manner of distortions of the surrounding world, if it is able to concentrate.”

“If you take me, then everything’s totally clear: I and people like me can’t see the past. But if you take you, Anastasia – it’s clear that you can find something out about our daughter’s past life through that particle of her Soul.”

“I’ve been trying to glimpse and understand our daughter’s past life, Vladimir, and I’m seeing it as strange in some way. Our daughter’s life in her body was very short, no more than seven years long, and she lived many thousands of years ago.”

“Well, if the child lived such a short life, there’s not much to learn about the past.”

“Yes, not much, but it sometimes happens that even in the course of a very short life, a person carries out an act that can affect events that occur in subsequent millennia.”

“I wonder, how can it happen that a child could carry out some act that could affect people’s lives for millennia? Can you tell me about it, Anastasia, or better yet, can you play back some pictures from our daughter’s past life?”

“Yes, I can, Vladimir.”

“Go ahead and play them back, then.”

And Anastasia began the extraordinary tale of our daughter’s past life. Or, rather, the tale of the little girl, a particle of whose Soul now resides in little Nastenka.

INTO A DIFFERENT DIMENSION

“As you know, Vladimir, some time ago on Earth there began an ice age. In those regions into which the glaciers advanced, the climate changed. The cooling made it impossible for many types of plants to grow. Areas that had previously been rich in forests, orchards and lush grasses interspersed with flowers, gradually turned into valleys covered with only scant vegetation.

“The people who were living at that time in one of the valleys in the foothills decided that it was impossible to continue living the way they had been living under such cold conditions. They decided to leave their homes and head out in search of places with a more hospitable climate.

“The men headed out and took the lead. Following their tracks, the head of the family line, Wood², was leading the children, women and old folks out of the settlement.

“The gray-haired, hundred-and-twenty-year-old elder walked at the head of the caravan of eleven mammoths laden with wicker baskets. The children were seated in one of them, and the others held food stores – after all, they didn’t know how long they would be traveling.

“Along both sides of the caravan of mammoths, the people of his family line and all the livestock who had resided in the family homestead settlement were on the move, on horseback and on foot. It seemed that all the living beings understood that it was essential for them to set off for new climes, and they followed the person. Only the plants had remained in the settlement – they had no way to move. Plants, doomed to die.

“Wood was thinking things over, trying to answer the questions he’d posed to himself:

“Why had the undesirable changes in nature occurred? Why had the cooling begun?

“Whose will had set this disaster in motion?

“Might it not become a disaster for all of Earth?

“Did man possess the power to do something to head it off?

² **Translator’s note:**

The name used here in the original is “Вуд” (transliterated “Vud” and pronounced “Vood”). The origin of this name is unknown.

“Might disasters result from man’s actions?”

“Wood understood that if the answers weren’t found, then a sad fate would await his children and grandchildren and his entire family line. He could see that all the adults who were now walking along in the caravan were viewing the changes in the natural world as a tragedy – their faces were sad and thoughtful. Even the children had grown quiet and were on their guard. Only his little favorite, his six-year-old great-granddaughter Anasta³, was frolicking – she’d started up a game at the head of the caravan with the lead mammoth.

“Wood observed his great-granddaughter’s game with the mammoth leader, glancing at them out of the corner of his eye. She plopped the tip of the giant, seven-ton mammoth’s trunk onto her little shoulder and made believe she was dragging the huge animal. And he, the mammoth, was playing along with her. Of course, he was carrying the whole weight of the trunk himself, touching the child’s shoulder only lightly with it. From time to time Anasta would stop, as if catching her breath, wipe the nonexistent sweat from her brow and say, ‘Oh, my, how big you are. You’re heavy and lazy.’”

“The mammoth would nod his head, as if in agreement, flap his ears, and wipe his own brow with his trunk. Then he’d lay the tip of it on the little girl’s shoulder once more, as if he couldn’t move from the spot without her help. The game was funny and harmless. But the other game his great-granddaughter started up next, Wood didn’t like that one. Here’s what it consisted of.

“Anasta would scramble up the mammoth’s trunk, up to his head, and he would help her, curving his huge trunk and pushing the child higher with its tip. After getting herself settled atop the moving mammoth’s head, Anasta would sit there for a while, then suddenly utter a frightened ‘Oh!’ and swiftly slide down the trunk. The mammoth had to be very dexterous to manage to catch the child right above the ground and prevent her from hitting the ground or ending up beneath his massive feet.

“Wood was thinking over the past, trying to discover in it the reason for the disaster that had forced his people to leave their native valley, but his reflections were constantly being interrupted by recollection-pictures from the life of his great-granddaughter Anasta. He didn’t push these pictures away. He liked them, and they distracted him from sorrowful thoughts about what had happened.

“At one point Wood even smiled, recalling the way Anasta had registered her objection to an opinion that had been posited during one of their lessons. He saw the whole picture, down to the smallest detail.

“Wood was giving the lesson at that point. Children of various ages and three adults were sitting in front of him in a circle, beneath a spreading oak tree. Wood started off the lesson with the following words.”

³ **Translator’s note:**

The name Anasta (in Russian “Анаста”, transliterated “Anasta” and pronounced “Ah-NAH-stuh”) is meant to echo the name Anastasia.

SNAKE GO-BETWEENS

“Many people know that our ancestors strived to determine the life’s purpose of all creatures living on Earth. Once they’d done so, they would teach the animals how they could become as useful as possible to people. The animals would then teach this to their offspring, and in this way our generation, just like any that came before it, has received a great gift from our forbears. And we, in turn, need to not just make use of it, but also perfect the abilities of all earthly creatures living around us. It’s our generation’s task to determine the life’s purpose of those creatures for whom our ancestors didn’t do so.” Having said this, Wood pulled a grass snake out from under his shirt and continued: “For example, we need to determine for what purpose reptiles were created and how they might serve man.”

Those who were present looked at the grass snake that had wrapped itself around Wood’s hand, and said nothing. The first to raise his hand and ask to speak was a red-haired little boy about five years of age. Wood permitted him to speak.

“I’ve seen that snake,” the little boy began, “or one just like it, crawl up to our nanny goat and suck milk out of its udder. The goat stood right where she was. That means she agreed to give it her milk.”

“Yes, grass snakes and other reptiles can suck milk from cows or goats. You’re correct in noting that, Izor⁴. But at the moment,” Wood reminded those who had gathered, “we’re trying to solve the question of what benefit the existence of these creatures should bring to man.”

“Yes, I haven’t forgotten about our question,” the red-haired boy went on. “I remembered the way he was drinking the milk, and I thought we should make a little hole in this creature at the opposite end from his head. He can drink the milk and lower his tail with the little hole into a pitcher so it fills up with milk. Then mama won’t have to milk the goat.”

A disorderly choir of children’s voices could be heard from all sides:

“You can’t put a little hole in...”

“You shouldn’t put a hole in – it’ll be painful for the creature!”

“The milk won’t run out of the hole if the creature itself doesn’t want it to.”

⁴ **Translator’s note:**

The Russian original is “Изор” (transliterated “Izor” and pronounced “Ee-zore”). This name’s origin is unknown.

“The main argument against the hole is the pain the grass snake will experience,” Wood said, summarizing. “And man shouldn’t cause earthly creatures pain. Your suggestion is not accepted, Izor.”

Wood wanted to move onto the next question, but the red-haired boy wasn’t giving up.

“If we can’t put a little hole in his tail, then we can do it some other way,” he announced. “When that creature was sucking the milk from the goat, it got fatter and fatter. That happened because there was a lot of milk in it. We need to train the creature to crawl into the house with its milk and pour it out, into a pitcher. Then people won’t have to go out to the pasture with a pitcher to fetch the milk, and the dairy animals won’t have to leave the pasture and come to the houses to be milked. Many different creatures will crawl to the house, and when they see that the pitcher is empty, they’ll fill it with milk.”

The children liked the red-haired boy’s idea, and they vied to outdo each other with their own additions to it.

“And you could also get milk from them far away from home, if you feel like eating and your house is a long ways away.”

“We need to train them to crawl up to a person with milk when they hear a certain sound. So we don’t have to go searching for them in the grass. You clap your hands, say, or whistle, and they’d race to crawl right over to the person.”

“Well, I don’t feel like drinking milk that’s been pumped out of a snake – they might add some snake thing of their own to it,” one little girl noted timidly. But the others immediately started arguing with her.

“Well, with a cow the milk was inside, too, and everyone drinks that.”

“If they add some snake thing of their own, then it’ll be even better. I mean, they, these creatures, are always clean, even though they crawl along the ground.”

“Yes, exactly, they’re always nice and clean. I never saw a filthy snake.”

Izor listened as the children discussed his proposal, and he even blushed from pride.

“Your second suggestion is worthy of attention, Izor,” Wood said, praising the boy, and then he added: “We’ll discuss your second suggestion next time, and before then, everyone will think and give their opinion or propose their own suggestion for how to make use of creatures that crawl. And now I want to ask you what life’s purposes have been determined for the animals you know. Who’s ready...”

Wood didn’t finish what he was saying. He saw Anasta’s little raised hand, her palm facing in his direction. This gesture indicated that the little girl disagreed with

something and intended to lay her objections out to those present.

“Tell us your objections, Anasta,” Wood said, giving his permission.

“I’m against having creepy crawlers deliver milk to homes.”

One after another, the children began challenging Anasta:

“But why?”

“We don’t have to say no to conveniences!”

“The creatures aren’t doing anything for man at the moment, and this way they’ll have something to do.”

“People will have more time to do something nice instead of milking cows.”

The little girl calmly heard out the objections and went on:

“If the creepy crawlers start bringing man milk from the cow, then man himself will turn into a cow.”

One of the adults who was present at the lesson couldn’t restrain himself:

“What are you talking about, little girl? Explain what you mean.”

And Anasta went on:

“When a person receives milk from a cow or a goat or a camel or some other animal, he gives the animal his attention and feelings in return. If he doesn’t take the milk from the cow himself, and if she doesn’t feel his attention, then the milk won’t be as good. The person will give his feelings of gratitude to the crawling creature when he gets the snake milk from it. The snake will come between the cow and the person. It will be a go-between between all creations and the person. It will lure the person in with its enticing service and will milk him, sucking out of him the beneficial feelings that were intended for all the earthly creatures.”

Everyone remained silent for some time, lost in thought.

All at once a picture arose in Wood’s imagination: a spreading apple tree, studded with ripe fruit. Before it were standing a man and a woman. The woman was saying:

“Look, my love – one apple has already ripened. It’s very pretty. The apple tree wants to give it to us. Reach up to the branch and bend it down and pick the ripe apple.”

The man tried to reach the branch, but couldn’t. He wanted to jump up and grab hold of the branch with the ripe apple, but right then a snake appeared on the branch. It pulled off the apple, took hold of the branch with its tail and obligingly hung there,

offering the fruit to Man.

“Thank you, crawling one,” Man said and stroked the snake.

The man and the woman moved away from the tree without thanking it. They gave the beneficial energy of their feelings to the snake. The apple tree shuddered, and half of its fruit, still unripe, fell to the ground.

And Wood broke the silence that had fallen:

“Your protest is also worthy of attention, Anastochka⁵, and we accept it in part. We must all think carefully about replacing man’s direct connection to all that grows and lives on Earth with a go-between. We need to think about what that might lead to in the future. I propose that we return to this topic in our future lessons. But now,” he said, glancing at all those who had gathered there, “as we agreed to do earlier, please tell me the life’s purposes of the animals you know.”

⁵ **Translator’s note:**

Anastochka (in Russian “Анасточка”, transliterated “Anastochka” and pronounced “Ah-NAH-stuhch-kuh”) is a diminutive form of the name Anasta, used affectionately as a nickname.

THE MOST IMPORTANT INSTRUMENT FOR BUILDING A HOUSE

“Me! Me!” the impatient children’s voices poured out.

“All right, all right,” Wood said, nodding, “Tell me one at a time, and each of you name no more than two animals’ life’s purposes.”

One at a time, the children jumped up from their spots and spoke quickly:

“Cows and goats give milk. They eat grass, and every day they come to a person so he’ll take the milk from them.”

“Donkeys and horsies are meant to haul a person when he doesn’t want to walk on his own two legs.”

“Chickens and ducks walk around somewhere and fly around somewhere, but nearly every day they come back and lay eggs so a person can come get them.”

“We need a mammoth to lift heavy things and move or carry them to the place a person shows him.”

The children were already going around the circle for the third time, striving to recall the life’s purposes of all the animals they knew. Finally Wood posed a new question.

“Who can tell me under what circumstances animals work together and in what way a person directs them?”

The very same red-haired little boy addressed those present, saying, “Can I tell?” And, hearing no objections, he looked at Wood. The latter nodded in assent. “Animals start working together when a person wants to build himself a home⁶. Now, the person uses a fife to direct the animals. First he plays a calling tune, and various wild animals come to him, and birds fly over. When they come, they sit down not far from him and wait – that’s the way our forbears taught them. When he finishes playing the calling tune, the person looks affectionately at all the animals and bows to them. And all the animals that have little tails all wag them joyfully when the person looks at them affectionately. And the ones that can’t wag little tails express their joy in some other

⁶ **Translator’s note:**

The Russian word used here is “дом” (transliterated “dom” and pronounced “dome”). Throughout *Anasta*, this word both refers to the physical structure in which one lives and also carries the sense of a place where one can feel “at home.” I have translated this word as “home” throughout the book, so as to preserve both of these connotations and also the sound of the Russian original.

way, because the nicest thing for all animals is when a person looks at them affectionately. Then the person makes a different sound on his fife. Right away the bears run out from the group of wild animals and start digging a pit in the ground, right on the spot the person has marked with twigs. When the person thinks the pit doesn't need to be dug any bigger, he makes a different sound on his fife, and the bears go back to their spots. When the new sound is played, the mammoths place stones in the pit the bears dug. This whole time, a whole lot of swallows are circling about the chosen spot, very impatiently waiting to hear their tune. And as soon as the person begins playing their pretty tune on his fife, the swallows race off every which way and come back again and again: they bring tiny little bits of dirt, straw and fluff in their little beaks – everything they use to build nests for themselves, and they lay what they've brought on top of the stones until they've got a wall of the home."

The little boy stopped speaking, and Wood saw that Anasta had once again gotten up from her spot and raised her hand with the palm facing him. Wood gave Anasta permission to speak.

"Teacher Wood, I want to ask you whether the building of a home is considered pleasant and interesting work."

"Yes, of course," Wood answered. "It is the very pleasant and creative act of a thinking person."

"Teacher Wood, but then why are children categorically forbidden to engage in this pleasant and creative act?"

Wood knew of Anasta's obsession with the idea of building her own little home. At home she'd brought up this topic with Wood many times, but he would always patiently explain to her why children weren't allowed to build homes. Now she'd posed her question to Wood in front of the children and adults alike. Clearly she had a reason for asking. "She's thought of something," Wood concluded, and he began to answer:

"If children, especially those who haven't fully grasped the essence of the universe, pick up a fife and begin playing it, they might unwittingly distort the tune, and the animal builders will get confused and not know what to do."

"Teacher Wood, may I show you something?" Anasta asked.

"Yes, you may, if it's related to your question."

"It's related," Anasta replied, and she began to sing. She began singing ever so quietly. She offered up various tunes in her thin little voice, the very same tunes that adults would play during building.

"She didn't make a single mistake," one of the elders who was present remarked quietly.

“That’s right, she didn’t make any mistakes,” agreed another.

“But you know, she’s only heard that tune once,” stressed the elder who was sitting on a fallen tree in the last row. “The little girl has a good memory,” he added.

When she was done singing, Anasta asked Wood:

“Teacher Wood, did I make even a single mistake in even a single tune?”

“You did not distort the tunes, Anasta. You reproduced them with total accuracy.”

“Then I’ve removed the first obstacle?”

“Let’s say you’ve removed it,” Wood admitted. “But there are also other conditions. One of the children may be allowed to build a home, as an exceptional case. This can happen if that individual – in this case one of you – tells about the design they’ve conceived and the elders pronounce this design innovative. Then they may permit the home to be built as an exceptional case, as a model.”

Sensing that an extremely favorable situation had arisen, and that he could stimulate the creative thought of the children who were present, Wood said:

“I propose that all of you who wish to do so present your designs in two moons’ time. First we’ll discuss all the designs and will pick the best one, and then we’ll propose to the elders that they examine it and hand down a decision.”

Wood hadn’t been mistaken: both the tiniest children and those who were a bit older felt a burning desire to present their own unique designs. They all began whispering amongst themselves, evidently discussing what innovations they might introduce into the methods of building a home that had been worked out over the centuries. Understanding that there was no point in continuing class any longer, since the children were occupied with trying to solve the task that had been set for them and it was unlikely he’d succeed in shifting their thought, which was fired-up by its creative search, he stopped the lessons and dismissed those who were present.

Two moons later, the day the children had long been waiting for arrived. Many up them came to class a bit early and, without waiting for the older ones, began telling each other what they’d thought up. By the appointed time, many parents had gathered at the lesson, too. When class began, each of the children, excited, took turns telling of his design.

According to established rules, Anasta was to present her design last. Out of the designs presented before her presentation, the best design turned out to be the one presented by a little boy named Alan⁷. He was a good-looking boy, eight years older

⁷ **Translator’s note:**

The Russian original is “Алан” (transliterated “Alan” and pronounced “Ah-LAHN”).

than Anasta, a good singer whom all the domestic animals happily obeyed just the way they would a grown-up. Many of the girls in the settlement liked this boy, including Anasta. Therefore, if he were to win, she wouldn't be terribly upset. "Better him than anyone else," Anasta thought.

Finally it was her turn to present her design. Trying not to show her excitement, she began to tell about it:

"On the surface, my design doesn't differ much from already existing ones. My innovation is in the wall. In the southern-facing wall. I'll situate a beehive log on it. When the bees start bringing back flower pollen and the sun begins to warm the log hive, the bees will have to fan it with their little wings. Now, the log hive will be connected to the house by means of a small opening, and the air from the hive will fill the person's room, along with the scent of the flowers."

The grown-ups began talking amongst themselves, discussing Anasta's innovation. Finally Wood made a decision that everyone agreed with. It was decided to present two designs to the elders for consideration: Alan's and Anasta's. Anasta wasn't pleased – she didn't particularly feel like being rival to the boy she liked.

The elders came together the next day to consider the designs, right at the next lesson, which a great many people had also come to attend. Anasta's design was deemed best. The solemn announcement was made by a gray-haired, stern-looking elder. But he did note:

"Anasta, we have deemed your design worthy of attention. It really does contain an interesting innovation, but we cannot allow you to build the home. We can't turn the building of a home into a child's game. Only a man and woman who have decided to create a family may build a home. That is the inviolable rule. Do you agree with this rule?"

Anasta said nothing. The lump that had risen in her throat prevented her from speaking. She had worked on her design with extraordinary inspiration. She had imagined and even sensed her little home. In her thoughts she was already living in it, sleeping on her soft sleeping spot, looking out the window at the beautiful flower beds through the curtain woven by a little spider, and breathing in the subtle scents of the flowers the bees had brought back... Right then Alan rose from his spot.

"Might you allow me to say a word about the inviolable rule?" He glanced questioningly at the elders and then continued. "Of course it's fair, and it can't be changed, but there's a way to do things so that the rule won't apply to Anasta."

The people and the children were looking at Alan in disbelief.

A voice rang out. "And just how could that be done?"

"Allow me to demonstrate," Alan said.

An elder consented. "Go on, then, show us."

Alan walked up to Anasta and stood opposite her. Then he removed the family pendant from his neck and placed it around Anasta's neck:

"Will you marry me, Anasta?" he asked.

Those present gasped. Anasta was struck dumb. Only her eyes shone and looked over the youth before her, from toe to head.

"Do you say yes, Anasta?" Alan asked.

Anasta nodded energetically, then quickly took her own family pendant off her neck and held it out to Alan. But he didn't take it. Instead, he knelt down before the little girl so that she could place her beautiful pendant on him herself.

The people watched what was happening in astonishment. Then Alan took Anasta's little hand and addressed the gray-haired elder, saying:

"Now there's no obstacle for Anasta, and the inviolable rule does not apply to her."

"All right," the elder began, a bit unsure, somehow, "but people come together in order to raise a family. Anasta's still too little. She can't bear children."

"Yes," Alan agreed. "She's little. But she will mature with each day and each year. And the day will come when she will be a fully mature beauty. I am sure that I will see that day and that I will not go back on my decision."

After conferring with each other, the elders gave Anasta permission to build the small home, under the condition that it would be disassembled after eleven days, since it wasn't permissible for the home to be unoccupied, and Anasta wasn't yet allowed to live apart from her parents, due to her age.

On the appointed day, nearly all the residents of the family homestead settlement came together on a hillock. Anasta stood beside her flower bed. Beforehand, she'd marked out the border of her little home with sticks and twigs. She was very nervous – after all, so many people would be watching her actions, but she was especially nervous because among these people was Alan. Some unique feelings toward this young man had been born within her after his proposal that they join their lives together. The village head walked up to Anasta and opened a pretty case before her. Inside it there lay a fife – the most important instrument for building a house. With trembling hands, the little girl took up the fife, covered several little holes with her small fingers and brought the fife to her lips. But no tune issued forth – Anasta felt that before beginning, she needed to calm herself somehow. She pressed the fife to her chest and, gazing at the people standing on the hillock, she thought, fast as lightning, about what she could do to calm herself down. But her nervousness was only growing.

Then a youth came out of the group of people and headed toward Anasta. It was Alan. He walked up to the little girl and said:

“I know this tune, too, and I can play it. You’ve laid out where the house will be located and how big it will be. You were victorious in our competition. That means this will be your home. All I’ll do is play the tune.”

With eyes shining with tears, the little girl looked at the stately youth and whispered with lips trembling with excitement:

“I want to do it myself, Alan. Thank you, but I need to do it myself, I definitely need to.”

“Then listen to me carefully, Anasta. Breathe in some air and hold your breath. Hold it for as long as you can and then exhale, but not all at once, but in three steps. Exhale the last time so that as little air as possible remains in you. After that, begin to breathe evenly. From your very first breath, you should think only about your breathing. Forget about everything around you, and as soon as your breathing settles in normally, begin playing. I’ll stand behind your back and look at the people on the hillock. I won’t let their glances and thoughts through, won’t allow them to touch you, and you, calm and confident, will build your little fairy tale home.”

Anasta did everything just the way Alan had instructed her. She brought the fife to her now-calmed lips and... the calling tune filled the space.

After a bit the wild animals began gathering from the forest and the pastures. When enough of them had gathered, Anasta brought the calling tune to an end, went and stood in the middle of the oval that marked the walls of her future little home, and began playing once more, a different tune now.

Three bears immediately came out from the group of animals and hopping, ran up to the oval Anasta had drawn, walked around it in a circle, sniffing, and started digging a pit alongside the twigs Anasta had laid out.

They were trying, trying very hard. Suddenly two little bear cubs just couldn’t hold back and jumped into the pit that their mother was digging. Thrown off, Anasta stopped playing. Everyone froze in place. Then the she-bear grabbed one of the cubs by the shoulder and, giving it a slap, set it down outside the pit. It rolled off, head over heels, and she went through the same procedure with the second cub. Then she roared at them, as a warning, looked at the little girl holding the fife and waved a paw in her direction like a conductor. And Anasta began playing the fife once more.

When the pit had been dug, Anasta changed tunes – there rang out low, sedate and rhythmical sounds. And one after another, mammoths walked out toward the pit, each carrying a stone with its trunk. The mammoths placed the stones and continued their work until they had filled the entire pit with them. Now the fife’s low, rhythmical tones were replaced by modulations resembling the twittering of birds. The swallows

that had been circling above the building site suddenly disappeared, as if on cue, but reappeared before long. They landed on the stones, first here, then there, laying down something from their beaks.

The little feathered builders were able to bring just a tiny bit of building material in their beaks, but there were a great many of them, and they carried out their actions unusually swiftly and in unison. And so, the walls of the home grew before everyone's very eyes, accompanied by the fife's melodious modulations.

DON'T GET AHEAD OF YOURSELF

Wood's recollections of his great-granddaughter Anasta's life just wouldn't leave him alone, and he even chuckled a bit, recalling one particular instance.

It was getting toward evening. Wood had washed his feet off in the stream and was getting ready to go to sleep when he suddenly heard a child crying, or not even crying, but sobbing. He turned around and saw Anasta running toward him. She looked unusual: her face was all smeared with something black, and hay was sticking out of the opening of her dress. She ran up to Wood, limping a bit, sat down on the earthen mound outside and, taking her head in her hands, began lamenting her sad state.

"Oh, woe is me, Granddad! My life is just coming to an end."

Now that Alan had proposed to her, the little girl wanted to grow up as soon as possible, and when she'd wake up in the morning, instead of running off to the stream pool to get washed, she'd take a straight pole, stand it up against the wall of the house and score it, to mark her height. And then at the stream pool, before taking a dip in the water, she'd look at her reflection and wonder how long it would be before she'd get breasts like the ones grown-up women have – the kind of breasts they nurse little children with.

"Have a drink of water, Anastochka and calm down. Tell me what's happened."

Anasta swallowed some water from the pitcher and, through her sobs, began telling Wood the tale of her woe.

"I knew it, Granddad, I knew it... They are all crazy about Alan because he's the handsomest and the smartest. I've been worried that in the time it takes me to grow up, one of the grown-up maidens will make my Alan fall in love with her. She'll make him love her. And today, when it was just getting towards evening, I saw them, these maidens, walking to the glade, toward the mountain, and they were talking about my Alan. And I realized I can't wait any more, can't wait 'til I grow up. I have to take action now. That's what I decided, and I started to take action.

"I took a little piece of coal and made up my eyes, the way the grown-up maidens do it. Then I took a beet and painted my cheeks and my lips. And I even covered over my birthmark with clay. The birthmark that's right here, on my forehead." Anasta pulled aside her bangs and showed Wood the birthmark on her forehead that resembled a tiny star.

"Why in the world did you try to paint over the birthmark, Anastochka? After

all, you can't see it – your beautiful hair covers it,” asked Wood, concealing his smile.

“Sure, it covers it. But the wind blows, and it comes uncovered.”

“Let it come uncovered. I, for example, like your birthmark very much. It resembles a little star.”

“Agh-h-h,” Anasta said, wailing again. “You like it, Granddad, but I don't like it one bit. It's like I'm marked somehow. Mama doesn't have a little star on her forehead, and neither does Papa, and you don't have one, either, Granddad Wood. Who drew it on my forehead? Who was it who mutilated me? Agh-h-h...”

“No one mutilated you, Anastochka. Quite the opposite – they adorned you. If you start doing kind deeds for people, they'll start saying that this act, say, was done by the little girl with the little star on her forehead. And if you do bad deeds, people might say, that was done by the little girl with the spot on her forehead. People see any person's appearance as beautiful if his deeds are beautiful.” Wood stroked his great-granddaughter's head and then asked, “Anasta, tell me: why is there some hay peeking out of your dress?”

“I made two little wads of hay and tied them to my chest with a ribbon, so my chest would be the same as the grown-up maidens'. And I put hay in my shoes under my heels, too, so I'd be a little taller. And then, all grown up, like a maiden, I went out to the glade where they get together with the young fellows. I got there and I saw Alan standing there along with the young guys, and the maidens had gathered together a little ways away from them and were talking amongst themselves, sneaking glances at Alan. And Alan himself was glancing at the maidens.” And once again Anasta got all worked up and started crying again, and then went on, through her tears. “I saw him, Granddad, he was sneaking glances, sneaking glances. I knew that before long they'd get into a circle and take each other's hands and they'd do a circle dance and sing and look at each other. And so I'd be able to get into the circle, too, I went up and stood next to the maidens.

“One of them was just staring at me. She looks and looks and then she up and starts roaring with laughter and all the rest of them too, when they see me, they start roaring with laughter. And all the guys standing with Alan, they were laughing, too. Oh, woe is me! Woe is me, Granddad Wood. I was standing there alone, and they were all laughing and laughing. Looking at me and laughing. One guy fell right over onto the grass – he was rolling around and laughing.”

Wood looked down, trying to hide his smile, and asked:

“Was Alan laughing at you, too, Anastochka?”

“Alan wasn't laughing at me, Granddad Wood, not at all. Alan hit me.”

Wood was astonished. “He hit you? What do you mean, he hit you?”

“Just what I said, Granddad Wood. He hit me. First he walked up and picked me up. Picked me up the way you’d pick up a little child,” she told him, blubbing. “And I... I so wanted to be a grown-up... But he... he picked up me up like a little kid and took me behind the bushes. There he set me down on the path and said, ‘Go along home, Anasta. Wash up and don’t be such a dummy any more.’ And I... I said I wouldn’t go, and so it would be convincing, I stomped my foot a few times. Then he took me by the hand and spanked me. Like this and like that,” Anasta said, slapping herself on the hip with her palm, all the while lamenting, “Now I’m all beaten up and unhappy and abandoned and unmarried.”

“What, did he take back his pendant from you?” Wood asked.

“No, he didn’t take it back.”

“Well, that means you’re still married,” Wood said, reasoning with her.

“All the same, even if I’m married, I’m still beaten up and wretched.”

“Did it really hurt so much when Alan spanked you?” Wood asked.

“I don’t know, Granddad. I don’t know. I didn’t feel any pain, but the bitter insult was stronger than any pain.”

“Calm down, Anastochka. I can see that Alan spanked you out of love, so you wouldn’t do things people would laugh at you for. That means he was shielding you from taunting in the future.”

“Out of love? Do people really spank you like that when they love you?”

“Well, of course, that’s not the best method, but perhaps at that moment Alan couldn’t think of anything better. And you know, Anastochka,” Wood went on, untying the bundles and taking the little wads of hay off her chest, “don’t try so hard to be grown up. You’ll grow up without making any effort at all. And at the moment you need to be thinking about other things, my dear little girl.”

“About what, Granddad? About what?”

“You lie down on my lap, Anastochka, and I’ll sing you your favorite song, the one with no words.”

Anasta laid her head on Wood’s lap, blubbed another time or two and, at the very first notes of the familiar tune, drifted off to sleep.

The next day Anasta ran up to Wood, joyful and excited. Before she’d even stopped running, she announced to Wood:

“He came by my little home. He came by. At first I wanted to hide when I saw

him through the window, but then I just sat there, quiet as a mouse, so he'd think there wasn't anyone in the home. Alan walks up to the little home and takes a seat next to the entrance. He takes a seat, Granddad Wood, and he says, 'I know you're home, Anasta. You're a very smart little girl, a quick study, and I'll wait until you become a beautiful girl. Believe me, I'll wait, but don't you get ahead of yourself any more.' And I sat there and didn't say a thing, and I wasn't at all mad at him any more. I felt like running out and hugging him and even kissing him, like a grown-up, on the cheek, but I didn't do that. I sat there, quiet as a mouse, so as not to get ahead of myself.

"Alan sat there a while longer near the entrance to my little home, then he got up and left. And I ran to see you, Granddad Wood, to tell you about it. And you know what else, Granddad? You know, Alan, when he was sitting there at my place, he drew three little flowers on the wall of my little home – one bigger one, another a bit smaller, and a third, tiny-tiny one. I saw them when I ran out. They're very pretty."

Wood hugged Anasta and said:

"Does that mean you're not wretched any more and woe is no longer you?"

"Now I'm joyful, and I feel like making something unusual and pretty, so everyone will look at it and be happy and say, 'Very pretty, great, good,' and so Alan will hear that and be proud of me."

"That's a very correct decision that's come to you, Anastochka. Create beautiful creations in a burst of inspiration. Only in that way can we win the love of humans."

WE HAVE TO THINK

Putting an end to his reminiscing, Wood turned to his great-granddaughter, who had thought up a new game to play with the mammoth walking at the head of the caravan. He said:

“Anasta, you’re keeping the mammoth in a state of great tension with your playing. Is it really right to treat an inoffensive, kind animal that way?”

“Actually, Granddad Wood, I’m keeping him in a state of pleasant tension. I’m distracting him from sad thoughts. And see, Granddad Wood, I distracted you from your gloomy thinking,” Anasta said, jabbering away.

“Yes... Many people’s thoughts are gloomy right now. There’s a reason they’ve come up. But what about you, Anastochka, can it be that you don’t have any sad thoughts?”

“I don’t, Granddad Wood.”

“Does that mean you don’t understand why the adults of our family line are gloomy?”

“I do understand, Granddad Wood. They’re gloomy because the cold glacier is advancing. Many plants are dying from the cold. The people from various settlements have had to leave their family spaces⁸. And no one knows where they’ll have to go and how long they’ll have to walk.”

“That’s correct...” Wood said pensively. And, somewhat astonished, he asked his great-granddaughter, “But, what, aren’t you sad to take leave of our family space, Anastochka?”

“I’m not sad, Granddad Wood. As soon as that sad, leave-taking thought came up, I immediately rejected it, and now I don’t have it in me any more,” Anasta said, jabbering away again light-heartedly and bobbing up and down on the mammoth’s trunk. It was as if the mammoth walking alongside Wood understood he needed to carry the little girl alongside her great-grandfather and give them the chance to spend

⁸ **Translator’s note:**

The Russian phrase here is “родное пространство” (transliterated “rodnoe prostranstvo” and pronounced “rahd-NOH-yuh prah-STRAHNST-vuh”). The first word has the same root as the first word in the phrase “родовое поместье” (transliterated “rodovoe pomest’e” and pronounced “ruhd-ah-VOH-yuh pah-MYEST-yeh”), which I have translated throughout as “family homestead,” and the second word, meaning “space” or “area,” occurs throughout the “Ringing Cedars of Russia” series in the phrase “пространство любви” (transliterated “prostranstvo lyubvi” and pronounced “prah-STRAHNST-vuh lyoob-VEE”) which means “space of love.” As such, the phrase “family space” brings together the two ideas of the family homestead and the space of love.

time with each other.

Wood was both astonished and intrigued by his great-granddaughter's answer. What mysterious method she had managed to use to cope with the sad thoughts? And he asked:

"Anastochka, can you tell me how you managed to reject the sad thoughts, what method you used?"

"A very simple method, Granddad Wood. I decided to remain with my family space."

"Remain? You decided to? But you didn't remain. After all, you're leaving it behind, along with everyone, Anastochka."

"For the moment, I happen to be leaving it behind. I'm accompanying everyone on their journey to a far-off land. But as soon as we come up onto that rise, the one you can see in the distance, it will be noon, and I'll need to be heading off back. I'll be back on my motherland by evening. The morning will dawn and it will rejoice at seeing me. I'm already rejoicing right now myself. I can just imagine how much my motherland will rejoice at seeing me."

Wood didn't respond to his great-granddaughter's words with alarm. He figured she had been joking or was just imagining going back in order to drive the sad thoughts off. Deciding to play along with the nimble-witted little girl, he said:

"Yes, the entire space will rejoice at seeing you, but what will you do there all alone?"

"First of all, I'll make up a hill of dirt and grass around my flower bed," Anasta replied, jabbering away, "and the little hill won't allow the cold glacier wind to blow on my beloved little flower. I need to be right alongside that little flower when it blossoms. If nobody's there next to it, the little flower will get very sad."

"What did I bloom for?" it will think. "What for, if no one is going to rejoice at my beauty?" But I'll be right there and I'll rejoice."

"The little flower will stop blooming, Anastochka and there will cold spells, the like of which we've never before seen. Many plants won't be able to bloom in the cold. A huge glacier is advancing upon our family space," Wood said, as if musing to himself as he ascended the rise Anasta had mentioned. "Yes, a glacier is advancing."

"I'll stop the glacier, Granddad Wood," the little girl suddenly blurted out, jumping off the mammoth's trunk and enthusiastically jabbering on. "I still don't know how, but I'll definitely stop it. Something there, on my motherland, will give me a hint about how to stop it. I feel it. I feel it ever so strongly. Something will give me a hint, and I'll be able to do it."

“There’s a hint, there, on my motherland. It’s there, but everyone has left. No one thought of the hint. And no there’s no one the hint can hint to. Everyone thought about how to leave, where to go to get away from the cold. But no one wanted to give it some thought together with the hint and think about how to push the glacier aside. And you yourself said it so often at our gatherings, Granddad Wood, that we have to think.”

Wood froze in his tracks. The caravan leader stood still, too, and the others who had been following behind the mammoth also stopped.

The gray-haired head of the family line looked intently at his great-granddaughter, saying nothing.

What Wood did a minute later – he was never able to explain that later, not to himself, and certainly not to the others. He signaled to the people who were walking along the sides of the mammoth caravan to keep moving forward. But to Anasta he said:

“The last one in the caravan is a mammoth that’s limping, the son of the caravan leader. You know him, and he obeys you better than all the others. Take him with you, Anasta, and when it gets very cold, you can follow in our tracks on him and catch up to us.”

“Thank you, Granddad Wood,” the little girl cried joyfully. She grabbed him around the legs, snuggling up against him. “Thank you!”

“How am I supposed to tell your mama and papa, your parents, what you’re up to?”

“I’ll let them know myself once I get back home. There’s no need to say anything right now. Goodbye, Granddad Wood.”

Anasta skipped along off to the last mammoth at the end of the caravan, and Wood followed his great-granddaughter’s receding figure with his glance, as if what was happening hadn’t quite sunk in yet. He continued on his path, and for some time there were no thoughts at all in his head. Only a few hours later did Wood ask himself, “Why did I give my consent? ‘We have to think.’ ‘No one thought about how to stop it.’ No one. She was the only one. Then he said, out loud now, “I did the right thing.”

DUN THE MAMMOTH

The huge mammoth Dun⁹ was walking at the end of the caravan, limping slightly. In his build and his strength, He resembled his father, the leader of the mammoths.

When he was still just a young little mammoth, a boulder fell from the mountain and fractured his leg. The people tied sticks to the animal's leg with ropes so the bone would knit properly. Dun had to spend many days lying on his own. It was at that point that a touching friendship started up between the mammoth, three-year-old Anasta and the kitten the little girl would bring along with her.

Little Anasta would often visit the mammoth as he lay there with the bandaged leg and bring him treats and talk to him tenderly. She'd taught the kitten to chase annoying bugs and flies away from the mammoth lying on the grass, and she'd place the kitten on his hip.

But the main thing she did was to talk to the two of them and instruct them, the way grown-ups instruct their children.

After she'd seated the kitten atop the mammoth, Anasta would stand before them and point at the sky with her finger, direct her gaze upward and utter the words "sky," "clouds" and "sun," and then she'd kneel down and stroke the grass with her hand and tenderly utter the words "the nice green grass" and "the little flower has a scent."

The mammoth and the kitten would intently watch what the little girl did, and after a few days, during which she would regularly repeat her lessons, something astonishing happened. When Anasta uttered the words "sky" and "clouds," the baby mammoth – and then the kitten, too – directed their eyes toward the sky. Upon hearing the word "grass," they glanced at the grass. And upon hearing the words "the little flower has a scent," the kitten hopped to the ground and began sniffing the little flower, the way the little girl had done.

Anasta continued her lessons with the animals even after the mammoth had recovered. The little girl liked telling her four-legged friends about the meaning of each new word she learned from the grown-ups. And the young mammoth and the kitten liked the attention the kind little girl gave them. Like well-disciplined pupils, they would come to Anasta's flower bed at noon. The little girl would usually show up at

⁹ **Translator's note:**

The Russian original is "Дан" (transliterated "Dan" and pronounced "Dahn"). This name, although similar to the Russian name Daniil, also has other layers of meaning, including the root expressing the meaning of something given or granted.

that time, too, and she'd give her charges their next lesson. If she didn't show up for some reason, the four-legged pupils would sit waiting for their friend and teacher for hours at a time or else head off to look for her.

When Anasta turned six, Dun the mammoth, who'd also gotten bigger, was pretty much the same as the grown-ups on the outside, but his behavior differed noticeably from the other mammoths'.

Wood, Anasta's great-grandfather and the head of the family line, was the first to notice that Dun the mammoth could understand human speech. It was the following event that preceded his conclusion.

Wood was sitting in the shade of a broad tree and weaving a wicker basket for berries. Anasta would often spend time with her great-grandfather. She liked to listen to his stories and be part of all he did, and so she was right alongside him this time, too. His chatty great-granddaughter was quickly and animatedly telling him her thoughts on collecting berries, and she told him he had to make the basket pretty, because then the berries collected in it would be tasty.

Right then Wood noticed that Dun the mammoth, who was standing ten steps away from them, was looking intently at Anasta and listening to what she was saying, as if he understood the meaning of the words and the sense of his great-granddaughter's speech. "He must like the intonation of the little girl's voice and the energy coming from her," Wood thought. Noticing that there was almost no water left in the trough where the twigs for weaving the basket were soaking, Wood asked Anasta to fetch a little water from the nearby spring. But his ever-obedient and diligent great-granddaughter didn't rush to fulfill Wood's request. She just turned in the mammoth's direction and quickly told him, "Dun, fetch a little water from the spring." And then, as if nothing out of the ordinary had happened, she continued her animated story about the berries and the basket.

The mammoth slowly turned around and steadily took one step and then another in the direction of the spring. Then Anasta said one more phrase. "Get a move on, Dun." And the huge mammoth began to run.

Wood understood that unlike the other mammoths, Dun wasn't simply carrying out certain commands. Rather, he could understand human speech far better than the other animals – he understood the meaning of the words and, what's more, he understood the meaning of whole sentences.

The mammoth brought a little water in his trunk and, at the little girl's direction, emptied it into the trough with the twigs.

"Thank you," Anasta said, praising the mammoth, and she added, "Don't forget to water our flower garden this evening. But for now, go to the woods and have some lunch. You can see I'm busy." The mammoth answered the little girl with a nod of his head and headed for the woods.

“What are the limits of the animal kingdom’s ability to serve man?” Wood thought. “To what extent can man direct it? Now, people thought up the wheel and everyone was so delighted by the invention and began looking for different ways of using it. But living creatures, who have already been thought up and are far more advanced than the wheel – we’ve stopped studying them entirely. Is our race doing the right thing? Where might man’s ignorance of the capabilities and life’s purpose of the varied nature around him lead?”

That’s what Wood was reflecting on, and these thoughts made his heart uneasy.

DON'T SURRENDER, MOTHERLAND! I'M WITH YOU!

Seeing Anasta running toward him, Dun joyfully bobbed his head, flapped his ears and halted. The huge mammoth stretched his trunk out toward the little girl and lightly touched the little girl's shoulder with its tip. She took hold of the tip of the trunk, pressed her cheek to it and tenderly stroked it. Then she gave the order, "Follow me!" and ran hopping off back in the direction of the family space they had left.

The mammoth hastily turned around and ran after Anasta. When Anasta grew tired, she gestured to the mammoth to stop and scrambled up his trunk and onto his head. When she'd made her way up onto Dan's back, she saw the kitten there, too. He had long since grown into an adult cat, but had still retained his nickname of "Kitten." He started rubbing against the little girl's leg and purring, expressing his joy and devotion.

The three of them made their way to the abandoned family space by late evening. Anasta sent Dun off to pasture, went into her little clay house, made her way in the darkness to her sleeping spot with the aromatic hay, lay down on it and immediately fell asleep.

Anasta was up with the dawn. She ran out of her little home and, blinking and spreading her arms wide, she offered her body up to the tender, warm rays. After taking this sunbath, the little girl ran to the stream and, taking a running jump, went with a splash into the little creek with its clear water.

The cold spring water burned Anasta's body, but she splashed and laughed in delight. Then, after making her way out of the water, hopping and spinning around on the shore, as if she had no idea where to go and how to use the unusual energy that had filled her, she ran up onto a small hill.

A cold wind was blowing. The little girl tied her shawl around her waist and threw its free end over her shoulder. She looked silently at the land where her family line had lived so very recently.

The family space, where once the sounds of the voices of a great many birds and the chirping and buzzing of insects had unceasingly been heard, was now keeping some kind of fateful silence. Here and there the grass shone white from the chill of the night. The trees and bushes in the gardens weren't blooming. Their little leaves were curled, as if in despair.

And the family space, shrouded in the oppressive silence, with its withering but

still living natural diversity, attended to the little girl with incomprehension. And all of a sudden, everything all around shuddered, when... A cry of desperate and confident joy pierced the oppressive silence like a warm ray of light:

“He-e-ey! He-e-e-ey!” Anasta shouted, in defiance of the oppressive silence. “Don’t surrender, Motherland! I am Anasta, Motherland. I am with you.”

She ran down from the hill and dashed to her flower bed, touching the tree trunks with her hands as she ran and stroking the little leaves of the bushes.

“He-e-ey!” she cried out once more, running around the trunk of a big, old apple tree with shriveled leaves.

The little girl’s thin, high and joyful little voice was conquering the silence that had been oppressing the family space. And suddenly another voice joined hers, a powerful, low bass – Dun the mammoth was running from the pasture at Anasta’s cry. Running and trumpeting for all he was worth as he went.

And next to the little girl you could also hear a loud, incessant “Meow, meow” – it was the cat with the nickname “Kitten,” meowing in support of Anasta.

Anasta stopped at the flower bed that she herself tended, the way all the children in the settlement each tended their own flower beds.

The grass on one edge of the flower bed had turned gray, and the flowers had dropped, and only one still unopened bud remained on the little girl’s favorite flower. It was drooping toward the ground as if it had thought the better of blooming. But the sight of the drooping bud didn’t make the little girl sad. She was looking at it and smiling. She wasn’t sad, because she was imagining her favorite flower not drooping, but abloom in all its beauty.

Squatting down before the flower that had been getting ready to wilt, she quietly and tenderly called out to it:

“Hey, little flower, I’m here. Wake up.”

Then she held her index finger in her mouth, then raised it, to determine from which side the cold wind was blowing on the flower. Having determined the direction of the flow of glacial air, she lay down on her side on that side of the flower, in an attempt to block the path of the cold air with her own body. Even so, the cold currents still enveloped the flower’s small body and stung its little leaves, preventing them from straightening up. Suddenly the cold streams of air stopped and Anasta felt the opposite – she felt warmth on her back. She turned – Dun the mammoth had flopped down on his side and shielded Anasta and her entire flower bed from the cold with his own body.

“Good for you, Dun! You smart thing!” Anasta exclaimed.

Latching onto his fur, she scrambled up onto the mammoth's back and, turning to face the wind that was blowing from the direction of the glacier, she joyfully and victoriously shouted out her "He-e-ey!" The cold wind blew even more strongly. Then, after thinking a bit, the little girl turned in the opposite direction and shouted out a summons and waved her arms, as if inviting someone invisible to come. The mammoth raised his trunk up high and trumpeted a summons, too. Kitten began meowing, calling.

The cold wind quieted down, but some time later it started up again, only now it was blowing from the other side, and it was caressing the flower and the mammoth and the little girl and the cat standing on his back with warm currents.

The singing of the few remaining birds greeted the life-giving streams of air.

For several days, Anasta fought against the cold wind blowing from the direction of the glacier; again and again, she would run to her flower as soon as the wind started up. And each time, the mammoth would lie down next to the flower bed, as had become his habit, blocking the cold's path.

Then the day came when the rejuvenated flower bloomed. Running up to the mound of earth, Anasta got down on her knees before the flower and kissed the orangey-red petals, touching them lightly with her lips. Then she took two steps to the side and admired the beautiful miracle and the extraordinary, beautiful creation – her flower.

Since she couldn't stay standing in one spot, due to the exuberant energy that had surged up from somewhere inside her, Anasta at first hopped up and down in place, and then her hops morphed into an unusual, improvised and rousing dance. Even Dun the mammoth was trying to dance along, shifting from one leg to another. Kitten was spinning around, now flopping down on his back, now jumping up again. And the living flower was waving its orangey-red petals at them in the warm breeze.

And then Anasta stopped. She'd caught sight of two youths standing on the mountain.

THE BROTHERS OPPOSITE

Both youths were of the same height and athletic build. In outward appearance, they looked a great deal like each other, differing only in the color of their hair and eyes. One was Light-haired and Blue-eyed, the other Black-eyed and Dark-haired.

The youths stayed where they were for a while, as if giving Anasta the chance to get used to their unexpected appearance. Then, at a leisurely pace, they approached the little girl.

“Hello, little girl!” Dark-haired said, addressing her. “You need to act more quickly, little girl. You sensed intuitively that you will be able to stop the glacier, that you have within you powers capable of changing God’s program. Now, that’s impossible, of course. But you will continue seeking these powers within you. And I will learn more about Man than I currently know. I’m prepared to tell you about the world order and answer any question you might have, little girl. Only you need to act as fast as you can.”

Anasta had no time to answer: the second youth began to speak:

“Hello, Anasta. You’re pretty and sharp, you’re splendid, just like many other marvelous creations on the great planet Earth. My brother knows much about the world order, but you should, I think, listen to yourself above all others.”

Anasta finally managed to greet the youths: “A good day and good, light thoughts to you.”

“Hold on,” Dark-haired said, interrupting Anasta. “That’s just the way it always is. It even makes me sick to hear those idiotic, thoughtless memorized words. There are two of us here. I’m dark, so why do people wish me light thoughts?”

“I’m dark, and my thoughts are dark and hostile. That’s the way I am, and that’s my life’s purpose within God’s program!” Dark-haired was growing more and more angry. “If I’m some kind of light little sniveling fool, a light thinker, then I won’t be me. Poof— and there won’t be anything left of me. You get it, little girl? All that will be left in front of you is one light little simpleton. There are two of us! You get it, little girl? And you shouldn’t only speak about what’s light. Take your thoughts back, if that’s what was behind your words, if your words weren’t just memorized parrot sounds.”

“If my greeting has offended you, then I will change it and will say to you a simple, ‘Hello,’” Anasta replied.

“Now, that’s more like it. ‘Cause otherwise, you and your light...”

“Who are you?” Anasta inquired. “What family line are you from? I’ve never seen you before.”

“Of course, you haven’t. No one has ever seen us. But our manifestations are present in all human doings, in every moment,” the dark youth told her quickly. “Yes, in each and every one. Now, of course, there are more of my manifestations – they are awesome. Almost all of humanity lives from disaster to disaster, dominated by my energies.”

“Stop, my dark and talented brother,” said the light-haired one. “After all, we didn’t even introduce ourselves.” And, turning to the little girl, he went on: “Anastochka, try to understand what I say. Between the two of us, my brother and I make up the two complexes of Universal energies. The entire immense space of the Universe is filled with energy entities. When God created Man, He took an equal amount of energy from each of the entities, brought them into inner balance in some unknown way, and gave them to the person He had created. Out of everything, He created a person with inner balance.

“When this happened, we all understood that Man must emerge as the strongest entity in the Universe. That’s why he’s not called an entity, but Man. But where his strength lies, what his capabilities are and whether they are limited – that is unknown. And *when* it, this strength, will fully manifest – this has, up to the present day, been known to no one in the entire Universe. Not even to us, despite the fact that we and our separate energies are present everywhere. We are always invisible. We always fill up space. We’re present in the water, and in every living wild animal and every little worm. And the energies of the Universe – each and every one of them – exist within each person.”

“You say you’re invisible,” Anasta said, astonished, “but you know, I can see you!”

“Yes, you see us, because we solidified the air, solidified it so as to exhibit the kind of bodies you’re used to. The clouds up there in the sky, for example – you know they’re solidified air vapors, too. You get whimsical shapes when they solidify: sometimes you get ones that look like wild animals, sometimes ones that look like a human face or body. And in many ways the human body is made up of water that’s been solidified to different degrees. It must be the case that the Creator alone knows the meaning and ratios of the various solidifications of the human body. Our bodies resemble human bodies only on the outside. My dark-haired brother represents all the dark entities, while I represent all the light ones.”

“But why did you exhibit this solidification in the form of the human body?” Anasta asked.

“So you wouldn’t be frightened when you heard our voices, so you wouldn’t

expend the energy of your thoughts on trying to guess where the sound was coming from,” Light-haired answered.

“But what did you want to talk with me for?”

“You set out in defiance of the elements, or, to be more precise, in opposition to a planetary disaster. You set out on your own, confident that you’d be able to prevent it. We are certain that this is impossible to do. God’s program includes provisions for a disaster, should mankind follow a ruinous path. That has happened, more than once. And we wouldn’t have paid any attention to your efforts. It’s just that all the Universal entities shuddered when the flower on your mound of earth bloomed. It bloomed, even though according to the Creator’s program, it should have died. But it bloomed.”

“The flower bloomed thanks to the mammoth who shielded it from the cold breeze.”

“The mammoth is but one link in the chain of events that you constructed.”

“I didn’t construct anything.”

“Your thought did the constructing, Anastochka.”

“So does that mean your particles are inside me, too?” Anasta asked thoughtfully. “But I can’t feel them at all.”

“A person doesn’t feel us, especially when he manages to balance our particles within him. When they are in balance, a third energy appears. And this third is found solely in the Universal entity that is Man. It appears when *we* are in complete balance and it, this new energy, is all-powerful. It’s capable of creating new worlds. No secrets exist for it. This kind of person becomes a master of the Universe, a creator, and no one can even imagine his creations. They can be magnificent and unfathomable.”

“Your particles are probably not at all balanced in me, since I can’t stop the glacier,” Anasta said with a sigh. “The flower bloomed, but everything around it in our family space is withering and dying.”

“Anastochka, you are on the path to unity. You can attain it in the next moment or in three millennia. It’s for this reason that the Universal energies will strive to help you, so that they can learn Man’s great secret and their own future fate as well.”

“What you said about the extraordinary power hidden in the unity of the opposites is so interesting. But if you know about this extraordinary power, why don’t the two of you just agree to unite?”

The two brothers exchanged glances and cast their gaze over Anasta’s family space. Then they began looking in different directions. They were slow to answer, as if at that moment they themselves were looking for the right words to explain it. The little girl waited patiently.

Finally Light-haired answered.

WHAT IS YOUR LIFE'S PROGRAM?

“That’s impossible. My brother and I have different tasks,” Light-haired said. “Everybody has his own program. And nonetheless, only in Man can we, by each carrying out our personal program, also work on the overall plan and become particles of the new energy that’s found only in Man.”

“But how in the world can you each work on something different, something opposite, and at the same time contribute to the overall good?” Anasta inquired incredulously.

“We can, by continually outpacing each other by just a little bit. When you start walking, Anastushka, one of your little legs shoots out ahead, leaving the other behind. Then the one that’s lagged behind suddenly shoots out ahead. It’s like the legs are competing against each other. And in the end, together, by complying with the body’s thoughts, they move it forward.”

Dark-haired entered the conversation: “Now that’s some example you gave. You even cracked me up,” he said, interrupting his brother. “If you’re going to imagine us as two little legs, then you’re a really short one, and I’m super long. I take a step, and the body goes right up over mountains, but you just loaf around, pretending to move. I’m leading mankind to a planetary disaster for the fifth time now, as part of carrying out my own program. And if the Creator’s thought regenerates it all over again, it doesn’t matter – Bam! I’ll hit it all over again with a planetary disaster, so it won’t get out of line.”

“Yes, you’re talented, my dear brother. You really have led the life of the whole planet to the brink of a global disaster. But your disasters don’t bring you any discoveries, any new knowledge, and they don’t add to your powers. But they do always give Man new knowledge. And mankind regenerates all over again.”

“But before they do, they perish in hellish agony, along with all their knowledge.”

“You and I, Brother, we don’t know the Creator’s program. Perhaps one day it will happen that mankind will prevent a disaster – an instant before it happens – and at that point an aspiration unknown to you and me will illuminate its thought.”

“I’m sick of your light little dreamiekinses, my light little snotty-nosed brother. You listen to me, little girl, not him,” the dark-haired youth said, addressing Anasta. “I, little girl, will show you all my power in a form you can understand. My light little one there got a thing or two right. Human thought really is a huge energy, equal to mine in

size, and way bigger than his. Each person, if he makes use of this energy properly, really is capable of making the world different.

“But there’s another unseen energy-thought, too – collective thought. That’s when a great many of separate people’s thoughts come together into a unified whole. If all mankind’s thoughts came together into a unified whole and you got a mankind-wide thought – my brother and I would be like ants compared to it.

“But I’ve learned how to prevent collective thought from arising. I’m the one who tosses various philosophical lines of reasoning and concepts out to mankind. And what you end up with is one billion people collectively thinking one way, and another billion thinking a different way, and that way they repudiate the first group. I, little girl, am the incarnation of all the dark powers of the Universe, and if you join forces with me, we will become a force second to none. I have a secret plan. You’ll get what it’s all about, and you’ll help me.

“Together we’ll turn all people into our playthings. We’ll play with their minds. I’ll make you mankind’s mistress, and one day you will tell me...”

“I don’t like that plan,” Anasta replied, and added, “I will never take part in it, and I don’t think any other people would agree, either.”

“You won’t take part? You, little girl, just don’t know yet, what an amusing game it is – making people think what you want them to.

“And don’t be so quick to say that people won’t follow my program. The wheel has already been invented – it’s primitive, so far, but then people will put two wooden wheels together with a pole, and that’s in line with my plan, my ingenious program.”

“But what’s so bad about a wheel? When we had to haul food to the injured mammoth Dun, a little wheeled cart helped us do that.”

“It’s all good, little girl. Just great, even. This wheel will be perfected. A great many wheels will be made. And people will see that it’s difficult to roll a wheel over the natural terrain, across hillocks and pot holes, through tall grass. And then they’ll cover a huge portion of the earth over with a stone shell, so the wheels will be able to roll along it unobstructed.

“And, growing more and more numerous, they will roll along over the groaning earth, carrying some people atop them and ruthlessly crushing others beneath them.

“You, little girl – try to find an answer yourself: what can be more powerful than the power which can send people to their ruin? But you won’t be able to find an answer within you, so go ahead and acknowledge my greatness.”

Anasta pondered the question, but couldn’t find an answer within her. She looked once more at the light-haired youth. In response to the little girl’s silent question, Light-haired replied:

“Anastochka, my brother has painted a sad picture for you. That’s his task, and he’s carrying it out in good conscience. I can see the question in your eyes: do I have a program, too? I do, and I also want to appeal to you to take part in my program.”

“So what does your program want?”

“To try to comprehend the Creator’s great creation: Man. To understand the greatness of His future achievements.”

“But hasn’t everything on Earth already been created?” Anasta asked, astonished.

“The fact of the matter is, Anastochka... You see before you a beautiful blooming flower. Each plant or animal is perfected in and of itself, but at the same time they are all interconnected, too. It seems that the Creator has created a miraculous, harmonious and perfected earthly world. But that doesn’t mean that this world can’t be perfected even more.

“We can view the Creator’s creations as simply the rough material for a more perfected creation: for creating a beautiful and perfected way of life never before seen or imagined by anyone.”

“But who can be more perfect than perfection itself?” Anasta asked in amazement.

“Those who issue forth from it: the Great parent’s son and daughter. For example, you, Anastochka.”

“Me? But I can’t imagine how you could possibly alter what’s already been created. I, for example, have no desire whatsoever to alter the little flower that bloomed in my flower bed, even the tiniest bit. I even think that we *shouldn’t* alter it, not under any circumstances, so that we don’t spoil its perfection. And why alter Kitten? Or how could you perfect, say, Dun the mammoth? By altering his trunk, or his ears? By altering it how? And what for?”

“But see here, Anastochka, you altered Dun the mammoth.”

“No, I never altered him,” she objected in amazement.

“It’s true – you didn’t alter him on the outside, but your mammoth Dun carries out far more human instructions than all the other mammoths who have ever lived on Earth, and Dun’s understanding of what he’s instructed to do is qualitatively different. You’ll see that immediately if you compare him with your other mammoths, the ones that look similar.”

“Yes, now I get it. I think he’s smarter than all the other ones. It’s just that before, I somehow didn’t give it any thought.”

“There, you see? Not only the external form and build are significant. What’s inside and the life’s purpose are more important. And you were the very one who created and determined what’s inside of Dun, and a life’s purpose for him. And Dun the mammoth, who on the outside doesn’t look at all different from other mammoths created by the great Creator, is different nonetheless. Now he is a joint creation – the Creator’s and yours. And we don’t know who he belongs more to. After all, it isn’t only that Dun the mammoth can carry out a larger number of commands that are essential in every day human life. He’s grown more intelligent, loyal and responsive. Do you recall how one day you fell asleep on the dry grass beneath a tall, tall tree, and when you woke up, you saw Dun the mammoth standing above you, not moving a muscle? You got angry – there was some really unpleasant smell coming from him, as if he’d gotten smeared with some foul thing and had come on purpose to disturb your sleep with this unpleasant smell. You got up and set off walking toward your home across the wet grass, but before you did, you said to Dun the mammoth in a dissatisfied tone, ‘Dun, you’re forever straggling off from the herd. Now you’ve started coming here of your own accord, even when no one’s calling you. Go on off to your pasture, to your brothers.’

“You went away, walking barefoot through the wet grass, without looking back even once. Anastochka, do you remember that the grass was wet?”

“Yes.”

“And do you know why Dun the mammoth smelled so unpleasant?”

“No.”

“When you fell asleep, a thunderstorm began. Not only people, but animals, too, know that lightning most often strikes tall trees. Dun saw you fall asleep, and when the thunderstorm began, he got all agitated and came over to you, leaving his herd. He didn’t wake you up. He just stood over you, shielding you from the rain. Some lightning hit the tree you were sleeping under. One branch caught fire and began to fall. It would have fallen on you, but Dun the mammoth managed to cast it aside with his trunk. Then a second branch caught fire, and Dun cast that one off, too, but not before the fire had scorched the fur on the mammoth’s head, and it began to smolder, giving off an unpleasant smell. The scorched spot was unbearably painful, but Dun stood above you without moving a muscle, while you slept. And when you left after rebuking him for being a pest, he couldn’t even bring himself to take offense, and he forgot about the pain. He was overjoyed that you hadn’t been harmed, and later, when tending to his burn, he thought of you with tenderness.”

Anasta jumped to her feet and ran to the mammoth, who was standing a short distance away. He nodded joyfully. Anasta took hold of the tip of his trunk, patted it with her hand, pressed her cheek to it then kissed it. The mammoth froze. He kept standing that way, motionlessly, his eyes scrunched up, even after the little girl had walked away from him and gone back to the light-haired youth.

“I get it,” Anasta said to Light-haired. “Dun the mammoth has been remodeled. Maybe it happened all on its own, or maybe I helped him in some way. He *does* differ from the mammoths who were just created by the Creator.

“Does that mean Man’s been given that right – the right to remodel?”

“Yes, he’s been given that,” Light-haired answered. “So now think about this: in accordance with which program?”

“In accordance with the good one.”

“So go ahead and define it. Choose. Create.”

“Do you mean that the One who created everything on Earth didn’t create any one program that Man has to live by?”

“I think that He presented Man with a great many options to choose from, but that He himself dreamt only of one thing.”

“What?”

“Only Man can find an answer to that.”

“But where should we look for it?”

“Inside you. By mentally imagining, analyzing and comparing various options for arranging life on Earth.”

“Do you mean people live on Earth, but know nothing of the Creator’s program?”

“People have been given great knowledge about using biological resources for development, but people possess various types of freedom, including the freedom to replace biological resources with technocratic ones. It’s up to them to decide whether to use their inner resources deep down inside them – those, say, of a living tree that grows and senses biological rhythms and, by adjusting to them, regulates its own state depending on the surrounding conditions – or the exterior, superficial resources of a dead tree. When people step onto the technocratic path of development, they use the superficial resources – they fashion this or that implement out of wood and use it for fuel or for building material.

“For some reason, people always choose the technocratic path. But it inevitably leads them to disaster. That’s happened more than once. After all, all planetary disasters are created by people’s thoughts. Thoughts that are followed by actions.”

“But the glacier that forced my family line to leave its home – no people created that.”

“Your family line, Anastochka, has already set foot on the technocratic path.

And in accordance with the program of life, the glacier will overtake it and bring it to ruin. But life will rise anew. A new hope for human intelligence will appear. If someone stops the glacier, and only a person can do that, your family line will live in a technocratic world. And sooner or later the technocratic path will all the same lead it to disaster. True, if a person finds a way to stop the glacier – meaning, a way to avert one disaster – then in all likelihood, he'll be able to avert the one after it, too. A short while before the next one, he'll be able to illuminate people's souls with an understanding of where they went wrong in their choices, and avert the disaster. Then mankind will be able to choose a new path and gradually and carefully dismantle his lethal inventions. But illuminating the souls of people of the technocratic world is an uphill battle.

“During a technocratic period of life, people cease to be intelligent beings. It's necessary to appeal not to their minds, but to their feelings and, through their feelings, to inform them about the essence of the Divine program, and in order to do this, one has to sense and comprehend it for oneself.”

“But haven't you already comprehended it?”

“Not entirely. Really, I think it's impossible to completely grasp it in the way that one can completely comprehend my brother's programs. It's impossible to completely comprehend it. Completion is cessation of motion. In addition, I see no limit to how much you can perfect, say, your mammoth.”

“What about other wild animals?”

“Others, too. You know full well, Anastochka, that all animal offspring adopt their parents' habits and skills. That means that each new generation will be a bit more perfected than the previous one, and if Man correctly determines all wild animals' life purposes, if each subsequent generation continues perfecting the animal world around it – a world that will free man from all every day concerns – then in the very same way, human thought will be freed up for more important achievements.”

“That probably is what can happen, if you're speaking about wild animals. But now, I wouldn't ever take it into my head to try to perfect the little flower – it's very, very perfected.”

“I think so, too, Anastochka. Even so, your beautiful little flower is but the paint that the Creator has presented to his daughter for her future creations.”

“But why paint? After all, the little flower is a living thing.”

“Yes, certainly, it's a living thing and self-contained, and at the same time it can be no more than a tiny particle of the living picture that is great in its beauty.

“Take a look at your flower bed. What looks most beautiful in it is your favorite flower. But if you plant two or three more of the very same flower in it, the way the flower bed looks will change. Then you can plant other pretty flowers, ones that don't

look like these, and the way the flower bed looks will change once again.

“Then you can perfect the living picture by arranging the various flowers in a different order. There’s no limit to the perfection. It is in accordance with the Creator’s program to move toward it.”

“Does that mean that Man was created in order to make everything around him lovelier and lovelier? In order to perfect the world the Creator gave him? Is that Man’s main life’s purpose?”

“To create glorious living pictures, to comprehend and perfect the animal world – of course, that is an important life’s purpose for Man. But I see the main one as something different.”

“As what?”

“As Man perfects the Divine world order, he himself will necessarily become more and more perfected, and there is no limit to be seen to this phenomenon. Great resources will open up before him.”

“But why will he be more perfected? I mean, no one’s going to be instructing Man while all this is going on.”

“You, Anastochka, created a lovely flower bed and your experience helped you understand how to do that. You’ll try to make your creation next year even better. And you’ll do so, using your previous experience and feelings. That means that by creating the first time, you gained experience, knowledge and sensations that enable you to create something more perfected. And that means that your creation itself is instructing you.

“Creation in divine, living nature perfects the creator.

“And there is no end in sight to the heights such great creation can reach– there is eternity.”

“I really want to live in a marvelous world like that, where everything can be perfected eternally, where the creator will perfect his creations and the creations will perfect their creator. I want my papa and mama, my brothers and Grandfather Wood and our entire family line to live in that world.” Anasta smiled, and her eyes shone. “I must stop the glacier. How do I do it? How?”

“Human thought is the most powerful energy of the Universe. There is no limit to its potential. It’s important to learn to use it properly. But how to do this, using what means – that is unknown. Only Man has the power to make this great discovery.”

“Most likely, my thought is still quite small and not powerful,” Anasta said sadly, sighing. “I want the glacier to stop, but it’s coming closer and closer, and it’s growing colder and colder every day. That means my thought is small.

“If Dun the mammoth knew how to think about the glacier... He has a big head, and that means the thought in it might be big and powerful.”

Anasta ran up to the mammoth and, slapping her palm against the trunk he extended to her in greeting, she said, excited:

“You’re so big, Dun, and you have a big head. That means it might contain a big thought. Think your thought, Dun. Stop the glacier. Because otherwise all you do is listen and listen. At the very least, take a walk over to the pasture, Dun – there’s less and less food for you all the time there.”

Dun the mammoth stroked the little girl’s cheek and hair with the tip of his trunk, slowly turned around and began walking off. The cat nicknamed Kitten took a running start, sprang onto the mammoth’s leg and, latching onto his fur, scrambled up onto his back.

“Anastochka, it’s time for you and your charges to flee this place,” the light-haired youth said, addressing the little girl. “There’s already ice on the other side of that mountain there. That isn’t even the main glacier yet, but even it can move the mountain that covers the valley, and carry away the gardens and homes where your family line lived. And it’s causing the temperature to fall with every day. The main glacier will press against this ice and the mountain will slowly begin moving. This will happen a few days from now.”

“I will not flee this place. I have to see it, this ice, and understand why it’s advancing onto our Land. I have to think up a way to stop the glacier. Tomorrow morning I’ll go up on that mountain and I’ll see it.”

Bowing to the little girl and taking his leave of her, the light-haired youth said, “I wish you auspicious and sharp thoughts, Anastochka.” And he addressed his brother, saying, “Let us go, Brother, and remove ourselves from the little girl’s sight. Let’s not bother her. Perhaps she’ll be able to understand and will learn how to control her thought.”

“Come on then, let’s go. Of the two of us, you’re the main hindrance. You got all carried away here, philosophizing and going on and on.”

“Oh, wait! Please wait!” Anasta suddenly said, starting. “Each of you told about his program. That means I must also have a program, but I’ve never ever thought about it. Could it be I don’t have one in me?”

“We’re getting out of your sight, little girl. You get busy thinking. Don’t slack off. You’ve hardly got any time at all left, only two sunrises,” said Dark-haired, without answering the question.

And the youths left.

WHO CONTROLS OUR THOUGHTS?

Anasta was left totally alone. Slowly, she set off walking along the wilted grass of the valley where her family line had so very recently lived, and in the absolute silence that had fallen, she tried to comprehend how she could control her own thought.

If thought was the strongest energy, the little girl reflected, then what could possibly control it, this strongest thing? If this energy-thought exists within me, then what within me could be stronger than it? And why did the most wise elders teach us everything at the gatherings, but say nothing about how you can control your thought? Perhaps they didn't know anything about this either?

The strongest energy remains uncontrolled. First it heads off in one direction, then in another. Even though it's inside me, all the same it's also not mine, if I don't control it in any way. And maybe someone will manage to lure it over to them and play with it, and since it's inside me, then they're playing some kind of game with me, too, but I won't even know about it.

All the way up until dusk, Anasta made efforts to reflect on the power of thought. And when she lay down to sleep, she made an intense effort to think about it.

When she woke up in the morning, Anasta did not see Dun the mammoth next to her little home the way she usually did. He used to always be right there as soon as she woke up, but now he wasn't there. Dun still hadn't shown up by the time Anasta had bathed in the creek, either. She began calling him, shouting in the direction of the pasture, "Dun! Dun!" But, just as before, he didn't show up. Kitten hadn't been next to her that night, either, and he also didn't show up in the morning.

Anasta realized they had left. A mammoth needs a lot of vegetation to eat, and there was less and less of it all the time. That meant Dun had left so he wouldn't die a senseless death, from starvation. And Kitten had gone off with him, too. "But I won't leave," Anasta thought. Tossing a coverlet woven from grass bast around her little shoulders, she resolutely set off for the mountain beyond which the glacier was advancing on the world. Wending her way up the path toward the mountaintop, Anasta once again made an intense effort to comprehend how this strongest energy – human thought – worked. What did she need to do in order to stop the glacier?

When she'd reached the mountaintop, she stood on its peak, wrapping herself in her shawl in the wind. Harsh, bitterly cold air currents tousled her hair, now uncovering the star-shaped birthmark on her forehead, now covering it over again. But the little girl didn't notice the cold air currents. She was taking in what was going on down below, on the far side of the mountain, whose foothills no longer sported any verdure. From

horizon to horizon, as far as the eye could see, there lay ice.

Blocks of ice were heading for the mountain. They were huge, and this wasn't even the main glacier, but merely the first ice cakes that the more powerful ones were pushing along. That meant the mountain didn't stand a chance against the giant masses, Anasta was thinking.

One side of the mountain had already grown cold, and there was no vegetation on it, and the second one would grow cold as well. As if confirming her words, the sound of cracking ice was heard, and a stream of water mixed with ice chips rushed out from beneath the ice, and the ice blocks traveled along the slush, coming closer and closer to the mountain, plowing up the earth before them and pushing along the felled trees.

Anasta directed her gaze to the tallest block of ice and started at what she saw. There stood Dun the mammoth, his head pressed against this giant mountain of ice. Alongside the giant mass of ice, he no longer seemed so big.

Anasta instantly recalled how attentively Dun had listened to her words about the power of thought that is capable of a great deal. She recalled telling him that probably there must be big and powerful thoughts in his big head. And he had understood all of that in his own way. He'd figured that if he were to put his big head with its big thought up against the ice block, then he'd be able to stop it from moving.

Anasta raced from her spot and ran headlong along the path to the foothill of the mountain, to the spot where Dun the mammoth was standing.

The wind, with its biting snowflakes, tore off the little girl's scarf in a violent gust, but she didn't pick it up. She jumped forward onto a rock, stumbled and rolled down, head over heels. And then she got up once more and set off running.

When she'd gotten to Dun's legs, she saw... A small depression had formed in the ice, beneath the mammoth's head. The ice there had melted a tiny bit, and water was running down the mammoth's trunk in thin streams.

The mammoth was trembling from the cold. And down below, at his feet, Anasta saw that Kitten was trembling from the cold. He, his head pressed against the ice like Dun, was attempting to hold back the glacier's movement.

"He-e-ey," Anasta shouted. "He-e-ey!"

But neither the mammoth nor the cat responded to her shout. The little girl scooped up Kitten, who was trembling from the cold, and, cuddling him, began rubbing his little body. When he'd gotten warmed up a little, Anasta made him scramble up on the mammoth's back. Kitten tried with all his strength to do it, but he fell. He was only able to make it up on top on his second attempt.

Anasta stood up on the rock so she'd be as close as possible to the mammoth's

ear, and she whispered to him:

“Dun! My faithful Dun. You are very smart and loyal. You are kind. You know how to think – maybe not entirely correctly, but we’ll fix that. Thought isn’t just in the head – it’s everywhere. Dun, you should go to the other side of the mountain.” The mammoth stood there without moving. Only now and then a shudder would run through his body. And Anasta began whispering once more: “I am Anasta! Do you hear me, Dun? I am Anasta. I won’t leave here without you. Turn and look at me, Dun.”

Dun the mammoth slowly pulled his head back from the block and turned it to the little girl. The thick fur on his forehead was wet, and he had a hard time raising his eyelids and looking at the little girl. Then, he made an effort and raised his trunk and touched its tip to Anasta’s shoulder. His trunk was totally cold. Anasta took it in her hands began rubbing it and blowing on it, as if by doing so she could warm the mammoth’s huge body. And she did actually warm it, not only with the warmth of her breath, but with something warmer and more meaningful as well. And the mammoth obeyed and followed Anasta, who led him by his trunk, as if she were leading him by the hand. Barely putting one foot in front of the other, Dun ascended to the mountaintop. There the exhausted little girl sat down on the trunk of a fallen tree and, pointing to a slope that still remained green, ordered the mammoth to make his way down.

“Dun, go down there. Go to your pasture. You’ll rest up there and get your strength back. And you’ll find some food for yourself there, too.” And she added, sternly, “Go, Dun, go down there.”

The mammoth obeyed and began slowly making his way down along the path to the still green valley. When he’d taken ten or so steps, he turned to Anasta, extended his trunk upward and trumpeted out a summons, the way he’d done when Anasta had run through the valley, asking her Motherland not to give in to the glacier, when she had shouted out her “He-e-ey!” and conquered the silence.

And just like she’d done then, Anasta summoned her strength and shouted out, “He-e-ey!” and waved to Dun as a sendoff for him on his downhill path. And Dun the mammoth made his way slowly down off the mountain, carrying out his mistress’ order. But she...

After a brief rest, Anasta stood up atop the rock and once again cast her gaze over the giant ice masses that had filled the space before her as far as the eye could see, and quietly, but confidently, she uttered the words:

“I am a person! My thought is powerful. I am directing my thought against you, glacier. You must stop and crawl back where you came from. With my thought I command you to do so.”

Down below, the sound of a crack was heard once more, and the ice moved a tiny bit closer to the mountain. A gust of cold air hit the little girl in the chest, as if

trying to knock her off her feet.

“Go back, ice! I command you! Back!” Once again a crack, and once again the glacier advanced toward the little girl.

Anasta said nothing for a short time, gazing at the advancing glacier, and suddenly she smiled.

“I get it. You are feeding on my thought, glacier. I get it. But now you will cease to exist.”

Anasta turned her back on the glacier, sat down on a tree trunk and began looking at her still green valley. But Anasta did not see flowers and grasses that were withering from the cold. Rather, she was imagining the meadows blooming in vibrant color, imagining that snow-white and pink flowers were coming out on the trees, that birds were singing and grasshoppers were chirring in the grass. Imagining Great-grandfather Wood returning to the valley and the entire family line returning along with him. And Anasta was running toward him barefoot through the grass. More and more quickly all the time...

Anasta's thought was speeding up more and more. She had enough time! In the space of a moment, she tenderly stroked a billion blades of grass. And she was able to imagine each one separately, from its root up to its little stem. She was able to send a little ray of sun to each one. Give each one a little drop of rain to drink and caress it with a breeze.

Anasta fell asleep on the rocks near the trunk of a fallen tree. A cold wind blew against her back. But even as the little girl was falling asleep, her thought was at work and speeding up more and more.

Hurling lightning bolts coming from her thought touched everything in the space. Creation awoke. And the new was born in the space, as if Anasta's entire Motherland had risen from a deep sleep. The thought kept working, even when the little girl Anasta fell into a sleep that would last thousands of years.

Her thought – the great human energy – lingered above the valley, caressing the bugs and the blades of grass, Kitten and Dun the mammoth.

The ice blocks shuddered and cracked, but they could move forward any further, not even a millimeter. They were melting. Streams of melted ice skirted the valley and flowed into rivers and lakes.

The glacier was melting, powerless to overcome human thought, the strongest energy of the Universe.

WHAT WILL THESE PEOPLE COME TO?

Torrents of water from the melting glacier formed a large river. Its raging current swept up rocks and fallen trees as it went. It washed off and carried away the fertile topsoil, along with the vegetation and everything living in it. But the family valley that people had been forced to abandon was left untouched by the fearsome stream.

The foliage on the trees in the valley yellowed and fell off, and there was no singing of birds to be heard. But some number of the plants continued fighting for their lives, adapting to the cooling that was unusual for these parts. And, amazingly enough, Anasta's favorite flower still remained in her once very lovely flower bed.

The valley was shielded by the ridge of mountains, atop one of which the little girl Anasta had fallen into a sleep that would last thousands of years.

Two athletic youths, one light-haired and one dark-haired, stood at the foot of the mountain. They were looking at a huge block of granite that extended out over the ground. Drops of water were forcing their way along both sides.

The dark-haired youth spoke with joyful Schadenfreude:

"That's what they get, these people who've lost their sense. Little by little, some time in the next two days, the water will gradually wash away the support around the rock, and it will collapse, opening up a path for the death-dealing torrent to make its way into the valley. The water will rush like a powerful waterfall, tearing off and carrying the mountain rocks away with it, and little by little it will erode the entire mountain and carry it away. Once the torrent that's coming in on the right of the mountain has thrown this giant rock aside, it will rush into the crevice that forms, making it larger and larger, and it will change direction."

"Yes, if this block collapses in the next two days, before the torrent reaches the sloping lands beyond the valley and floods it, thereby lessening the water pressure, then it will rush with all its strength into Anastochka's family valley," the light-haired youth agreed. And he added, "Now I regret having taken form in a human body. Right now we need an animal with a powerful body, to prop up this block."

"Ha, ha, he regrets he's not a powerful animal! Sure, you could have adopted its appearance, but then you would have had to resemble it, too. You wouldn't have been able to speak like a human and realize that the block will soon be carried away by the torrent.

"Yep, what are you jabbering on and on about, with your 'family valley' and

your ‘Anastochka’ ... It’s all the same to her now. Her Soul is soaring in the immense Universe.”

“Soaring. Yes...” Light-haired said, thoughtfully and tenderly. “The thought has been carefully preserved in it, and the dream. Awareness, great knowledge. All the same, she really did manage to stop the glacier. The Daughter of God grasped the power of human thought through her feelings. She altered God’s plan a tiny bit.”

“Exactly – a tiny bit! And how much slobbery tenderness is there in your words? Just a tiny bit, I might add. A tiny bit. And you? ‘She grasped it through her feelings’ and ‘Daughter of God’...” Dark-haired said, mockingly mimicking him. Speaking with abandon, he went on. “The raging torrent will rush into the valley anyway. It’s rushing after the crowd of idiots who don’t even suspect that they themselves – and their thoughts and actions that drew them away from the natural and toward the artificial – are the cause of the disaster. For now, their aspirations are still in the beginning stages, but we know how destructive these aspirations are for them, and for the Earth and for the whole Universe. And so that they don’t suffer, and so that they don’t tear the surface of the Earth to bits, they will be destroyed – in accord with God’s program – at the very beginning stages of the disastrous aspiration. The raging torrent will overcome them. A huge, roaring tidal wave of water, rocks, fallen tree trunks and corpses of the formerly living will make its way unforgivingly toward them.

“At first, when they hear the rumbling behind them, they’ll feel something is wrong and pick up their pace. But the rumbling will grow, and off in the distance they’ll see a huge wall moving toward them, bringing death. For them it will signify the Flood. They will all be gripped by terror – their mammoth-elephants, their kittens, their children and their old folk. And their Souls will fly up into the Universe, retaining within them only the horrors.”

With a kind of venomous passion Dark-haired began using facial expressions and gestures to portray these people who had been gripped by terror. Mothers, pressing their infants to their breast, people who had knelt down with their hands stretched out to the heavens, feverishly praying for mercy. Others, running with their last ounce of strength and shouting. Dark-haired began running around in a circle, wailing, showing terror on his face. Then he stopped, glancing in the direction of the people who were leaving, and said:

“My pale-faced brother, do you get it? Do you get what kind of unavoidable destiny will overcome these people? And so, that little girlie, asleep on the mountain, didn’t change God’s program in any substantial way.”

“The way you’ve modeled the human future is not to my liking, Brother. We, Universal entities, can probably take some action. It’s not our business to remain indifferent. When we’re indifferent, then we do not exist.”

“What does the future care about your ‘to my liking’, ‘not to my liking’, if it’s unavoidable?” Dark-haired sneered.

Without waiting to hear his brother's answer, he turned sharply and saw... His light-haired brother had gone to stand beneath the granite block and all on his own, with his shoulders and arms, propped it up. The stream of water flowing along the edges of the block became significantly smaller.

"Idiotic, senseless and irrational," Dark-haired said after a brief pause. Then he was silent a bit longer, as if deliberating about something, and then he began shaming his brother with new-found strength, attempting to prove the senselessness of his actions: "There's no one here, and thus, there's no one to laugh at your total idiocy. Before you went to stand under that granite block, you didn't even take the time to calculate how much it weighs. The water's still oozing through, and the supports holding the granite up are eroding, and that means more and more weight will be pressing down on you. Do you understand that, you pale-faced idiot?"

"By force of my will, I will condense to the density of the granite, and I'll be able to hold my ground. I only need hold out for two days. I'll hold out!" said the light-haired athlete.

"Right! 'I'll hold out,' 'I'll condense,' ... Well, go on, then, condense away, to the density of the granite. But what's your load-bearing surface area? Your load-bearing surface area is the size of the soles of your two feet. And along toward the middle of the second day, the whole burden will come to rest upon you, and you'll sink into the ground like some kind of granite stake, shoving the smaller rubble off to the sides. As soon as you sink in up to your knees, the torrent of water will shove the block aside."

"I'll straighten my arms out. Then I'll be able to hold out half a day more."

"Yes, of course, you'll hold out. Only not for half a day. You'll hold out, maybe for an hour more, you clueless blockhead. Then there'll be a landslide. For all of eternity, since the moment of creation, never once has God's program experienced a glitch. And I am in agreement with it. Given that mankind is stepping onto an absurd path of development, it's better to put them down at the beginning of their path. Maybe a new civilization on Earth will comprehend its life's purpose and then *we'll* comprehend. The Universe will see new deeds, not today's primitivism. Numerous times, the earth has experienced disasters that have washed away the filth that Man accumulated.

"Who is it you want to save? Mankind, which with its very own hands will, in the future, create a living hell for itself and everything living on Earth? Do I need to remind you where the technocratic path will drag them off to in the future? Should I remind you? Why don't you say something? Ah, excellent! You're condensing and petrifying. Are you already having a hard time talking? Don't talk, then. Excellent! Stand there like a stone idol and look. Look at the pictures of the future life of the people you're trying to save. I've always admired them. There's the most unenlightened folly, absurdity and vanity in them. But you don't like looking at them,

these pictures. Go on and look now, my pale-faced, petrifying, motionless one. Look! But no, first listen and hear what you don't want to hear.

"If those who have left the valley aren't destroyed, they'll follow their technocratic path. They'll multiply, and from one generation to the next, they'll break, destroy and remold the great earthly harmony. And they'll kill animals. Animals who are meant to serve them. They'll construct a multitude of various soulless devices out of completely living material. They'll start referring to their actions using the resonant words 'industrialization,' 'scientific and technical progress,' and they'll invest these words with the implication of intelligent development.

"Well, and what kind of development? Do they possess rationality? Are they developing in a rational way? Like crazy folk, they will destroy unsurpassed creations and call their own barbaric actions 'progress.' They are ill! A virus has taken up residence in their minds. And the epidemic will smite all of mankind. This virus is more terrible than the complete annihilation of everything on earth. It threatens the entire Universe. It is called... Have you already guess what word I'm going to utter now? More than once you've beseeched me not to repeat it and have turned away from me and hurried to walk off, away from me, but now you won't turn away, you won't walk off. What will strike this whole human civilization is... anti-rationality.

"Struck by this anti-rationality, mankind will enter into the virus' dimension. It will begin performing deeds unsurpassed in their idiocy and villainy, cloaking them in the words 'progress,' 'advanced,' 'moral,' 'lovely,' 'rational,' and 'spiritual' when they speak to each other. Now that's some kind of development, right?

"No, I can't get by without a visual here! Now, take a look."

The dark-haired youth traced a square in the air with his hand, and a hologram immediately appeared inside it.

The hologram showed a twelve-story building being built. Two cranes were raising building materials up to the already complete stories. People in orange hardhats and blue coveralls who were busy doing the finishing work on the dwellings could be seen through the window openings.

The dark-haired youth commented:

"This incomprehensible thing here with a great number of cells – they're going to call that a 'home.' Anti-rationality is turning people into anti-people. They have distorted the concept and the meaning behind the words 'my home.'

"They've replaced the home – a living space formed by a person's thought, and reflecting his thought capacity – with an artificial, stone cell. And they've called it a 'home,' as some kind of travesty of Rationality. The Universe is not in need of their limited thought. It is becoming a breeding ground for anti-rationality and develops and strengthens its might. And this breeding ground is growing larger and larger."

The hologram stretched out from horizon to horizon, showing the building of a multitude of little boxes with artificial, stone cells. Some of them were collapsing, but the people in the orange hardhats were erecting new, even taller stone structures with a multitude of cells in their place.

Dark-haired continued:

“To gain the right to live in these cells, they will have to perform deeds that aren’t proper for a rational being – Man! Children of God! Goddesses! Take a look, my pale-faced brother, take a look at these deeds.”

The dark-haired youth waved his hand once more, and a square with a hologram appeared once again. This time it showed a huge grocery store. A great many people were gathering all manner of items to purchase, placing them into metal baskets and walking up to one of the cash registers arranged in a row, to pay for the goods they’d chosen.

“These are the beings from the stone cells. Every day they engage in various deeds that are worthless in terms of rationality, and they call their deeds ‘work.’ For their work they receive slips of paper that they call ‘money.’ Here you see them exchanging the money they’ve received for food.

“In the beginning, God created everything so that all a rational person had to do was stretch out his hand and take the Divine creation that was to his liking and enjoy consuming it, thereby increasing the energy inside him and satisfying his body. But these beings have altered their way of life so much that there’s none of God’s food around them. The food they acquire in exchange for the slips of paper does not possess Divine energy. The beings who have created this way of life cannot be called rational. Their way of life is the result of anti-rationality.”

The picture in the square changed, and now it was showing a close-up of a female cashier. One after another, people would come up to her cash register and lay out this or that kind of packages, boxes, cans and bottles on a little table in front of the woman. Smiling, the woman would say, “Hello,” to each of them. She’d take the packages, pass them over some kind of little pane of glass, after which numerals representing the product’s price would light up on the cash register. The cashier would take some money from the person and say to him, smiling again, “Thank you for your purchase. Come visit us again.”

And now there was a close-up in the square, showing the woman’s face at the moment when she turned away from the people who were standing in line and bent down to the floor to pick up a bag that had fallen. She turned away from the people standing before her for only a few seconds, and some kind of sad and doomed expression appeared on her face. Her eyelids began to close a bit, betraying an incredible weariness. The woman picked the bag up with one hand and pressed the other to her side, wincing in pain. All of this lasted just a very short time. When she turned back to the people, there was a smile on her face once more, and once more she

said to each one, “Hello. Thank you for your purchase. Come visit us again.”

The dark-haired youth commented:

“You see, my brother? Before you is a being you call a goddess. She sits behind a register made up of a multitude of little screws and circuits, and she herself is less perfected than those little screws. The register has no soul and no rationality. It just acts in accord with its prescribed program. Now this being sits behind it twelve hours a day, tapping away at its keys and saying thank you to every person. What’s this being thanking each person who comes up for? For nothing – it is simply a robot. It should have rationality, but it sits and taps away at the keys of some register for twelve hours at a time. It will do that for half of its life, so that it can finally end up in a stone cell.

“Rationality wouldn’t have allowed something like that to take place, so that means that the anti-rationality virus is at work in her, that this woman is not a person, but an anti-person, and that she is located in the dimension of anti-rationality. Her internal organs have been petrified, she does not receive normal food, and the blood in her veins is solidifying and stagnating because she has to sit for twelve hours at a time. She looks older than her years. Look! This is the way she should look at her age, if she were in the dimension of Rationality, if she were a person. Now I’ll show her in the natural dimension at this same time. Look!”

A new hologram in the square showed a slender, blond beauty running along the side of a brook toward a naked little boy, her son. The beauty ran up to him, scooped him up in her arms and spun around, bursting into happy laughter.

The two women, living in different dimensions bore little resemblance to each other.

The supermarket cashier sitting at the register appeared in the square once more.

“This is just one little isolated instance,” Dark-haired said. “Would you say it’s totally uncharacteristic of all mankind? Take a look.”

Next he spread his arms out, and the picture in the square spread out from horizon to horizon, and a picture appeared: hundreds of thousands of people were sitting behind various registers in tightly packed rows, tapping away at the keys. They were varied, these people. Very young girls and elderly women, and there were some men, too. Then a picture appeared in space – hundreds of thousands of hands were tapping away incessantly at the registers’ keys. In the corner of the boundless screen the sun appeared, then the moon replaced it, then the sun appeared again, replacing a half moon. The daytime and nighttime luminaries measured off the days and months and years, like a clock. But the people who had filled the entire space from horizon to horizon, kept on tapping away at the keys of their registers, repeating, as if they were robots, “Hello, thank you for your purchase. Come visit us again.”

“Look, my brother. Take a look. Now it will get even more interesting. Take a

look at mankind's future.”

A hologram appeared in space, showing a close up of a person running with a sword in his hands, his face distorted by rage. It was replaced by a picture of a person lying on the ground in the mud, spraying machine gun fire. Then three people appeared who were shooting a cannon. And the entire space suddenly filled up with a multitude of people. They were shown as very tiny, so that more of them would fit into the space. With swords, pitchforks, scythes, machine guns and cannons, the people were cutting each other down and shooting at each other. They were strangling each other with their hands and kicking them with their feet. From up above, flying machines were dropping objects down onto the ground that was teeming with a mass of people. Upon reaching the ground, the objects would explode, sending up clumps of mud and the remains of human bodies.

“Did rational beings create this mess, my brother? And they're anti-rational because they've taken into their heads to justify this, too. They'll call this mess 'war.' They'll give various decorations to those who excel in this slaughter, and the ones who receive these medals will proudly wear them on their chest. They'll learn to pass laws that justify this slaughter that will go on for centuries without ceasing.”

Dark-haired waved his hands once more, and a hologram appeared in the space once more, divided into a great many squares. Each square showed the interior of various halls where people were sitting and listening to people speaking from rostrums.

“They have different names for this: a Congress, Parliament, Duma, or a House, but they're all essentially the same thing.

“Do you see the people sitting there, my brother? You can still see, so take a look. The people sitting before you are writing laws for various peoples and, if you lump them all together, for all mankind. They've been writing them for millennia, but there are no perfected laws – nor can there be. Do you get that, my brother? Of course, you get it!”

Dark-haired roared with laughter. His spiteful laughter filled the valley, and its echo bounced off the ridge of mountain. He stopped laughing and, turning to the pictures with the people sitting in them, shouted, as if they could hear and understand him:

“You'll never be able to write perfected laws because you don't know the most important thing. You don't know the life's purpose of each separate man and of mankind as a whole. This life's purpose – the Universal life's purpose – has been expressed in just four words. It is the foundation of all laws. It and only it, can string all the Earth's laws onto itself, like beads onto a thread, or repulse them. But you don't know what it is – you've forgotten it.

“Do you get it, my brother? They've forgotten the most important thing, and

now they're in the dimension of anti-rationality. They've forgotten that their life's purpose has been laid out in four words. What words are those? Do you want me to utter them, my brother? You do! Of course you do, very much. You're always uttering them, in the hope that they'll hear you and understand. You utter them, but they don't hear. They don't hear because they're located in the dimension of anti-rationality, and if I utter them, if you and I utter them together, they'll hear. They'll start to take action, and they'll become people. But I won't utter them.

"Let them deliberate until the next worldwide disaster, which will be unprecedented in scale and strength. It will approach inexorably, and they will be powerless to use their laws to stop it from approaching. These beings know of the approaching disaster. They even know why it will occur, and they can't manage to change their way of life. They can't manage at all. If you look at them, they still resemble people, but only on the outside. They themselves – just think about it, my brother – for centuries, they themselves have been inventing various mechanical substitutes for human capabilities. Just look what they're turning into."

A hologram appeared in space. The right side showed the handsome, well-proportioned body of a youth, clad only in a loincloth, while the left side showed a girl in a short little grass skirt. Between them was a circle filled with a great many small, multicolored circles.

"In the circle I'm showing the capabilities with which each man was endowed inherently. They were capable of much..."

Night replaced day in the hologram. The young man glanced up at the heavens and said, "Today in the heavens above me, nine billion, eighty two stars can be seen." "My love," the girl said, replying to the youth, "right now in the heavens above you, nine billion eighty three stars can be seen. There's one you didn't notice. It's not at all bright. I will wait for you on it. We will create a space of love on it, and it will begin to shine with a bright blue light. For the time being, our star is barely noticeable."

"Yes, they were capable of much," Dark-haired commented. "Their initial capabilities enabled them to create everything you can imagine. And even things you can't. But once they start inventing mechanical, non-rational capability substitutes, they'll begin losing their God-given talents." Calculating devices appeared one after another and then disappeared, and as each of the instruments appeared, several of the little circles decreased in size, some of them actually turning into black dots. "They used to be capable of counting all the stars by glancing at the sky for just an instant, but they'll get to the point in their inventions that they'll be calculating 'two plus two' on calculators.

"They'll invent the telephone and will begin losing the ability to communicate over distance and imagine their loved ones' whereabouts.

"In the end, they'll begin implanting artificial devices into their bodies," Dark-haired went on, "and they themselves will turn more and more into a primitive,

soulless device. It will be impossible to call them ‘people.’ Their rationality is stuffed down somewhere deep inside. Anti-rationality dominates them. It is simultaneously around them and within them. Take a look, my brother – now you’ll see my final little picture.”

Dark-haired waved his hand, and on the screen, in the steaming air, hovering in the air, was a folded-out map of the Earth – that part of it where people lived very densely in the cities. And in each city, the stout tentacles of some monstrously large being were wending their way between the large concentrations of people, weaving in and out and shuddering. They were great in number. They encircled the cities and were also located inside them. Some kind of foul-smelling, dark-colored gas was being emitted from the great number of pores on each tentacle. But the people weren’t shrinking back from these terrifying emissions – they were breathing them. The people were building their homes close to the tentacles. From time to time, first in one spot and then in another, the reeking tentacles would burst, seemingly due to great pressure, and the people would rush to patch and smooth out these blow-outs, so as to restore the monstrous octopus’ vital functions.

“My brother, do you see the tentacles of the monstrous octopus? Perhaps you want me to show you the body of the monster that has covered the world with its tentacles? Naturally, you don’t even want to think and speak about this. But I’ll tell you right where this death-dealing body is located. I’ll tell you where the tentacles are coming from. They’re coming from the brains of these beings who used to be considered rational people. The monster’s body is inside their brains – that’s where they’re all coming from. And they are proud of their death-dealing progeny – they cherish it. They call the monstrous tentacles ‘roads’ and ‘highways.’” Dark-haired roared with laughter. “There you have it – the future of mankind! And you want to save to save those who are heading for the dimension of anti-rationality? You want to save them for *that* fate?” Dark-haired asked, turning to his brother who was holding the block of granite back, keeping it from falling.

It wasn’t just little drops of water that were seeping around the block of granite any more – now the water was flowing around it in thin streams. The body of the light-haired youth supporting the block of granite was petrifying ever more intensely. Even his facial muscles had hardened, and he could neither speak nor blink. Only his blue eyes, still alive, were looking at the pictures of mankind’s future.

The dark-haired youth stuck his palm beneath a stream of the water that was running off and said, his voice full of venom:

“There’s precious little time left before the flood. Maybe I’d have time to say three or four more phrases to you, my brother, but I’m not going to say anything. Most likely you can’t hear me any more.”

The dark-haired youth spread his arms out to the sides then bent his elbows, amusing himself with his athletic muscles, then shook his head, tossing his black locks

of hair back. He spent a bit more time observing the streams of water flowing around the block of granite his brother was propping up, watching them grow stronger. Then he said:

“It’s time for me to be going. It’s time. Now what has been preordained to come to pass shall come to pass. But... it shall not come to pass.”

The dark-haired athlete strode up to the block of granite and, taking his place alongside his light-haired brother, propped up the block of granite with his own shoulders and arms.

The muscles of the athletic body tensed, and the veins stood out, but the dark-haired athlete slowly straightened out his slightly bent knees and raised the granite a bit. The water stopped seeping around the edges of the block – only a few drops were still rolling off it.

The Universal opposites united in one for a short time, having changed God’s program. God’s program... Perhaps by uniting, they had opened up new possibilities for the program?

After a short time, the raging, shattering torrent reached the plains, and the danger that Anasta’s family valley would be flooded passed – and along with it, the danger that the people who had left the valley would perish.

The light-haired youth’s petrification began to gradually pass, a smile came to his face, and he regained his ability to speak.

“Thank you, Brother,” Light-haired said, albeit it still with difficulty.

“Only I don’t need any of your ‘thank yous.’ *This* disaster that was predestined for people, it’s passed. Now they’ll go even further along in their absurd worldview. They’ll stubbornly construct the anti-world. There will be more of them, and there will be a new disaster, on a bigger scale.”

“There won’t be one, Brother. Maybe it’ll happen just an instant before any disaster happens, but the Soul particles, and feelings and knowledge that the little girl Anasta dissolved in the space will awaken within people’s hearts. And a great many women and men will stop the unprecedented disaster with their thoughts. And people living in the dimension of anti-rationality will suddenly see the light. They’ll begin to build a new world on Earth, never before seen by anyone.

“They, the ones who have simultaneously experienced both anti-rationality and Rationality, will unite what is opposite within themselves, in harmony. And they will bring to life the Divine impulse of His dream in matter and spirit. Not simply will they bring it to life. To it they will add their dream’s perfection.”

Anastasia fell silent. And I was silent, too, as I tried to make sense of what had been said and seen. Only after an hour or two did I ask her a question.

COMING FACE TO FACE WITH OUR PRIMEVAL IMAGE

“Anastasia, everything you showed me and told me about the dark-haired and light-haired youths and about the little girl Anasta – did all of that exist in reality, or only in your imagination?”

“You can choose your own answer to that question yourself, Vladimir.”

“What do you mean, I can choose it myself? You’re the only one who can say for certain whether it actually happened or whether you imagined it.”

“Tell me, Vladimir, did any new information appear to you from my story?”

“I sure did. Of course, I did. Information and images... I’ll say!”

“So that means the information exists?”

“Yes, it exists. I need to analyze it, make sense of it. And I have questions.”

“If information appeared, then it follows that its source also exists.”

“Of course. There has to be a source.”

“Information is an image. An image is information. If someone decides he wants to erase information within you, he’ll try to prove to you that the image doesn’t exist in reality. And as soon as you agree with the image’s lack of reality, then you yourself erase the information you’ve taken in from the image.”

“Well, but if this or that image was created by a person, then who’s the information coming from in that case?”

“From the image.”

“Why from the image, if some specific person created it?”

“If a child was born to you, Vladimir, a child who imparted new information to all people – including to you, too – then who is the source of the new information?”

“The child, of course. But an image – now, an image isn’t a child who has a material body. An image can be non-material, too.”

“So, does that mean the difference lies only in that in the first case you can see a material body, but in the second you can’t?”

“Maybe that’s not quite it. It’s just that when there’s a body, it looks more familiar somehow, more credible.”

“A body you can see bears no definitive evidence. And what’s more, it can lead you astray.”

“Now that’s true. It sure can! There’s even an article in the criminal code called ‘fraud.’ That’s when a criminal – who has a body – deceives someone for his own personal gain. I think I’ve got everything, Anastasia. If information appears, and what’s more, if it comes from an image, then all of that exists – you can’t deny it – and we need to analyze the information we’ve received. But when we get caught up in thinking about it – ‘does it exist or doesn’t it exist’ – then we’re wasting time and depriving ourselves of the information we’ve gained.”

“Yes, you’ve understood correctly, Vladimir.”

“There’s just one thing I don’t get. If every person can think up an image, and the image begins to exist, then how much information do we have to sift through in order to come up with what’s genuine?”

“Not much at all. Certainly, every person can think up an image, but people will not accept every image with their whole heart and soul, not at all.”

“Well, yes, of course. Not every image. Really, thank you, Anastasia. It’s interesting what you have to say about the image. Tell me something else about the image. What’s your opinion – what is it?”

“Man himself is, in fact, an image that has taken material form, and since he is a materialized image, man himself can use his thought to create and can materialize images. This is where his Universal power, a power unsurpassed by no one and no thing, lies.

“If this or that person doesn’t recognize the capabilities within him that have been given him by the Creator, then that person himself blocks his lofty power and falls under the influence of other images and materializes their thoughts, until finally he destroys himself, his family, his family line, his state and the whole planet.

“The artificial, technocratic world was also created by Man using the energy of an image suggested to Man by his antipodes. The technocratic world is fragile and transitory. Even the most advanced car, building or any other object of the artificial world disintegrates with each second and within but a few years turns to dust or, worse still, into waste products harmful for Man.

“Man himself, by living in the artificial world, becomes fragile and transitory as

well. For it is hard for a person who spends each minute looking at a multitude of disintegrating objects that lack autogenic capability, to imagine eternal life, create the image of his own eternity and materialize it.

“The natural world that is visible to us has existed not for billions of years, but for significantly longer, for at the beginning it already existed within an as yet non-materialized image. The scientists who determined the Earth’s age calculated not the date of its birth, but merely the date of its materialization, as one of the stages of its life.

“The natural world possesses the capability for autogenesis, and this capability renders it eternal. The Creator, who created eternity, is himself the very same. He is Alpha and Omega, and Alpha once more.

“A great many people might say or think, ‘What *was* there before the birth of the Creator and of His extraordinary, multitudinous energies?’ At one time nothing existed. Nothing! But recall what the Creator said about ‘nothing’ to His son: ‘Out of nothing will arise the beautiful new birth of you and of the aspiration reflecting your soul and dream. My Son, you are infinite, eternal. Within you lie your creating dreams.’

“But if out of ‘nothing’ arises something, this means that ‘nothing,’ too, takes part in the birth.

“By giving birth – out of ‘nothing’, in part – the Creator completed the circle and presented to Man the image of eternity.

“The knowledge, understanding and perception of the energy of the image within him enable Man to not die, but rather to drift off into an ambrosial sleep. Upon awakening, he incarnates in the spot, time and image necessary to him and created by him before his sleep.

“Gaining knowledge of the science of imagery leads to understanding the entire universe created by the Creator, and to the creation of new and beautiful worlds.

“Lack of knowledge and understanding of the science of imagery leads unavoidably to unskillful interaction with the perfected, natural world, and to the creation of an artificial, primitive, unnatural world.

“Lack of knowledge of the science of imagery turns entire states and peoples into puppets, into chess pieces in the hands of those who are acquainted with this great gift.”

“But Anastasia, after all, images can be positive and negative. How are we supposed to figure out which of them bears useful information and which is misinforming us, perhaps for personal gain?”

“Through your own self, Vladimir, and through your own image you will discern the value of any information.”

“You mean every person has an image?”

“Why of course, Vladimir. Every person has his own image. Each differs strikingly from the others.

“Were every person to preserve his primeval image, then tell me, Vladimir, how would the world now look?”

“Primeval? That means every person has – or used to have – a primeval image? What was it like?”

“Divine! Such is the way our parent – the Creator – did create it in his inspired impulse.”

“It – our primeval image – was it God, or what?”

“It was the son of God, and so it remains.”

“But where’s this primeval image of man gotten to? We can see images of drunks and drug addicts on the streets. And images of prostitutes along the roads. And various images make fools of themselves on TV. Where can we get a glimpse of man’s primeval image?”

“Within ourselves. Imagine it yourself. Go out to meet it. And joyfully will it rush toward you. Joyful will the path be. Gradually coming nearer and nearer to each other, you will one day encounter each other. You will unite! Safeguard your primeval image. Do not give it over to others for their own delight.”

“But how can I imagine it? There’s all sorts of information raining down on us about how man’s imperfect.

“First they say he’s an eternal slave, then that he’s like a lab rat. One of my friends told me a while back that he read in some book somewhere that they said something like some alien beings created people and are now feeding on their energy and are training them to be imbeciles.”

“Should you wish to be an imbecile, Vladimir, then go ahead and believe them.

“Should you believe you’re a slave, you will give birth to a slave within you.

“Should you believe that someone is feeding on your energy against your very will, you will waste away and really will give over your own energy.

“Everything exists that you yourself believe to exist.

“From the very moment of birth, they try to belittle the significance of Man – the son of God. But take note, Vladimir, behind this there always stands someone striving to elevate himself. He is, in actual fact, not elevated when compared to Man, and is unable to elevate himself. And only one path is left to him – to belittle the elevated one and prevent him from growing.”

“Yes, Anastasia, you’re exactly right here. I somehow can’t recall even a single book or movie where man is presented as the strongest being in the Universe. It’s always the aliens that emerge as the strongest, and if the people are strong, too, then it’s always connected to some otherworldly powers. Now I understand what serious and ongoing indoctrination man is being subjected to, and of course, it’s no accident. There’s somebody who needs this very much.

“If Man really were weak and didn’t possess some kind of mysterious and unknown power, then why be afraid of him? Why take such great pains to prove the opposite?

“Anastasia, you’re the only one who sees man as the son of God and the strongest being in the Universe. But that means that a great many other images will come out in opposition to your explanation of what man’s image is. They have methods that have been developed over the course of millennia.

“They’ve already created a great many images of powerless people.

“Plus many various teachings that belittle man. The press the world over is working for them, and the screenwriters and directors, too, and there a lot of them, really a lot. Looks like you’re on your own, Anastasia. But all the same you’re placing your hopes on something. Where are you placing them? Where, Anastasia?”

“On my very own primeval image. And on your primeval image, Vladimir. On the primeval nature of those images of the people building homesteads. Those who will in the future set off to meet their true image.”

“Anastasia, and they also say you don’t exist at all. And about me, they say I’m not the person I seem to be, not the way I appear in the books. Now I see that by doing what they’re doing, they’re trying to erase the information coming from your image, erase it in people. And they’re succeeding in part. There are readers, even among those who are building family homesteads, who say, hey, let’s not mention Anastasia’s name. Let’s not talk about the books and let’s not call our family homesteads family

homesteads, given that someone has convinced the authorities that these names are bad. They even offer them various concessions for doing that.”

“And you, Vladimir? How do you feel about suggestions of that sort?”

“To tell the truth, Anastasia, even I had the thought that, given that these words are irritating to some people, maybe it would be better not to utter them. You know, so things would move along more quickly. Now I get that the process *might* move along on the surface, but it won’t be in quite the direction man needs. Now I get it: they don’t *want* us to utter the words ‘Anastasia’, ‘family homesteads’ and ‘ringing cedars of Russia’ because strong images and information immediately come up once we do. They want to deprive people of them. Am I understanding things correctly?”

“Of course, Vladimir, behind each word there really does stand an image, and information. It is sometimes the case, that behind just one word there stands such a huge volume of information that it would be impossible for even a hundred volumes to reflect its image, to substitute for it.”

“Well, you know, there are words that awaken different images in people. For example, the word ‘war.’ Some people might see a liberating war behind this word, and others an invasive one.”

“But nonetheless, when this word is uttered, in people’s imaginations there immediately arise a great many pictures of battles, of warring countries, of weaponry and many other things. And even if the pictures are a bit different, this is of no consequence: they are great in number, and similar, but there is but one word.”

“‘Family homestead’ – can there be a great many different images behind these words, too?”

“‘Family homestead’ is a word-combination backed by the most powerful of images, images capable of settling a person in a Divine dwelling land¹⁰. Judge for yourself, Vladimir: the first three letters of this word-combination form the word “*rod*”¹¹. “*Rod*” means the people who come into life one after another, and the first of these came from God. Each person born today takes his place at the head of this great chain. It is within his power to settle his “*rod*” in one dwelling land or another. In a stone cell or in the beautiful space of his family homestead. Or – he can break the family chain altogether. It is within his power to nourish his family with Divine

¹⁰ **Translator’s note:**

The original Russian phrase here is “среда обитания” (transliterated “sreda obitaniya”, pronounced “sree-DAH a-bee-TAH-nee-yuh”). It expresses of the area, space or spot in which one resides and is often rendered as “habitat.” However, in this book the phrase encompasses all that is part of the area where one lives as well as all the beings and energetic forces present within it. Thus, I have translated it throughout as “dwelling land,” as it is related to the phrase “среда обетованная” (transliterated “sreda obetovannaya” and pronounced “sree-dah ah-bee-TOH-vahn-nah-yuh”). See note 16 below for commentary on this phrase.

¹¹ **Translator’s note:**

The original Russian is “род” (transliterated “rod” and pronounced “roht”). Where “род”/“rod” occurs in the text, referring to the chain of family members stretching in the past or future, I have translated this using the phrase “family line.” See note 8 about other phrases in the book containing this same root.

creation or with food that doesn't bear the energy of the Soul.”

“What does food have to do with anything here, Anastasia, if my family's ancestors are long dead?”

“Tiny parts of all your ancestors live on within you, Vladimir. Both your body and your spirit come from them.”

“Well, sure, they come from them. But... But that means that each person born anew bears a colossal responsibility for the fate of the entire family line.”

“Yes, each one bears it, Vladimir, and each one is given the power to decide his own fate and the fate of his family line.”

“I agree that we're given that power. But the great majority of people don't really think about their family line, and maybe their ancestors didn't think about it, either. So does that mean the family line that stretches from the wellspring people¹², from God himself, has disintegrated, fallen to pieces, that it no longer exists?”

“Family homestead – please, Vladimir, think about it. Family homestead – two words. One word-combination. As soon as a person utters it, then the person – who perhaps hasn't yet even fully realized his aspiration – except subconsciously – has given voice to it: ‘I gather together my entire family line and settle it here.’”

¹² **Translator's note:**

The original Russian word, coined by Vladimir Megre, is “первоисток” (transliterated “pervoistoki”, pronounced “pir-vah-ee-STOH-kee”). The roots in this word express both the idea of coming first or being in an original position, as well as the idea of flowing water and source. Hence, these are the people who served as the source for all others, in both the literal and figurative meanings of this word.

THE GATHERER OF ONE'S FAMILY LINE

“A person who has established his family homestead can gather together within it the souls of people from his family line, and they will be grateful to him for this great deed. Like guardian angels, they will protect and guard the family homestead and the person who created it. Nothing in the Universe disappears without a trace; it only passes from one state into another. When a person dies and his mortal body is given over to the land, then trees and grass and flowers grow up out of it. It passes from one state into another. But then, into what state does the main energetic complex – the human Soul – pass?

“At first, it lingers, hovering at the place where the person’s body is located, and in some religions, people understand this and don’t immediately commit the person’s body to the earth. And when the person’s body does join into an embrace with the earth, when the person is buried in a cemetery, then the Soul hovers above the spot where the body has been buried. The relatives spend some period of time near the grave. The Soul, deprived of its body – and so, of hearing and sight – cannot see or hear, but it can feel when people are speaking of it, or thinking of it. If they are saying good things, the Soul feels good, but if they are saying bad things, the Soul feels bad.

“Then the people leave the cemetery. For a certain period of time, the Soul remains above the mound of earth where its body is buried, but it no longer feels anything, only emptiness. Modern people, caught up in the everyday bustle of life, quickly forget their deceased relatives. In modern people’s apartments, often nothing at all serves as a reminder of the deceased relatives. After a year or five or ten, basically no one remembers them any more, and the souls of the deceased end up in a complete void. And we are speaking here about the recently deceased, but you know, there are also those relatives who lived a hundred, or a thousand or a million years ago, and they all find themselves in complete oblivion.

“A person who creates a family homestead can gather together his entire family line. To do this, he needs to call to mind his relative and imagine him or her, and then the Soul will give a little start. It will sense it’s being thought of, and no matter in which corner of the Universe it might be located, it will shoot off along this thought-ray to the place from which it is emanating.

“A person isn’t able to remember all his relatives and continually think about them and recall them, but he *can* plant a small grove of trees, preferably family trees”¹³,

¹³ **Translator’s note:**

The original Russian phrase, “родовые деревья” (transliterated “rodovye derev’ya”, pronounced “ruh-dah-VY-yeh di-REV-yuh”) contains the root “род”/“rod”, relating to “family line.” Thus, I have rendered this phrase as “family trees” to establish the link with the phrase “family homestead.”

that live a long time. These include oaks and cedars. As he plants them, he should definitely contribute his own family thought, saying to himself: 'I am planting this grove or alley in memory of the members of my family line. I am creating a family homestead, and may all the members of my family line who have lived in the past and who will live in the future gather together on it.'

"As he plants each individual tree, it's essential that he recall the name of one or another relative who has recently passed, and to imagine each of them and say a kind word about them.

"A person isn't able to recall each of his family members every minute and every hour, but the trees, which have received this information, will preserve it within themselves every moment. The Souls of the relatives of your family line will sense this. And they'll live in your homestead in the trees, the blades of grass and the flowers. The rays emanating from the trees are much weaker than those coming from people, but they are more constant. The Souls will sense this, and at first the Soul of the closest relative you've recalled will come to this spot, and after it comes, others will also gradually be drawn to this spot, too.

"In nine years, there will grow up a grove of trees that were planted by the person, and these will be extraordinary trees. They will possess colossal, beneficial energy. No one will be able to sense this energy's benefits – no one except the gatherer of the family line himself and his close relatives.

"Imagine, Vladimir, what an extraordinary and kind thing it is that man will accomplish! He, like unto the Creator, will gather together anew his family line that had scattered through time."

"But Anastasia, you said that the Souls are an energetic complex and that when people die, some of them disintegrate into particles and give their energy to various bugs and plants and animals."

"Yes, I did say that, Vladimir. This happens when, during its life on earth, this energetic complex – the human Soul – is in disharmony with the surrounding environment to such an extent that it represents a danger to earthly existence. The Souls of the deceased preserve the complete complex when the imbalance has not yet reached a critical point. The more harmonious ones are the first to incarnate into earthly bodies. Unfortunately, there are fewer and fewer of them all the time within the Universal space, and the program is now choosing from the best of a bad lot."

"But what if all the Souls of my family line have disintegrated into particles? Then will none of them come to the family grove I plant?"

"Since you exist, Vladimir, that means that your family chain has not been broken, either."

"But what happens when a person is buried on the family homestead?"

“When a person’s body is buried on the homestead he himself established, his Soul does not fly off into the Universal darkness. It remains on the family homestead – after all, it is there that the person planted trees and communed with the land. The Soul, which cannot see or hear anything, but *can* feel, will sense the warmth that the plants give it, and besides that, the people – this person’s descendants – will recall him more often as they come into contact with what he created.”

“Anastasia, I know of one instance when the little old mother of some people I know came to their homestead to visit them. She was a little over eighty years old. She’d just come to visit for a few days. She’d come to visit her daughter, just to see what in the world she and her husband had cooked up. Then she asked them to let her stay forever. And she stayed. She’d spend a long time sitting on a little bench. Sometimes she’d walk through the homestead’s little forest, and one day she said to her daughter and son-in-law, ‘When I die, please don’t take me off to the cemetery. Bury me here.’ And she pointed out the spot she herself had picked out. When this elderly woman died, the daughter and son-in-law carried out her request. What will happen to this elderly woman’s Soul, if she didn’t manage to plant anything on this homestead?”

“Her Soul will remain on the family homestead, even if all she did was sit on a little bench. She herself decided she wanted to be buried there. That means she was thinking about that before she died, and her relatives will visit the spot where she was laid to rest more often than they would go to a cemetery, and they will think of her more often.

“You must not bury a person on a family homestead against his will, even if he has done something there. If that happens, it is essential to ask the person’s forgiveness, to go to the spot where he is buried and mentally explain to him why that was done, and ask for his help.”

“Yes, Anastasia, it’s an interesting situation. But way back when, did people know about this? Did they understand it?”

“Ofcourse they knew, Vladimir. Even in the not so distant past many people had family crypts. You know about that. But in earlier periods of human existence, cemeteries didn’t exist at all. They came into existence when people appeared who had no family land at all: artisans in cities, domestics, various servants, and soldiers for hire. When they died, they needed to be buried, and so they’d carry their bodies off and toss them without their family members into the latrine pits where they’d throw sick animals. Or they’d bury them in common graves. A bit later on, when the cities grew larger and many various families lived in them, including well-to-do ones, then cemeteries began to appear. Well-to-do people would buy up small plots of land where they would bury their deceased relatives, and then other people would do the same nearby. As a result, cemeteries began to be divided up into – to put it in modern language – into upper class, middle class, and ordinary ones, for servants.”

“Those kinds of cemeteries still exist today: if you want to get into Vagankovo

Cemetery in Moscow, you'll need to bring a lot of money and effort to bear to get a good plot, and the plots are assigned by a special burial committee."

FOUR WORDS FROM THE UNIVERSAL LAW

“Anastasia, what about those four words from the Universal law, the words Dark-haired referred to, the ones that define the life’s purpose of each individual man and of all mankind as a whole – do you know what they are?”

“Yes, Vladimir, I know these four words, those that define the common task facing mankind.”

“Can you utter them for me now?”

“I can.”

“Then utter them.”

Anastasia rose to her feet and, painstakingly speaking each word, said:

“PERFECT THE DWELLING LAND.”

“And that’s it?” I said, disappointed.

“Yes, that’s it.”

“To be perfectly honest, I thought they’d be some unusual, magic words.”

“These *are* unusual, magic words from the Universal law. These are the most important words of all the Divine programs. With their help, it is possible to determine the degree to which both an individual person and mankind as a whole are necessary for the Universe. With their help it is possible to determine the usefulness or uselessness of the earthly laws conceived by people.

“Perfect the dwelling land means perfect yourself.

“All that exists within the Universe and on Earth represents through itself a united dwelling land, inseparably interconnected, and with man in the center.

“Perfect the dwelling land means give birth to and raise children who are more perfected than you yourself. Each generation should be more perfected than the previous. For this to come about, the generation that comes before should present the following generation with a more perfected dwelling land.

“In perfecting the dwelling land, man perfects his own thought. The perfected dwelling land quickens and refines man’s thought.

“In perfecting the dwelling land, man comes to know immortality.

“In perfecting the dwelling land, man turns the Earth into the most perfected planet of the Universe.

“Earthly perfection permits and helps man to perfect other planets of the Universe.

“Universal perfection permits and helps man to create new worlds.

““Where is the edge of the Universe? What will I do when I come to it? When I have filled everything with myself, when I create that which I have thought?” a man of the wellspring people asks God. And replied to His son: “My son, The Universe is thought. A dream was born of the thought, and it is partially visible as matter. When you come to the edge of everything, a new beginning and continuation shall your thought discover. Out of nothing will arise the new, beautiful birth of you, and of the aspiration, reflecting in itself your Soul and your dream. My son, you are endless, you are eternal, your creating dreams are within you.”

Anastasia fell silent. Astounded by the unusual intonations and by the meaning of the words she’d uttered, I kept on looking at her. And with complete clarity, I suddenly realized: she isn’t simply a taiga hermit living in the Siberian taiga. Not simply an extraordinarily beautiful woman.

Anastasia is a person from another dimension, a dimension where human Intelligence triumphs. She senses and sees this dimension of intelligence. She is worthy of it. Of a dimension in which a perfected, happy creator-man makes the planet Earth the most beautiful planet in the Universe. And the planets of the whole Universe, delighted by his earthly creations, call to him to contemplate them, too. To touch their surface ever so lightly, even with just their hand and, through a smile, give them a future. And how unbearably painful it must be for her to look at today’s earthly bacchanal.

But she gave birth to two children, and wasn’t put off by the danger that the anti-rationality that rules today would swallow up the children. That means she’s convinced that everything will change on its own – or that she’ll change it herself.

“Anastasia, given your world view, isn’t it painful for you to look at today’s reality?”

“Very painful, Vladimir,” Anastasia whispered.

“Then how do you bear such pain?”

“By creating pictures of a beautiful future, admiring them and delighting in them. The joy of beholding them vanquishes the pain. And what’s more, there is even more benefit from such beholding: the way you imagine the future to be, is the way it will come to pass.”

THE DIMENSION OF ANTI-RATIONALITY

“Anastasia, can it really be that modern mankind actually does live in the dimension of anti-rationality that the dark-haired youth mentioned? And what exactly *is* anti-rationality? How can we see this in real life?”

“Thought or information appears, and we need to assess its reality only through ourselves.”

“But how can we assess it, by what means? If a person is living in the anti-rational dimension, then he’ll think in the categories of anti-rationality.”

“Yes, that is so. But rationality all the same remains within a person, although in a significantly smaller degree.

“And if you mentally appeal to it, it is activated, and then you can use it to help you identify anti-rational manifestations. For now, we will speak no more on this topic, Vladimir. For now, go take a stroll here around the glade, around the taiga and reflect a bit. Here, in this spot, Rationality and anti-rationality are in balance. But in you they are not, and for that reason, help your rationality out – activate it from time to time.”

“How do I activate it?”

“Just mentally say within you: ‘Rationality.’ Or better yet, ‘Raaatio-naaal-iii-ty.’”

I was left alone and tried to reflect from a position of Rationality. And these are the conclusions I began to draw.

The Artificial World

Today's community of people lives in an artificial world, not a natural one.

It created it and slavishly serves it.

We have created an artificial world and live artificial lives within in.

The real, natural world is to be found along the side of the asphalt roadways along which modern mankind is rushing headlong toward an abyss.

Artificial concepts have been implanted into the collective consciousness of modern people.

Our scientists and "educated" researchers have, in their great wisdom, started to call modern medicine – which has existed for only two hundred years – traditional, while calling folk medicine – whose history is calculated in the hundreds of thousands of years – non-traditional. At the same time as they've begun referring to healers – and here I'm talking about real healers, who are well versed in the properties of medicinal plants – as charlatans. The result is that modern man ends up having to treat many diseases – ones that people just a hundred years ago easily cured themselves of, at no cost, using herbs from their very own garden – using expensive pharmaceuticals, on the advice of their doctor. Perhaps there should be two paths in medicine. We need to teach folk medicine in school and train specialists in medical schools. Eighty percent of ailments can be cured using folk medicine, and this will significantly lower the burden on today's medical facilities, which will make it possible to substantially improve the quality of medical service. But to do this we have to think in categories of Rationality.

Artificial Plumbing Systems

Mankind has buried millions of kilometers of metal pipes that they call plumbing systems in the ground. Colossal effort has been expended to manufacture these pipes and lay them in trenches. They require continual servicing and major overhauls, which come at the cost of people's hard labor. Meanwhile, the water that comes out of the faucets in our apartments ends up being unfit to drink. And besides that, we have a natural plumbing system in the natural world – by which I mean not just rivers, but groundwater aquifers as well. Living, healing water capable of filling millions of wells flow through the Earth's veins there. The natural plumbing system requires no repairs. But what's more, it's capable of purifying polluted surface water and of saturating a vital product with minerals and other necessary substances. But the city person's modern way of life has deprived him of the opportunity to utilize the natural plumbing system that was designed and constructed by the Creator.

The question arises: did man choose this way of life on his own, or under the influence of certain forces? In order to answer this question, let's take a look at one more case. We'd be hard pressed to call it anything other than the mental illness of a society. What steps must the average family in Europe, America or Russia take in order to acquire their own apartment or home?

The Anti-Rationality Mortgage

For example, they're advised to take out a mortgage. Or, more precisely, they're advised to take out a loan from a bank for a period of twenty or thirty years, acquire a modest residence with the bank's money and then, every month over the course of twenty years, pay the money back to the bank, with interest. If the family isn't able to pay the money back, the apartment will be taken away. A young family has to spend twenty years living in fear of losing their residence and – as a rule – work at a job they don't like, just so they can get paid more. Grovel at their boss's feet out of fear of losing their job. But perhaps there's no alternative to this kind of disconcerting situation? But there is! And that's not all – the alternative actually shows that obstacles that stand in the way of young people acquiring housing have been artificially implanted into their young heads. These obstacles are virtual, and intrinsic only to virtual reality. I'll give you a totally typical, real life example.

A young man named Andrei lived in the city of Vladimir, and on the outside, he didn't look much different from his peers. He went to cafes and discos; he smoked and used alcohol. When he read about family homesteads, he began dreaming of his own land and home.

He didn't have the funds to buy a plot of land and build a house, and his parents weren't in a position to offer him financial help. In 2001, a hectare¹⁴ of land on a deserted spot overgrown with tall grasses near the village of Konyaev, thirty kilometers from the city of Vladimir, cost thirty thousand rubles¹⁵. Nearly fifty families from among my readers have acquired their own hectares in this deserted spot and begun putting up structures. People mostly in their middle years, who possessed some financial reserves. Andrei also took a liking to this spot on the bank of a forest lake, and there was still some free land left there. Driven by his dream of having his own homestead, he stopped frequenting the youth club scene and, by working hard, was able to save up thirty thousand rubles in the space of only six months and acquire a hectare of land in the deserted spot. But where could he get the money to build a home? At that time in the city of Vladimir, a square meter of housing cost twenty thousand rubles, and thus, to build a home only fifty square meters in size, he'd need an additional million rubles. Andrei wasn't about to take out a loan from a bank, just so he'd then have to spend twenty years paying it back with interest. At the age of twenty-three, the young man went to the store, bought a good axe, and in the course of a year, all on his own, put up a wooden home on his plot. That's making a long story

¹⁴ **Translator's note:**

One hectare is equal to 10,000 square meters, or 2.471 acres.

¹⁵ **Translator's note:**

This is equivalent to roughly 1000 U.S. dollars or 750 Euros (for 2010).

short. Here's some more detail. First, Andrei got a job in a company where there were master craftsmen who knew how to frame a log house. From them he learned how to work with wood, while simultaneously earning the money to buy the logs for his future home. On this young man's plot, a garden is now growing, a well has been dug, there's a pond, and there's a wooden home, and people who are new arrivals to the settlement put themselves on the waiting list for him to build them log homes. Now Andrei is an acclaimed and respected master craftsman.

You could say that through his own actions, Andrei saved a million rubles. Or that he earned them. I think that's not even important. He gained immeasurably more than a million – he gained confidence in his own abilities, and a home built with his very own hands.

I think Andrei will manage to find a worthy girl who will enter this home and bear him a son and daughter, and the children will tell their grandchildren who it was who built the home with his very own hands, who put in the garden, who established their small motherland.

Andrei's story isn't the only one of its kind. In that same settlement, there are other families who have built their homes with their own hands.

I remember how my father and grandfather also put up their own wooden home, and the neighbors next to them, my parents' peers, did the same thing. More than half a century has passed, but people still live in these houses, just as they did back then.

And this is where questions come up. How could it happen, that for half a century, society has been developing new building techniques, new materials, machinery and devices which would seem to be more advanced, but in the end...

The average family has to work hard for twenty to thirty years to get a dwelling that it used to be able to provide itself with in the course of a year or two. For many families, the housing question has become insoluble, and the government has had to take it up.

Did the given situation come about by chance, or did someone artificially construct it? That, however, isn't important. The important thing is that the situation is absolutely anti-rational, but society, caught up in its everyday bustle, has turned out to be incapable of reflecting and analyzing. It's gotten used to the situation and can't imagine anything different. Society has gotten used to anti-rationality. And is ceasing to be rational.

Why Does Love Go Away?

Man's modern way of life has given birth to a great many problems that we are strictly forbidden to discuss, and since they don't get discussed, they don't get solved, either.

Billions of domestic conflicts take place all over the world, and they can get to the point where spouses fight with and murder each other. In so-called civilized countries, up to eighty percent of young people who enter into marriage divorce soon afterward. This process is preceded by negative emotions and stress of long standing, and children are made unhappy.

Over the course of millennia, millions of localized wars have been going on practically all over the world between people who have attempted to establish a loving union. It isn't only both sides in these battles that take the cruelest of beatings, but their children, too.

This kind of situation has been presented to modern mankind as a given. It's natural, they tell us – love comes and goes. But as it turns out, this kind of situation is characteristic only for people of the artificial world. It is not consistent with man's true nature.

For the first time ever, the taiga hermit has shown that young people's initial attraction for each other is not love – it is but the urge to give birth to the great feeling which arises when three components are united.

She identified these components and showed us three ancient rites that help real love be born. I have included them in previous books. I had to use the word 'rite' because Russian lacks a more precise definition that expresses these rational acts by young people who feel attracted to each other, and their parents.

But the given topic, like many others, turned out to be forbidden for the mass media. And that's not all – they began, using plausible pretexts, to make efforts to slander the source. It got to the point that on a show called "The Mysterious Anastasia" on Russian Central Television's Channel One, certain individuals began collectively declaring that people were going crazy from reading my books with the statements of the taiga hermit. Ludicrous! They don't go crazy from reading porn magazines or bloody thrillers or watching movies about violence, but they do from reading philosophical statements about love and man's way of life? This position makes it clear that there are forces in modern society that program social disasters. They target people and act through them, making use of their ignorance about what's really going on.

And we can understand these people. Imagine what would happen if a person who's read the "Ringing Cedars of Russia" book series starts asserting that by using three ancient rites, modern newlyweds can, during their marriage ceremony, in the space of thirty minutes and in plain view of all their relatives, create a family homestead on a deserted spot, along with a garden that will contain around a hundred plantings necessary for the family's sustenance. That they can erect a home with all the necessary farmyard structures, along with devoted animals that seem to have been settled in them as if by magic. Modern people who haven't read the "Ringing Cedars of Russia" book series might consider a person who asserts this fact crazy or gullible. But allow me to reveal a bit about this mechanism, the mechanism with whose help the given "miracles" really do take occur.

According to ancient rules or rites – you can call them what you want – a pair of young people who feel drawn to each other go out to the outskirts of the settlement, find themselves a plot of land no less than a hectare in size and build a small hut there. Together, they create a detailed and thorough design for their future homestead. For all intents and purposes, they are also creating a space where the energy of love can be found. In their design, they indicate not only the spots where their future home and farmyard structures will be located, but also where absolutely all the plantings will go.

Doing everything to create the design can keep them busy for anywhere from three months up to a year. Once the design is finished, they go around to all their relatives – on both the side of the bride and the groom – and invite them to participate in the rite of marriage. And each time they're at the home of this or that relative, they say, for example, "Ah, what a beautiful apple tree you have there." These words serve as a hint to the invited guest about what he should bring with him to the rite of marriage. In this particular case, a slip of the apple tree that the future newlyweds liked. To someone else they're inviting they might say, for example, "What a feisty little coat you have there." That means that the guest doesn't need to think about what gift to bring the young couple – he'll give them a colt. And so on.

During the rite of marriage, the newlyweds will tell their relatives and friends – as if they were taking some kind of great exam of life in their presence – all about the design they've created for their homestead, indicating in detail where everything should be located. Once they've finished the telling, they will give a signal, and the relatives and friends who have gathered together will set out their living gifts in precisely the spots indicated by the wedded couple. The newlyweds, all aquiver, will observe as their closet relatives and friends engage in the great joint action. Then the now-married young couple, having experienced great inspiration and emotional elevation, will be led away, each to his parents' home, where they will spend two nights. In the space of this time, the relatives on the side of the bride and groom will move previously readied structures to the spot, piece by piece. At dawn on the second day, he and she will hurry to their newly created family homestead, to their first meeting as husband and wife. It is impossible to describe what will pass between them in their new home, full of nothing but positive emotions and an inspired, never before experienced, energy of love for each other and for their newly created space of love.

What would have happened if the wellspring people had told such newlyweds that there will come a time when marriage will be carried out in an entirely different way? That two young people will come to some building, sign their names in some ledger and ride around in someone else's car that's been decorated with ribbons, all around a city that doesn't and never will belong to them. After that, along with their invited guests, they will take their seats at a table in some restaurant and eat food that wasn't prepared by their hands or by their relatives' hands, and drink vodka, and that the then tipsy guests and relatives will shout "bitter-bitter" to them, demanding that they kiss each other in front of everyone. And that's it. Next comes the so-called marriage bed and the lack of any pleasant after-effects from what has transpired. And what's more, any space that the energy of love can fill is totally lacking.

"Such a thing couldn't happen! It could never happen!" the wellspring people newlyweds will say. "Man is a rational being, not a crazed animal who would destroy love like that, love that is just an embryo and hasn't yet grown strong."

So, who is it who's really going crazy? Judge for yourselves, esteemed readers.

To answer the question of why love goes away, we can say that real, full-fledged love simply doesn't come to the majority of modern newlyweds, because there's no appropriate space for it.

What *is* love? It is a feeling, a great energy, that is capable of inspiring a person to create and that increases his spiritual powers and capabilities. It is a rational energy – it fills the space where two people in love are present and creates a unified whole for them, a space of love. Take a look at what happens nowadays. The newlyweds go to the marriage bureau to formalize their marriage. The marriage bureau facility isn't their space, but simple a temporary spot where they're spending some time, and what's more, divorce proceedings take place in this very same facility. And the rational energy of love is unable to fill a space like that.

Riding around in a car, often someone else's, also isn't fitting for the energy of love. And it can't fill a modern apartment, either. Because after all, the energy of love can't caress soulless, dying objects, and in a modern apartment, even in a very new one, everything is aging and disintegrating with each instant. Nothing is coming to life in it, and the energy of love can't make its peace with that kind of disintegration. When it's present in that kind of situation, it can't give its blessing.

What's needed for the energy of love is a living space that's been established by people – in the given case, by actual people who feel drawn to each other. It can't be any other way. The proof of this is the great number of secular divorce proceedings throughout the world.

The question of why love goes away deserves to be studied from all angles, and I intend to devote my next book to this, a book in which I will tell of the ancient land where people knew the secret of ever-lasting love. Today's approach to love is truly anti-rational.

Governing the Government

There are various methods one can use to influence people – we're not excluding the government here, either. And the most potent among them is the image. People grow accustomed to absurd conditions and images and accept them as givens. There's an image that tells us that the government, including the State Duma, too, where laws are developed and enacted, must definitely be located in the center of a big city. We've gotten accustomed to it being this way. But does this make sense?

Where did the prophets receive their revelations? And where did the wise men do their reflecting? Whence did they bring us the Divine laws?

Moses. He received the tables with the "ten commandments" after going into seclusion on Mount Sinai. Christ. He went off into the desert for forty days. Buddha. He spent several years deep in the forest. Mohammad. He spent months in seclusion in the cave of Hira on the mountain Jabal al-Nour.

Philosophers and scholars – Confucius, Lao-Tzu, Kant and Nietzsche and many others – have also spent years living in seclusion.

But where is our State Duma's building located? Where do they write our laws, these wise men chosen by the people? Do you recall?

Our State Duma's building is located at the intersection of busy highways – could we possibly create more absurd working conditions for our national chose ones?

What do we have here – a roadside Duma?!

What Causes Empires to Die Out

I can cite a great many historical examples of images influencing human society and inducing planetary disasters. But for the contemporary person, particularly one living in Russia, the most obvious example will be the situation connected to the demise of Tsarist Russia and, later on, the fall of the USSR.

“From a spark a flame will burst forth,” said the leader of the worldwide proletariat, V.I. Lenin, speaking of the Bolshevik newspaper “Spark,” in which the Tsarist regime was smeared. All according to plan, a negative image of Tsarist rule took root, and a new, beautiful image was created, an image of Soviet rule. Tsarism was toppled. A new empire – the USSR – arose and began developing, an empire possessing a huge army and equipped with nuclear weapons.

But only seventy years later, the great empire of the USSR collapsed into several separate states, ones not always inclined to be friendly to each other. It was the politicians who had signed the agreement concerning the division, as well as the economic and political situation, that political scientists identified as the culprits in the collapse.

When we take a closer look, we can see all of this, too, as simply the result of the action of images. Let’s recall Solzhenitsyn’s gifted books about the GULAG and the works of other masters of the pen who smeared the USSR. Other writers at the same time were creating an image of the prospering Western states where, unlike in the USSR, store shelves were groaning beneath an abundance of all possible products and happy and free people were riding around in fancy cars. And at the same time as they were speaking of the merits of Western civilization, they remained silent about the problems existing there.

Russia’s future is also defined using images that are taking root in the minds and souls of the people living in the country. Unfortunately, this is a whole pleiad of images that are leading toward the annihilation of the state. The cult of violence and the cult of money are forming the image of destruction in thousands of movies in theaters and on television. “Catching up to the West.” That’s what many of our politicians are propagandizing. No economic or military achievements and no calls to be patriots in our motherland are capable of opposing these images.

The only thing that can oppose this image is a different image, an image of creation, an image capable of inspiring millions of people. And Anastasia has created it as a counterweight to the armadas of destructive images. Hundreds of thousands of people have taken up the image of a beautiful, future country and have contributed

their own ideas to it and have begun making it a reality – they’ve begun building family homesteads. This grass roots initiative was in line with the government’s plans. Many well-known politicians, government figures, well-known academics, cultural figures and religious leaders have made positive statements about those who are building family homesteads. I’m not going to bring in their statements here, but anyone who wishes to do so can learn about them on the site Anastasia.ru.

Now, of course, these statements have inspired people, but they are nominally off-the-record, although they’re also infinitely bold. After all, these rational words have resounded within the landscape of anti-rationality and penetrated it.

Some of the taiga hermit’s assertions might seem fantastical, and that’s the way they seemed to me, too, when I first started spending time with her. Now, fifteen years after my first meeting with her, there’s much I’ve had to rethink. It’s we, contemporary society, who live in a dwelling land that is fantastically unnatural for living a rational life. Anastasia speaks about rational reality. She is establishing it, methodically, and she *will* establish it. I will try to help her, and hundreds of thousands of people are already helping.

And here’s what else is interesting. In electronic and print media, literature and the movies, there are practically no positive heroes who commune with the earth in a rational fashion. Call to mind the way of life and dwelling land of any main characters. For the most part, they’re shown in apartments, offices, restaurants, casinos, on the streets of big cities and in places like that. And if they do show a person who communes with the earth in a conscious way – and this happens extremely rarely – then this person is presented as immature, as an imbecile. Human society is methodically and persistently being indoctrinated about the kind of dwelling land where he should pass his life. Did this situation come about by chance? I think, and I am even convinced, that it did not come about by chance. It is leading us toward a disaster – a personal, social and planetary disaster.

When I was talking with Anastasia later on, after I’d done some thinking on my own, I said, with certainty:

“I am absolutely convinced that contemporary mankind is living in the dimension of anti-rationality. It thinks in the categories of anti-rationality, because it has no clear plans for how to construct a harmonious future. All it does is state the obvious – the fact that it is coming to an end – and speak about that.”

THE YEAR 2012

These days, the date of December 22, 2012 is being widely and actively discussed, both in esoteric circles and among scholars, and on the Internet. Many people believe that the world will come to an end on that day.

Why are people talking specifically about this date? It's because this date is connected to a gloomy, apocalyptic prediction by the enigmatic ancient Mayans, according to whose calendar – and, by the way, experts admit that the Mayan calendar is much more precise than the Gregorian calendar we now use – on this day, on December 22, 2012, the current cycle of the so-called long count, the Era of the Fifth Sun, or the Epoch of the Jaguar, will come to an end. According to legend, the conclusion of Epoch of the Jaguar will be followed by years of death and destruction that will continue until the epoch of the renewal of mankind begins.

Scholars recently ascertained that the date indicated in the Mayan calendar is significant astronomically. On this day an event will occur that takes place only once every 25,800 years: the Sun will come into alignment with the mystical energetic center of the Galaxy, and modern civilization will, for the first time, live through this rare astronomical phenomenon. Or it won't live through it.

It has been suggested that during the second millennium B.C.E., the Mayan forbears, whose monuments we encounter in Central America, came down from the mountains where they'd been living into the tropical forests and plains of the Yucatan. It is precisely on the plains that the Mayan civilization achieved its greatest flowering, in the first millennium B.C.E. The Mayans knew how to write in hieroglyphs, and their math and medicine were at a very high level. They built stone cities and unbelievable ceremonial structures, such as the Great Palace at Palenque, and – here's the main thing – they had a deep knowledge of astronomy.

Up to the present day, no complete explanation has been found for the fact that the Mayan cities began to fall into disrepair long before the Europeans arrived.

At the heart of the Mayan civilization's astrology lies the Count of Days. The basis for generally accepted astrology (of Ancient Sumer and Babylon) is the arrangement of the planets around the zodiac circle. The Mayans also knew the zodiac constellations, but their Zodiac had 13 constellations, not 12. They included the constellation Serpentarius (which the Mayans called the Bat,) through which the Sun passes for only a few days.

Now about the enigmatic calendar. The current cycle of time, which comes to an end in the year 2012, is measured starting from a very ancient date: the 13th of August

in the year 3114 B.C.E. And this is rather strange, because, as I've already noted, the culture of the Mayans themselves is a minimum of a thousand years younger than that. Experts who study Mayan culture have not been able to reach consensus about how their famous calendar came into being. It's been suggested that the Mayans acquired the calendar – along with their written language – from the Olmecs, whose culture has a more ancient history. And actually, archaeologists have made finds on the territory of the ancient Olmecs' settlement at La Venta that confirm a certain continuity or interconnection between those cultures. But what's more interesting is something else.

When scholars took a look at comparative chronology, then it became clear that certain momentous events from the past of human civilization fully coincide with the beginning of the current cycle of the Mayan calendar, the 3114th year B.C.E.. Thus, it is roughly at this time that the mysterious megalithic structure of Stonehenge begins to be constructed. Written language appears in Mesopotamia. In Egypt, following the unification of the Upper and lower Kingdoms and the founding of the fortress of the White Wall (Memphis in Greek,) ruling dynasties are formed. In America they begin cultivating maize. One gets the impression that precisely at that time, a global cultural revolution took place across the whole planet and that people acquired new knowledge, under the influence of certain external forces. According to one of the theories, priests, shamans and holy men of that time came into contact with some repository of secret knowledge during their meditations.

Of course, the predictions of the Mayan culture, the well-known prophecies and official sources that speak of a planetary disaster are worthy of attention. Even so, it's each thinking person alive today who can make the most important and reliable reckoning about the future.

Let's try to analyze in what direction changes in the ecological situation in Russia are tending.

Let's take the time span of just the last fifty years. The majority of the country's population began living in big and middle-sized cities. People in the big cities have ended up without good quality drinking water. As if that weren't enough, people have started having to pay for their most life-sustaining product. Fifty years ago, a situation like this would have seemed simply fantastical to society. Today society has gotten used to it. And it shouldn't have done so. Water is a requirement for everything, and if society agrees to the ever greater pollution of water, then it does not have the right to exist. It isn't someone up on high who's sentencing man to this, but man himself.

"I'm Cancelling the Predicted Hell on Earth"

This phrase was uttered by the taiga hermit Anastasia. I think it's useful for the majority of people living on Earth to utter similar words and to perform acts that correspond to these words. Today this is a matter of life and death.

Many people living on the planet Earth are taking note of the negative results of global warming. Scientists are spreading the word about changes in the Earth's geomagnetic field and about the flooding of entire continents in the not-so-distant future. Such large-scale disasters have begun occurring right before our contemporaries' very eyes, like the one in Indonesia, where more than two hundred thousand people perished, and in the USA, where New Orleans, a city with a population of a million, was flooded. Scientists are also spreading the word about impending changes in the Sun's activity.

Questions about the ecological safety of the Earth have arisen so keenly that they were included in the UN agenda in 2007, at England's initiative. At the beginning of 2008, they were considered by Russia's Security Council.

For the first time, assertions by those forecasting a global disaster began to dovetail with the way contemporary scientists and the leadership of many states viewed this topic.

The priests of the Mayan civilization also spoke about how a global disaster would occur, and that it would take place in 2012.

Many people have heard about this to one degree or another, but even so, public conversations about the 2012 disaster touch on only a small portion of what is spoken about in talks behind closed doors.

It's only by hearsay that we can guess that the Japanese government is taking steps to resettle its population. According to the forecasts, England will be one of the first to be flooded and, evidently, that's why it was the one to initiate the inclusion of ecological questions in the agenda for the meeting of the UN Security Council.

It's possible that the governments of various countries are acting correctly by not publicizing the current situation widely and in detail. Why sow panic in the people? But on the other hand, the majority of a population might perish because they're out of the loop, and if that's the case, then only the informed elite would be able to save themselves, taking one or two hundred slaves each along with them.

Scientists are making predictions about which countries will be swallowed up by the elements, the way Atlantis was, and which ones won't be subject to flooding. In

Russia, for example, the coastal regions will be flooded, and Siberia will end up being the best place to live.

Following global warming on the Earth, an ice age will ensue.

But what difference does it even make what kind of global disaster comes about, if society is in no condition to withstand the disastrous phenomena we already have today, such as the fumes that contaminate the air in the cities, the electromagnetic radiation that penetrates our dwellings, and many others?

Is there an alternative to mankind's sad future? Of course, there is. But all in good time.

And so, at world forums, they've come to a clear conclusion: it's possible that a disaster will occur in coming years. And so here's where an interesting question arises: are leaders, the wealthy, and science capable of taking some kind of measures to avert it? Representatives of global science have been unable to answer this question. The governments of various countries, in an effort to affect the situation in some way, developed the so-called Kyoto Protocol, according to which all countries would be required to reduce harmful emissions into the atmosphere. Thus far, the protocol has remained unratified by many countries.

What might happen in the future does, of course, cause us worry, but shouldn't the disastrous situation that's already playing out today – the situation masquerading as the triumph of civilization – cause us even greater worry?

THE MAN-EATING OCTOPUS

The picture that Anastasia or the dark-haired youth showed, in which people build their homes along the stinking tentacles of a man-eating monster is not fiction at all, but the truest reality. A reality to which people have grown so accustomed that they accept it as a given.

And the monster exists still and is growing in size. It is our roads and what moves along them. Information about this is available to everyone.

We know, for example, that the length of the world's major paved highways exceeds 12 million kilometers, which is, for purposes of comparison, three hundred times the length of the Earth's equator, which extends for approximately forty thousand kilometers. The length of air traffic routes approaches 6 million kilometers, railway tracks are 1.5 million kilometers long, major pipelines stretch for roughly 1.1 million kilometers, and interior waterways – for more than six hundred thousand kilometers. The length of sea lanes equals many millions of kilometers. If we turn to the problem of pollution of the atmosphere by various means of transportation, then automobiles' share would make up 85 percent! And you know, the problem here isn't limited to harmful gases. We shouldn't forget about such unfavorable ecological factors as noise and vibration. So, 80 decibels – which is about the noise level on a busy city street – already has the potential to harm one's hearing. And the development of various means of transportation and the laying down of highways doesn't promote psychological health, either. And here, too, these factors directly or indirectly affect not only drivers and passengers, but also the many people who are outside the means of transportation and communications lines. Crammed roads, sitting for many hours in traffic jams, the fact that sometimes it's impossible even to simply cross the road – all of this sharply heightens nervousness, leads to chronic stress and increased aggression and sometimes drives people to acts they not only never would have committed, but couldn't even imagine themselves capable of committing, had they been in some other place.

Yearly surveys of the condition of the natural environment in the various regions of our country eloquently express the acute nature of the problem of the ecological safety of all Russian big cities without exception. And experts unanimously recognize “the intensifying process of the automobilization of society” as the fundamental reason that the regions' level of ecological safety has decreased. Even now, medical personnel are already testifying that “ecological stress” caused by the automotive and transportation system costs the average resident of a large city in Russia 4 to 5 years of his life. Here we're talking about people and a person, after all, can not only perceive a problem, but articulate it, too. But what about the Earth, for example? Although the

Earth can also articulate a problem, too, in its own way. It's just that amidst the noise and clatter and fumes of our lives, are we still capable of hearing the Earth's voice?

What specifically is it about the automotive and transportation system that is killing the Earth? First of all, you need actual earth when you're building transportation lines, just as you need water and air. In the USA, for example, there's a statistic that the amount of land that highways, railways and airports occupy equals 101,000 square kilometers, while cities occupy 109,000 square kilometers. In Russia, the length of roads is greater than half a million kilometers.

Well, roads are built on the land – what's the problem? The problem is that when roads, pipelines and airports are built and used, the soil is destroyed: you get landslides and sink holes, and erosion advances. And then you get gullies that run along the ruts in dirt roads and grow wider, which exacerbates the situation even more.

The further you go, the more happens: a large expanse of land alongside highways, railways and the oil and gas pipelines that come out onto the surface is polluted with a combination of lead, sulfur, petroleum products and other substances. Experts rank as most dangerous the strip of land that extends 200 meters outward along both sides runs of the busiest highways. This is the reason it is expressly prohibited to grow agricultural products, collect mushrooms and berries, and graze livestock – especially milk-producers – along the sides of roads. (There are known cases of children being poisoned by the milk of cows that have grazed around roads.) Near roads, the layer of air near the ground, up to a meter above the surface, is also devastatingly polluted with dust consisting of particles of asphalt, rubber and metal. You'll find lead in it, along with other substances that possess carcinogenic and mutagenic functions. Those who are fond of taking a stroll or jogging along the roadside should give this some thought, and one should be particularly mindful of this when taking walks with little children – after all, when they're in a stroller or are walking, they're passing right through this hazardous zone.

And here's something else I'd like to add. Please note that the greatest number of harmful roadways is concentrated not in the desert or in Antarctica, but in places with the greatest concentrations of people. And huge cities and metropolitan areas take pride in their killer multi-lane ring highways.

When putting their budgets together, all governments include major financing for constructing and repairing highways. What else could they do? After all, if there were no roads, the residents of metropolitan areas might be left without food and medication. Roads are the blood vessels that provide a person living in a metropolitan area with everything he needs.

Stop! What we've got here is some kind of gibberish. It truly is rampant anti-rationality. The blood vessels which – it would seem – we can't do without, are in truth delivering to us a slow death.

Ah, what spiritual, well-educated and intelligent people we want to seem to be!

But if we leave monsters like this to the new generation, that means we are handing our very own children over to it to be ripped to pieces. Who does that make us in that case?

And there seems to be no way out of the current, absurd situation. But it only seems that way. There *is* a way out. And it lies in the way we live – both the individual person and society as whole.

The exhaust gases from millions of cars, the smokestacks of giant and small companies and other sources that belch out harmful pollutants are but an effect, and not the cause that gave birth to them. The cause lies in the anti-rational, technocratic way of life.

HEADING OFF A PLANETARY DISASTER

Now, many people – starting with the UN and the governments of many countries and ending with ordinary people – are saying that we are on the brink of a planetary disaster.

There's also talk about how human acts are the cause of the disaster.

It goes without saying that simply stating the fact that a calamity is approaching does nothing to head it off. We need concrete, efficacious measures that are capable of changing the situation for the better. But does an efficacious method for finding our way out of a crisis situation exist in nature? Yes, it does! Its "code names" are "family homestead," "the ringing cedars of Russia" and "Anastasia." These words and the images, information and philosophy that stand behind them are capable not only of leading the country out of crisis in very short order, but also of initiating a new phase of harmonious development in society.

So that we can understand how this might come to pass, let's first enumerate some of today's problems.

Ecology. There is not enough good quality air, pure water and healthy food in the cities.

Transportation. Traffic jams many kilometers long have become customary in large cities. Because of poor roads in Russia, up to thirty thousand people die in traffic accidents each year.

Corruption. There is much talk, including on the highest levels, about the scale of this phenomenon. A bureaucrat who embezzles from the treasury, a bribe-taker and a bribe-giver are no less dangerous than enemy saboteurs.

Unemployment. The most dangerous consequence of unemployment is depression. When this illness overcomes one person, he turns into a living corpse. If it overcomes a segment of society, then the state is in danger of dying out.

Drunkenness and Drug Addiction. We've been fighting these afflictions for a long time now, and unsuccessfully.

The Housing Problem. Despite all the efforts that have been brought to bear to resolve it, the situation is only getting worse.

And now, let's imagine the following scenario:

Fifty percent of the population of Russia, America and Canada decides to live a healthy way of life and build a family homestead for their family on a plot of land not less than one hectare in size.

The governments lay the necessary legislative foundation and grant these families the necessary amount of land so they can create settlements of family homesteads.

On the previously abandoned lands of former collective farms, state farms and farmlands, the people who have received land begin building on an unprecedented scale. They build residential homes and the necessary farmyard structures. Those who lack sufficient means do the building using their own family's labor. Those who have the means to do so hire construction crews.

But what's most important is that these people, each of them on their own hectare, are planting gardens and putting in vegetable gardens.

Previously abandoned lands in the Far East, in Siberia and in the Central Region of Russia turn into blooming oases.

In a state that has such oases, the food problem is entirely solved, since families who have changed their way of life not only entirely provide for themselves with first class produce, but are also able to feed the population of large and smaller cities.

The threat of a collapse of the transportation system in big cities disappears. Since the quantity of cars falls by half, the air improves significantly. The housing problem is completely solved, since the housing that has been freed up is granted to all who need it. Unemployment entirely disappears, and the government need not worry about what will happen when unprofitable businesses shut down.

Social tension in society falls sharply. Stratification into poor and rich no longer elicits rage and envy in most people. People have found more important priorities than how much money one has.

Consciously communing with the land opens up such possibilities and horizons for man that the technocratic mind can't imagine them, not even in science fiction films. For this reason, I believe that all of us, all together, need to try to fathom what lies at the heart of the secret of this communing.

Changing the way a significant portion of the population lives will eliminate the possibility of an ecological disaster on a planetary scale.

Some might say that what we have here is a very rosy and fantastical picture of the future. How can a significant portion of the population suddenly experience the inspired desire to begin living a healthy way of life? To build family homesteads by acquiring some land that's overgrown with tall weeds, and pay for it themselves to

boot? And all thanks to some code names and phrases. That's not realistic. That's a fairy tale.

I'll tell you right off, there's no problem where this question is concerned. The words and phrases are efficacious. Tens of people are showing us this in practice. In Russia there are already more than fifteen hundred settlements of family homesteads that have been set up by readers of the books in the "Ringing Cedars of Russia" series. There are the same kind of settlements in Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakhstan.

But what is fantastical, from the point of view of Rationality, is that government agencies have not aided these people enough and have, in some cases, opposed this beautiful aspiration.

A chorus of voices on the international and regional levels is calling for measures to be taken to head off a planetary disaster. But the only people who are really taking actions aimed at heading off social and ecological disruptions are the people who are building family homesteads.

More than a year ago an idea was born: for each person who has founded a family homestead and who is planning to found one to declare his intentions and aspirations. The first time I read a draft of a declaration like this out loud was at a gathering in one of the settlements. The idea was picked up, and since then, the text has undergone a great many changes and additions. I'm offering it here with the most significant additions.

FAMILY HOMESTEAD DECLARATION

Declaration of My Family Homestead (Draft)

I, a citizen of the Russian Federation, have familiarized myself with the philosophy of a way of life that has been set forth in fictional form in the “Ringing Cedars of Russia” book series. The idea of creating a family homestead has inspired me to take action.

I have acquired a plot of land in a deserted spot out in the country, one hectare in size, with the goal of establishing a more perfected dwelling land for my family and my descendants, and in memory of our ancestors.

I gave the given spot the name “Family Homestead.” On the land I acquired I have laid out a garden, dug a pond where fish will breed, and established several families of bees. I cultivate berries and vegetables.

I plan to fertilize the land using solely natural and native means of fertilization.

I believe that it will be a positive development if a large number of families who have the skills and desire to work the land, and who establish their daily lives on family homesteads located around large and small cities, are able to provide urban populations with a large quantity of ecologically pure vegetable produce and improve ecological conditions in the provinces.

I consider it unacceptable that tens of millions of hectares of land in our country are not cultivated and are overgrown with tall weeds, at the same time as we purchase 60% of our food products from foreign countries, and that in addition, these products are also often of low quality and are harmful to humans, especially children.

I believe that this situation not only threatens the safety of food in our country, but also destroys the populaces living within its territories.

I believe that under such conditions, it's counterproductive to accuse the government or anyone else of having made this or that mistake. Our entire society has made mistakes, and not only our country's society. As a result, the societies of many countries stand on the brink of social disruptions. In the current situation, it's essential for each person to think about what concrete steps he personally can take in the very near future to bring about positive changes.

The example of countries that have placed their bets on farm economy shows the ineffectiveness and even destructive nature of this choice. Farmers who focus on earning a profit from growing agricultural products enter into a competitive battle with each other. In order to prevail, they must use pesticides and herbicides and raise harmful genetically modified crops, and by doing this, they endanger the lives of people of entire states.

On the family homestead, a family lives and grows produce to meet its own needs and the needs of its relatives who live in the cities. Thus, a family living on a family homestead has a fundamentally different relationship with the land. The surplus produce from the homesteads will differ from all other produce that appears on the shelves of city stores in its beneficial nature.

The intensifying worldwide economic crisis creates the threat of social disorder in many countries. If we're to come out of this crisis, we must have a fundamentally new philosophy of a family way of life, one that people will understand. And such a philosophy has been set forth in the "Ring of Cedars of Russia" book series. I have accepted its fundamental concepts and they have inspired me to take the actions laid out above.

More than a hundred families – families in which children are being born and raised in a more perfected ecological setting – have each acquired one hectare of land and are already building their own family homesteads alongside my own family homestead. Practice has shown that they're doing so not because of some infusion of capital, but because of this philosophy.

I'm aware that thanks to this philosophy, tens of thousands of families in various regions of Russia, Ukraine and Belarus are already building their family homesteads. Millions of families are planning to do so as soon as a more favorable legislative basis for this is established. Many families are planning to become small business owners and produce agricultural products.

I fully support efforts by the Government and President of the Russian Federation to create favorable conditions for building small houses outside the cities, and to also make lands designated for agricultural use available for the construction of small houses, and to allocate each family a plot of land. I believe that each plot should be not less than one hectare in size, since on a smaller plot it's impossible to establish a comparably perfected and self-sustaining ecosystem and small-scale agriculture.

If families are not allocated a large enough plot of land, the settlements around the cities will turn into consumers instead of producers, which will only exacerbate the food, ecological and social situation in the country. I consider it essential for us to urgently ask the Government and President of the Russian Federation to speed up their work in this direction and adopt the necessary law regarding family homesteads.

I appeal to the President and Congress of the United States of America, to the UN, and to the heads of all states who have a vested interest in the flowering of the

peoples living in them, and recommend that they examine and embrace the idea that creating family homesteads is the most effective plan for enabling countries to come out of the global economic crisis, avert the approaching ecological catastrophe, and avoid a food crisis.

A significant portion of the peoples of Russia see the “Family Homestead” plan as a national idea. May it become an international national idea – and may our countries compete with each other to make the beautiful future a reality.

If the governments of various countries sincerely understand this idea, publicize it and support it, then the depression that is advancing on us can be stopped. An inspired, constructive international process will begin.

The actions of thousands of Russian families have already proven the positive influence of the “Family Homestead” plan. More than fifteen hundred Russian families, who have already begun building their own family homesteads have signed declarations like this one. We continue to collect signatures.

I wish all like-minded people success and inspiration as they creatively build a beautiful environment where their families can live – in various countries, and in the world as a whole!

Signature of the founder(s) of the family homestead

With the passage of time, this document, which has already taken on a life of its own, began to give rise in me to an ever-growing feeling of significance. I was getting the feeling that it's not a passport, a diploma or any awards that constitute a person's most important documents, but precisely this kind of declaration. Returning in my mind to this document again and again, I kept trying to understand why I was having these feelings. The text and language might vary, but they aren't what's most important here. What's important is the essence.

I read the declaration to Anastasia, told her about my feelings, and asked:

“What do you think Anastasia, why do these feelings arise, and not only in me? I've spoken with many people, and they also experience the feeling that the declaration is very significant, but no one can explain why that happens. Why is it?”

“You see, Vladimir, the feeling that this document is significant immediately arose in me, also. But like you and these others, what about it makes me feel that way – I am unable to explain that immediately. Perhaps we need to ponder it a bit together?”

“Perhaps, but I've already pondered it a great deal. The feeling that it's significant remains, but I still haven't understood why that is.”

Suddenly Anastasia drew herself up somehow and began to shine. She began speaking, pronouncing each syllable distinctly, just the way she always did when she was trying to emphasize something significant:

“Vladimir, I think I am beginning to understand where its great significance lies. Look! When the Creator was creating the earthly world, before the great Creation, He first gave voice to his intention. He imparted it to all the entities of the Universe, and when they asked, ‘What is it you so fervently desire?’ he replied, ‘Co-creation and joy for all who behold it.’”

“But can it really be so important to impart your intentions to everyone?”

“Of course. It is very important. For, imparting it to all means, above all, imparting it to yourself, as well. It means comprehending what is taking place, and believing in yourself.

“Besides, having declared your intentions in words, you are already materializing them. By imparting them to all, you call upon them to join you in co-creation.”

“Why do I need to call upon everybody? I mean, somebody might laugh at me, or oppose me, or be indifferent.”

“Derision, opposition and indifference will be participants in the co-creation from the other side. They are needed to fill out this creation, within which you will bring everything into balance.”

“I’m feeling an excitement inside, Anastasia. Where’s that coming from?”

“Vladimir, I, too, feel excited. This document has appeared as a herald of a new era on Earth. The aspirations of the people who stand behind it are holding within them a great realization. For thousands of years people lived without determining their own lives. What were they striving for, and why? What should the new generations carry forth? Should they bear in mind where those paths went wrong? Which paths? Amidst the bustle of life, women gave birth children, but they offered no goals in life to those they bore. Their children knew not, what they were to carry forward. And they would die, the earthly civilizations, having lived out their empty lives. Only pottery shards remained of them, and arrowheads. The children would heed others’ opinions of their parents.

“And what your grandfather wanted of life, Vladimir – he did not impart this to your father and mother in words. Nor did they impart that to you in words. You are their continuation. Tell me, what kind of continuation did they want in life?”

“I don’t know. I can only imagine.”

“You can imagine whatever you might like. But you know for sure that they did not impart it, their life’s aspiration.”

“Of course they didn’t. Nor do all the other people I know.”

“For the first time in perhaps billions of year, as if awakening at dawn, a man has said, ‘I have an aspiration. I will begin my creation, and my generations will live in a promised land around them’¹⁶. And they will perfect the promised land around them. Of course, they will be more perfected than I. But I will begin it all! And a little part of me will live on in my descendants.’

“You can cite many examples of how that which we do not impart in words dies along with the physical body.

“A man was thinking about how he might improve for his descendants the land where he lived, and he planted a cedar tree on his plot. Before long, the man died. Twenty-nine years passed, and the tree grew into a beautiful, spreading cedar, fifteen meters tall. Within but a year it would have borne marvelous, healing fruit, but people – the children of the man who had planted it – cut it down. They thought, why do we need this tree here? It casts a shadow over part of our plot, and its shade is keeping the tomatoes and cucumbers from growing in their beds. And they cut down the spreading cedar, and they cut it down precisely because the man had not given voice to his intentions.

“Genghis Khan conquered nearly half the world and brought Russia, India, China and Palestine together beneath his rule, so that there would be no war. He built roads, lowered taxes, and honored the traditions and cultures of various peoples, but he himself lived not in the palaces he had seized, but in a yurt. He sought to bring wise men from all over the world to him. Together with these wise men, he talked about how they could go about making people happy, and how to help everyone come to know eternity and immortality of peoples. Of all conquerors of the Earth, his empire endured the longest. He knew something. He attained and displayed it, but the empire collapsed all the same. And Genghis Khan has come down to us through the ages as just a conqueror. Who from among those alive today is able to say what his true intentions were? He didn’t give voice to them.”

“Well, perhaps they were just destroyed or are preserved in scrolls somewhere now.”

“Intentions should be preserved not only in scrolls, but in the hearts of the people. Genghis Khan wasn’t able to give voice to them so that they would be passed from generation to generation through the ages.”

¹⁶ **Translator’s note:**

The original Russian phrase is “среда обетованная” (transliterated “sreda obetovannaya” and pronounced “sree-DAH ah-bee-TOH-vuhn-nuh-yuh”). This phrase both echoes the phrase “dwelling land” (“среда обитания”, transliterated “sreda obitaniya” and pronounced “sree-DAH ah-bee-TAH-nee-yuh”) and is also meant to echo the Biblical phrase “promised land” (in Russian “земля обетованна” (transliterated “zemlya obetovanna” and pronounced “zeem-LYAH ah-bee-TOH-vuhn-nuh”). Thus, although “среда” is often translated as “habitat”, I chose to translate it here as “the land around you”, so as to retain the link to both “promised land” and the word “land” in the phrase “dwelling land”. See note 10 for discussion of the latter phrase.

“Those are striking examples. It’s amazing – why, for millions of years didn’t people attach any particular importance to the need to give voice to their lives? Now I’m thinking the same thing, that this document presages a new era. Tell me, Anastasia, how will you give voice to your aspirations – both before people and yourself?”

“Why, all of my aspirations are already laid out in your books, Vladimir. If I were to add anything else specific, I’d say, ‘I will gather together the best sounds from the whole Universe and will embed them into combinations of letters and into musical notes.’ I will ask today’s poets, you, Vladimir, and the bards to give voice to them. A great many people will sense them with their souls. Let people express them in a language they understand, let them model the dawn of the earth and its beautiful flowering. And when the melodies of man’s worthy land embrace the entire Earth, then I, amongst our kind neighbors, will help our grandchildren create their homesteads, and all the while, I will not forget my own family space.

“But what should I say to myself, and how should I voice my own declaration before people?”

“Each person needs to consider that on his own.”

“Yes. Of course. Each person on his own. Even this draft I already have resonates with me. I’ll think on my own about what I can add to it to make it my own.

“I’ll ask all the readers to consider it, too.

“This document is essential. It’s an important missive from the founders of a family homestead to the future generations of their family line. It’s a directive that comes from the people and goes to those at all levels of power, a communication with them. It will be a good thing if each family keeps a beautifully designed document like this, like a kind of relic, alongside the family book¹⁷ of the family homestead’s founders or those who intend to found one.

“A person will read it with awe and gratitude in his family homestead’s beautiful garden even a hundred years later, and he’ll read it and recall the founder. And another person, a hundred years later, a person who has lost his way in life’s whirlwind will suddenly come across it as he’s looking through his parents’ old things and will read about their unfulfilled intentions. And the person will have a burning desire to make them a reality.

“And I think it would also be useful to send this kind of document to each member of local governments personally, and to the UN.

¹⁷ **Translator’s note:**

The original Russian here is “родовая книга” (transliterated “rodovaya kniga” and pronounced “ruh-dah-VAH-yuh KNEE-guh”). This phrase, coined by Vladimir Megre, refers to a book that each family creates when they establish a family homestead. In the family book, family members will write down information about the members of the family line and about the family homestead, so that this valuable information will be preserved and handed down from generation to generation for centuries to come.

“Similarly, I consider it essential to establish a yearly scientific and practical conference called ‘Family Homesteads of the Future.’ under the auspices of the UN.”

MY LONELY LITTLE HECTARE

Anastasia has one trait that is, in my opinion, a bit aggravating. She possesses a colossal volume of information and is happy to answer many questions, but there are some she categorically refuses to answer. Sometimes this categorical nature of hers annoys me, and sometimes it simply enrages me. But even when she sees my annoyance and rage, she nonetheless maintains her position.

For example, she categorically refuses to make a sample layout for a family homestead and its landscaping. “If I were to do that, I’d be meddling in your creation, Vladimir, putting the brakes on your thought’s motion. I would be the one birthing the design, not you. It would be as if it were not your own child,” she says, and then she brings in various other arguments, as well.

But a serious and insoluble situation had come up for me that was precisely concerned with establishing a homestead. I spent a long time thinking about how to convince Anastasia to either help me or to say that the problem was insoluble so that I wouldn’t spend my time and have nothing to show for it.

I made another attempt to win Anastasia over and convince her to sacrifice her principles. I picked a suitable time – it was a sunny day and the taiga was fragrant. Anastasia was sitting beneath a cedar tree, weaving her golden hair into a braid. I was walking back and forth near her, mentally selecting some weighty arguments. She was the first to speak. Smiling, she asked affectionately:

“Have some complicated thoughts gotten you all stirred up, Vladimir? You’re right here beside me, yet at the same time, in your thoughts, you’re far from these parts.”

I took a seat next to Anastasia and began to speak, trying to be as convincing as possible.

“You see, Anastasia, a certain situation has come up, and I can’t possible deal with it without your help.”

“What situation, Vladimir?”

“Seven years ago, not far from the city of Vladimir, when I was having a look at the surrounding countryside, I drove onto a field in my jeep and got stuck. The vehicle was stuck up to its underside and the only way to pull it out was to use a tractor. While I was waiting for the tractor driver, I looked around at the abandoned field, overgrown with tall weeds. It was a rather pretty spot there. The field was surrounded by a mixed

forest, and a stream flowed in front of the forest, and not far off, you could glimpse a big lake. And I thought, it would be a good thing if a settlement of family homesteads were to spring up here. People would build pretty homes, dig flower beds, put in gardens and build some normal roads.

“And I could hardly believe it – that’s exactly what happened: a year later, on that very spot. People – readers of the ‘Ringing Cedars of Russia’ book series – began acquiring land so they could build family homesteads. The organizers suggested I take a hectare, too, and – I don’t even why, myself – I agreed. Maybe right then I felt like supporting them. But I hardly did anything at all with my hectare, and sometimes I’d totally forget about it. I only called twice and asked people to sow some mustard on the land, to improve the soil. The lands there are not very fertile – there’s layer of fertile soil about fifteen to twenty centimeters thick, and below that there’s about thirty centimeters of sand, and below that, nothing but clay.

“I totally forgot about my hectare. I have an apartment and a country house not far from town. You know of it, Anastasia. And I have a place to live in Siberia, too.

“But then, five years later, I happened to come to the spot where my jeep had gotten stuck. Even as I was driving up, I was astounded by what I saw. Can you imagine, Anastasia? Miracles *do* happen! Along both sides of the big lake, in the spot where there used to be a deserted space, there were homes. All different kinds. Big ones, solid ones and totally tiny ones. Driveways paved with gravel led from the main road to the homes. People had divided up the abandoned fields surrounding the lake into plots and were building up their family homesteads.

“I recalled how I’d dreamed there, by my stuck jeep, about family homesteads on just one field. But here, I could hardly believe it – people were settling all the fields surrounding the lake. A little island of the new and happy Russia was being born on this deserted space, overgrown with tall weeds.”

“That means your dream was powerful, Vladimir, and correct. They embraced it. And now you’ve seen the way it’s materializing, developing.”

“I should have been more careful what I wished for, five years ago, by my jeep. If I’d known how everything would turn out, then I’d have nipped that dream in the bud. I failed to take one thing into account, Anastasia.

“Now I’ll tell you everything in order. And this is where I desperately need your help.”

“Go on, then, Vladimir, and tell me everything in order.”

“Five years later, I was riding along a gravel road in that very same jeep with one of the local settlers. One spot caught my eye, and I stopped the jeep by a hectare that was overgrown with tall weeds. To the left of it, on another hectare, was a construction trailer, and next to it – a beautiful home with a roof had been put up. It didn’t have any

glass in the windows as of yet, but from all appearances you could see that people were making their family homestead livable. And to the right of the abandoned hectare was a beautiful, wooden home, too, as well as farmyard structures, and a bathhouse, and they'd dug a pond. It was as if this home on the right took great pride in its flower beds and, of course, in the people that had made it beautiful. And then I said to my travelling companion, 'I get the impression that these hectares of land have their own fates, and that their fates are tied with the people's.'

"'I think so, too,' my travelling companion replied. 'Probably, each person has his own hectare of land somewhere on Earth, but he doesn't know anything about it, or has forgotten about it.'

"I went on talking. 'When huge fields are abandoned, individual hectares don't feel so insulted, because they're all in the same situation, like homeless children. But this is a different case. It's insulting. The hectares to the right and the left are being set up, but this one, between the two of them, looks like an abandoned child.'

"My companion said nothing and even looked down somehow, as if he felt awkward, both for the hectare overgrown with tall weeds, and for the person who'd abandoned it.

"And I asked, 'Whose hectare is this?' 'It's yours, Vladimir Nikolaevich,' my travelling companion replied, without raising his eyes.

"'Mine?...'

"'Yes. Well, we all got together and made a driveway onto it. We laid a pipe in the ditch and covered it over with stone. We put in posts to mark the driveway, and we planted little fir trees on both sides. But nothing more – each person looks after his own land.'

"I got out of the car. On my hectare, which is almost an exact square, a hundred meters by a hundred, and which abuts the forest, only tall weeds were growing. It didn't just *seem* abandoned and lonely, like a homeless child. No, it was far worse off than a homeless child. Even a homeless child can go off somewhere, find himself some friends among his peers and somehow get himself set up. My hectare couldn't do that.

"I set off along the perimeter of the plot and suddenly saw two beautiful little flowers amongst the tall weeds. It was autumn. September. But they were blooming. You couldn't see them from the road because the weeds were taller. 'Wow,' I thought, 'My hectare is striving to be beautiful, too. Who knows how the flower seeds got here, but my hectare grew them and is reaching out to me through these little flowers, the way a child reaches out with his arms, and it's asking me to do something.'

"And some irresistible desire arose in me, the desire to set up this plot of land, no matter what, so that it would be no worse than other people's plots, and maybe even better. I don't know why that kind of desire arose. I wasn't thinking of this plot of land

as a family homestead for my family. I just wanted to make everything on it right and beautiful. And I didn't just *want* to – suddenly some irresistible idea arose to make it the best of all of them. Maybe later on it will draw my granddaughters to it. When it becomes the best in the world.

“I've returned to my hectare many times in my mind. I've sketched out the layout of various outbuildings on paper and made a list of the plants that should grow on it. I had to finish my work on the book and take care of a great number of other day-to-day affairs, but this hectare continually stirred up my thoughts in a pleasant way and even led my thoughts away from unpleasant problems. It's amazing, but it's actually thanks to it that I've been able to overcome a whole series of day-to-day difficulties and psychological problems. You know, there really is something mysterious in man's bond with the land. Some living link stands behind this bond. And the desire to make my land beautiful and well-tended has grown stronger and stronger.”

“A good desire has arisen within you, Vladimir, even passionate, I'm sensing. It will also be of help to you.”

“‘It' who?’”

“Your hectare. You yourself say that it stirs up your thoughts and leads them away from unpleasant problems.”

“There are very big challenges connected to that hectare, Anastasia. It's kind of like a child with a congenital physical defect.”

“What kind of defect?”

“Nothing will grow on those lands except weeds. Vegetables won't grow. And the people in those parts don't have normal gardens. There's a village nearby, it's two hundred years old, but the village residents don't have normal gardens, either. Those lands there have a very thin fertile layer, and then right below it, nothing but clay. In the spring the water sits on the surface for a long time, and in the summer, too, if you get a rainy summer. Most plants' roots can't penetrate the clay. If you were to dig a deep hole in the clay, fill it with fertile earth brought in from somewhere, even then the tree might die. Water will collect in the clay pit in the rainy season, the clay will retain it, and the roots will rot.”

“Vladimir, I do not think that the situation is so very hopeless as you've painted it. Tell me, how do the people feel about what is happening? Maybe they're disheartened?”

“No, they're not disheartened. The majority of them, they sense that this is their family land, for centuries to come. Some of them, even their parents come to visit, live there for a bit and then ask to be buried not in a cemetery, but on the family homestead. Everything's fine, but the fact that the land can't bear fruit in a normal way is very

upsetting to me. I even regretted having dreamt of a settlement springing up on this spot. Now it's like I feel guilty."

"What steps will you take now, Vladimir, in regard to your own hectare?"

"I don't intend to abandon it. I think there must be some way out."

"I also think so. You must search for it and find it."

"I've searched for it, but I haven't found it. So, I'm asking you to please help."

"What task are you posing, Vladimir? Lay it out, in detail."

I was overjoyed that Anastasia had asked about the specifics of the task, and I decided to formulate it in the most complicated way possible. Otherwise, I thought, it wouldn't be interesting for her. I began to explain:

"Anastasia, I'm asking you, I ask from the bottom of my heart, please arrange it so that apple trees and plum and pear trees, and cherries and sour cherries can grow on my hectare, and on other people's, too. So grapes can ripen! And good flowers and various shrubs. And also arrange it so that all of this can be done at minimal expense. Something an average person can afford, not an oligarch who can put in millions of dollars."

"Is that all, Vladimir?"

"No, Anastasia, that's not all. I ask you, please. I ask you from the bottom of my heart. Arrange it so that all of this comes to pass in no longer than three years."

"Four or five years would be better."

"No, in three."

"You've set a fine task for yourself, Vladimir. I will genuinely rejoice when you solve it."

I actually got worked up to a fever pitch by that answer. I jumped to my feet, but restrained myself and didn't say anything rude. I tried to calm down – as much as that was possible – and explain:

"Anastasia, after all, I'm not just asking on my own behalf. Please understand. There are three hundred families there on that spot. Three hundred. They're building family homesteads. They've understood what you've said, they've felt it deeply. It's become their dream! But they're setting up their homesteads on land that is totally, totally low in productivity. It's even listed that way in the books. These people wouldn't be able to get any other kind of land. Before, back before Perestroika, these lands belonged to a State farm. At that time, the State worked to improve those lands – with a drainage system, by sinking pipes into the ground to drain off the water, but even

so, aside from grain, nothing would grow on them.

“And now all those improvements are no longer in existence, the equipment has all been stolen, and there’s practically nothing that can be done. And would it even be worth doing, since it didn’t help? How can we improve the productivity of the soil on my hectare now?”

“And besides that, I can’t fully imagine the layout of my entire plot. I really want to make everything beautifully and quickly. I need to catch up to the people who are five years ahead of me. And so here I’m asking you to help, to do this layout for me and choose the plantings.”

“Yes, certainly, Vladimir, the layout is very important. The layout – it is creation done with the help of the thought of the future, and then the materialization takes place. But if you farm out the layout to me, then what of *yours* will be materialized on that plot of land?”

“I’m telling you – I’m also planning it myself, but I’m afraid of making a mistake. So, in practice I came up against something that would seem to be such a simple matter, like a living fence, and it turns out that it’s not a simple matter at all. You can work on improving it forever, but you need just as much knowledge as a space ship designer. You have to know what plant blooms at what time, what kind of soil it needs, how tall it will get over the summer, what kind of flowers it has and how they’ll go with the other plants’ flowers, and a whole lot more. I made a plan to build something out of cob, but the experts say it the rain will wash it away. Can you imagine – I’ll be building something and will hire workers, and then I’ll be a laughing stock.”

“Even if you do make a mistake, Vladimir, then it will be *your* mistake, and it will materialize. For this reason, you need to do the layout yourself. Certainly, you can consult with someone, but in this case, the final decision must always rest with you. In the spring, Vladimir, it is all right for you to plant only annuals, and when they grow up, mow them down and enrich the soil. And do the very same the following year.”

“I can’t wait. I want to do things fast. Otherwise I’ll lose more than a whole ‘nother year.”

“Perhaps you shouldn’t rush? It’s better to do everything on a sound footing. What’s more, if you set yourself the condition of creating everything anew all in one year, then you will be extremely limited in your choice of plantings, and in the autumn, when all the annuals dry up and your living fence is left without any plantings, it might disenchant you. Now, if you do everything properly, then you will receive more positive emotions. Although certainly, it is also possible to do everything using a fast track approach.”

Anastasia grew thoughtful for a moment, and it seemed to me that she was considering the fast track approach, but here is what we ended up with.

THE OBSTACLE OF LACK OF FAITH

“What you are asking for, Vladimir, can be done. I sense that it can be done, but you do not want to seek the solution yourself. Rather than spending your energy on the search, you are expending it on convincing me to find a solution.

“You have placed an obstacle before you, consisting of lack of faith in your own powers, and, as you try to convince me, you are fortifying this obstacle more and more. Beyond it, Vladimir, beyond your obstacle of lack of faith in your own powers, there are beautiful gardens blooming and glorious flowers growing, and amongst them are living happy people. Yet you cannot see all of this. The obstacle you have constructed keeps you from doing so.

“If I find the solution, then it will grow more fortified still. What’s more, the solution might turn out to be very, very simple, and that would be an affront to you. You will think, why ever couldn’t I guess that myself? You will decide it is clear that you are not competent.

“You have turned to me, perhaps thinking me a sorceress who is capable of bringing to bear powers unknown to man to solve your problem, but I am no sorceress at all. Through my feelings, I am able to take in from the Universe information about everything that has been, about everything that the Universe knows, but every person is also capable of taking in the very same information, if he does not erect the obstacle of lack of faith in his own powers. If he is physically healthy and if he thinks in an undistorted way.

“The information of the Universe resembles that which a supercomputer can contain within it. A person who possesses a computer taps several keys and receives the information he needs. Now imagine, Vladimir, that instead of tapping several keys, you ask me to do that. A person is in continual need of information, and if he does not himself know how to tap these keys himself, then he will always need to have alongside him someone who does know how.”

“Well, I know how to get information using a computer. I *don’t* know how to get it from the Universe.”

“It’s simple, very simple: seek the solution of your problem yourself. Believe that you, precisely *you*, will find the correct solution. The most correct one.”

“Well, I’ve been thinking bout this, thinking about it for a whole year, and there’s no answer.”

“And I am telling you: the answer cannot make its way through the obstacle you have constructed, and your fervent appeal to me only confirms this. I will not solve your problem for you.”

Anastasia’s decisive refusal to help me outraged me.

“Well, of course, you won’t. You’re firm in your convictions. No arguments can make you act otherwise,” I said, with bitter irony. “I repeat, again: there are three hundred families there, and God forbid the same situation arises for people building family homesteads in other places that has arisen here, but there are three hundred...”

“Vladimir, perhaps God actually gave rise to this situation. Imagine: if there had been fertile soil there right from the start, then these people would not have received these spots. Perhaps God himself arranged everything this way, and those in power deemed these lands unsuitable for growing gardens. This situation made it possible for three hundred families to acquire this land and begin building family homesteads. Perhaps someone is even having a laugh at their expense and figuring that their heavenly oases won’t succeed, but the information will push its way through to one of them in the form of a tiny spark, and these spots will be lit up by billions of flowers on fruit trees and in the grasses.”

“Maybe it *will* push its way through, that tiny spark, but look, we want to live today, now, and with a beautiful vision of the future, not with hopelessness.”

All of a sudden I sensed a pleasant warmth behind my back and turned around. My son Volodya¹⁸ was standing next to me. Our eyes met, and the unusual warmth grew stronger.

My son’s face looked like Anastasia’s and maybe a little bit like mine when I was young. His height was nearly equal to mine. His still youthful build was distinguished by its good proportions and unusual athleticism – one expressed through ideal balance, rather than artificially pumped up muscles.

My son’s gaze... it resembled Anastasia’s affectionate gaze, and in this gaze there was also... You see, in his gaze you could detect an inexplicable confidence. An inexplicable and somehow calm confidence. It’s as if he has no idea that any difficulties even exist in life, or as if he can’t imagine any situations that man can’t overcome.

Volodya bowed to me and then began speaking, addressing Anastasia:

“Mama, I heard what you were speaking of here. Mama, please allow me to address you and express my opinion.” He bowed deferentially to Anastasia and silently awaited her reply.

¹⁸ **Translator’s note:**

Volodya (in Russian, “Володя”, transliterated “Volodya” and pronounced “Vah-LOH-dyuh”) is a diminutive name Vladimir.

This was the first time I had seen or felt the kind of deference and love he had for Anastasia. He probably couldn't begin a conversation without her permission.

Anastasia looked at our son attentively, in no hurry to answer. There was no severity in her gaze, but rather tenderness and respect.

"Strange," I thought. "Why is she taking so long to answer this simplest request of his? The speed of her thought is great – in the space of such a long pause she would be able to calculate a multitude of variations of the way events could play out. But here, there's nothing to calculate."

Anastasia finally replied:

"Do speak, my dear son. Papa and I will listen to you attentively."

"Mama, I feel it would be good and correct for you to help Papa. I feel it's important for him to solve this problem. And if you help him, the obstacle of lack of faith in his own powers and his own intelligence will not grow more fortified, but rather, smaller. It will even crumble – partially, perhaps, but it will still crumble." And Volodya fell silent.

Once again, Anastasia did not answer right away. For some time she looked at our son affectionately, smiling, and then she said:

"Well, of course you are right, my dear son – in the given situation, it really is necessary to help Papa. Volodya, you go ahead. Please help Papa. The two of you will find a solution, along with other people. It will be best if you begin searching for it right away, right here, and I will not hinder you."

Anastasia turned and began slowly moving away from us. After taking a few steps, she turned around and added:

"You are faced with co-creating a very interesting and useful deed – demonstrably and significantly perfecting the dwelling land."

My son and I stood before each other. I asked him:

"Tell me, Volodya, can you use all the information there is in the Universe, the way Mama can? Many thinkers speak of it. Stanislaw Lem, a very famous writer, he said the Universe is like a supercomputer. We can't get along without it. Do you have any success in utilizing it?"

"Not in utilizing it as fast as Mama does."

"Why not?"

"Because Mama is a purebred."

"What does that mean, 'a purebred'?" I asked in surprise.

“That means the wellspring peoples’ breed has been preserved in her.”

“And why hasn’t it been preserved in you? Oh, I get it...” And I thought to myself, “It’s because I’m not a purebred. That’s probably the way Anastasia explained it to him. But then why the heck did she agree to have a child with a non-purebred? She couldn’t find anyone else? Is that what it means?”

My son looked at me attentively. It’s possible he understood what I was thinking about, and he said:

“Mama loves you very much, Papa. Come along with me. I’ll show you two things.”

“Let’s go,” I said, agreeing, and set off following my son.

When we got to the entrance to the dug-out where I’d spent the night with Anastasia when we first met, Volodya moved aside a stone, thereby opening up a way into a longish little cave, or den. He stuck his hand inside and, as if taking something out of a safe, pulled out an empty cognac bottle and a stick.

I recognized it: this was the bottle from which I’d drunk the cognac when we first met, when we stopped for a rest. “Wow,” I thought. “She kept the bottle.”

“But what’s that stick?” I asked Volodya.

“This is the stick you wanted to hit Mama with, when, before I was born, she wouldn’t agree to give me to you to raise.”

“She could have not saved the stick,” I said sheepishly.

“Mama says that when you were holding this stick, a great deal of energy was surging through you, and now it’s very dear to her.”

“But what does she do with them, with these things? At the very least, she might collect water in the bottle.”

“Mama doesn’t collect water in it. She often comes to this spot, moves aside the stone, takes the bottle and the stick in her hand, looks at them, smiling, and says some words. She’s made it so that you’ll live forever, Papa. From time to time you’ll go to sleep for a moment and awaken in a new body.”

I was stunned. “But how can you create such a thing with words?”

“You can create a great deal with words, Papa, and especially when these words are uttered by Mama. Oh, and when she repeats them so often, besides.”

“What words are these, Volodya?” I asked my son softly.

And my son began, as if reciting poetry, to recite the words Anastasia would

often utter at this spot:

“My love, you and I have before us all eternity. Life always comes into its own. A little ray of sun will shine in the springtime, the Soul will don a new body, but the mortal body, too, has reason to meekly embrace the earth – fresh flowers and grass will rise in the springtime from our bodies. And should you, retaining your lack of faith, scatter to the winds as specks of dust in the vast Universe, then I, my love, will put you back together again from the specks of dust wandering adrift for eons on end.”

“Volodya, I also heard Anastasia say these words one day. I thought it was just some pretty phrase she was uttering. I had no idea they had a literal meaning.”

“Yes, Papa, they have a literal meaning.”

“Well, how do you like that,” I said, drawing out the words. “Many thanks to Anastasia for eternity.”

“Papa, say thank you to Mama when you see her. Say it to her with belief in her words, and she will be very happy.”

“I’ll tell her.”

“We need to solve your problem, Papa, the problem that’s now our shared problem. Let’s go to the lake. We’ll sketch out a layout of the hectare you’re talking about in the sand, and we’ll think about how to set it up. We’ll think very powerfully and we’ll think until the correct solution comes to us.”

I walked behind my son and thought, “Well, but how? How can it come to us, this solution? There’s no answer to be found, not in the literature and not on the Internet. I’d searched for it everywhere, but hadn’t found it. I’d consulted with experts on agricultural methods, and they hadn’t given me any valuable advice. But he, Volodya, had clearly not read anything on this question. He didn’t have Anastasia’s capabilities. He didn’t know how to utilize information from the entire Universe. Then what could he use to help him find something there? But there he was, walking along, as if he was capable of solving the problem. We need to do something that will be more effective than meaningless expectations or searching.” And I decided I’d talk with my son.

“Stop, Volodya. Let’s have a seat on that tree there. I need to have a serious chat with you.”

“All right, Papa, let’s have a seat. I’ll listen to you attentively.”

We sat down on the trunk of a fallen tree. My son laid his hands on his knees and looked at me attentively with Anastasia’s gaze, but I didn’t know how to start off this not very pleasant conversation with him. Not very pleasant, but necessary.

“Now I’m going to say some things that may be not very pleasant for you,

Volodya, but I need to say them.”

“Go ahead and say them, Papa. I can endure unpleasant things. I won’t be offended.”

“Volodya, you need to understand that Anastasia directed you to help me so that I’d stop pestering her with my questions. You won’t be able to offer any help whatsoever, not to me, and not to those people who are setting up their homesteads. You don’t have Mama’s capabilities, you don’t know your way around agricultural methods, and clearly, you don’t know what ‘landscape design’ is. Am I right?”

“Papa, I think that landscape design is when a person is planning to create a space that’s beautiful.”

“That’s more or less it, but in order to make it beautiful, people who have a knack for this also spend five years or more studying, sharing information and looking at various illustrations. But have you seen even one well-designed homestead?”

“When Mama and I went to the village, I saw the way, on the land around their houses, people...”

“All you’ve seen is village gardens that have no design at all.”

“Yes, Papa, gardens. But I’ve imagined how I would make my own homestead. I’ve reflected on that often and imagined it.”

“Just imaginings alone aren’t enough. You need serious and comprehensive knowledge that you don’t have. And so, it follows that you have no basis for thinking. As for me, well, I’ve been thinking for a lot more than a year. And not just thinking – I’ve been consulting with experts, too. It’s all no use. And we won’t be able to get this business off the ground now simply with our thinking. But you really *can* help. I’ve hatched a plan. You should help me convince Anastasia to join in with us on solving this problem. If we give it all we’ve got, she’ll give in.”

“But Papa, Mama already made a decision. And her decision *is* help. I cannot allow myself to try to convince Mama to reverse her decision.”

“I see! He can’t allow himself!” I cried. “So, when Mama tells you to help, you obey her without thinking. But when your father asks, then right away it’s ‘I won’t.’ So that’s how you’re being raised! No respect for your elders! For your father!”

“I have great respect for you, Papa,” Volodya objected calmly. “I will carry out your request and help you.”

“Now, that’s more like it. Now, let’s take a bit of a walk somewhere until evening, then we’ll go to Anastasia as if we’re really upset. She won’t be able to stand it and will start helping us.”

“Papa, when I said I would help, I mean that I’d work with you to solve the problem of how to make the soil more productive, and make a mock-up of the landscaping for the whole homestead.”

“Ah, so that’s how it is! You mean, you’ll help me solve it. Do you even get... Come on, you’ll get it...” And I set off walking toward the shore at a fast clip.

I used a twig to sketch out a plan in the sand of the hectare abutting the forest. Volodya used various grasses and sticks, which he stuck into the sand on one side, to represent the forest that abuts the side of the plot opposite the road. I had sketched the layout of the plot just so Volodya could realize in practical terms of how useless his attempts were. But then it happened that I myself got caught up in searching for all possible options.

We spent two days thinking about this problem of how to arrange it so that gardens would grow up and various vegetables would mature on not very fertile land. We went over and over it in our minds and discussed a great many options, but we weren’t finding a solution to the problem. And we weren’t finding a solution, because one of the conditions was to do everything with minimal resources. If not for that condition, then with enough money we could bring in fertile dirt on dump trucks, but we would need a minimum of fifty loads of dirt. Each load costs seventeen thousand rubles. It follows that we’d need eight hundred-fifty thousand rubles.

The majority of the three hundred families couldn’t afford that. What’s more, in the spring, water close to the surface might wash out the fertile layer and carry it away as it ran off to the flat lands.

In order to distract ourselves from what at that point seemed like the hopeless problem of improving the soil’s productivity, Volodya and I began designing the landscaping for the area. Or, more precisely, we attempted to arrange various structures so that they’d complement each other and the surrounding area.

I explained to Volodya:

“First of all we need to build the outhouse and the bath house, then the shed, the home, the garage, the root cellar and the greenhouse. We have to arrange all of this somehow so it will be both pretty and convenient.”

We constructed a mock-up of the home out of sand and placed it at the center of the plot. The bath house and outhouse were next to the home, and the shed on the backside of the home. We created the greenhouse out of sand, too. We laid a little white stick atop the oblong mound so it would look like glass or plastic sheeting.

Clearly, this greenhouse wouldn’t fit in anywhere. We built it first to the right of the home and then to the left, but even so, it stuck out of the overall grouping like a sore thumb. And really, I didn’t like this so-called grouping itself, and, to all appearances, neither did Volodya. Gazing thoughtfully at the rough design, he said:

“We’ve made some kind of mistake.”

“And not just one,” I added. “Looks like there’s a lot of them.”

“But even so, I think it’s one. There must be some kind of right approach, some principle, some view, or some other kind of thing that will solve all the problems at once.”

“And what kind of new approach could that possibly be? I’ve laid everything out the way most people in the country do. This layout has been worked out over the centuries. It’s all we’ve got. People just can’t have been mistaken for centuries, not knowing some principle that might not even exist at all.”

“It does exist. I sense that.” Volodya was silent for a bit and then added, “Or, perhaps it *will* exist. We have to think, Papa, and we’ll find it.”

“And where the heck will we find it, if neither you nor I is in contact with this Universal data base?”

“We’ll look for it within ourselves.”

“Well, maybe *you’ll* find it within you, but I’ll be sixty years old soon, and I probably won’t have enough time.”

“We’ll have enough time, Papa. We’ll definitely have enough time. I’ll try very, very hard. I’ll find it. We’ll find it.”

I had strained my thoughts to such a great extent, that even during the night, when I’d fallen asleep on the fragrant grasses in the dug-out, I kept going over and over all possible options in my dreams. In my dreams, the fruit trees and flowers grew quickly, right before my very eyes, but then they just as quickly wilted and fell without giving any fruit.

A DUEL OF WIZARDS

By the middle of the second day, we were considering this option: what if we didn't drive ourselves crazy worrying about soil productivity and didn't draw the spring waters off the plot, but rather, blocked the streams from draining off and chose plants that love water? This option proved somewhat sparse, and it lacked a good garden. At this point Anastasia came up, leading our daughter by the hand.

Little Nastenka probably figured that Volodya and I were playing some kind of game. She quickly sat down with us and began attentively looking over the mock-up. We'd already dug out a pit on it to represent the pond. On the edge there was a mountain of sand that represented the clay, since there was a lot of clay in the soil on the plot.

So as not to sit there like a lump, I began running a stick around the perimeter of the hectare, deepening the boundary line. Then I threw away the stick and began simply looking at the sand mock-up.

On all fours, Nastenka crawled right up to the mock-up, sat down at the edge, thoughtfully rubbed her little nose for some reason and suddenly... Her chubby little hand started raking the sand onto the boundary line and forming a little hill. She did this slowly and carefully. When she got to the middle of one of the sides of the hectare, Volodya, too, began making an oblong little hill on his side. And without knowing why myself, I also began raking the sand up onto the line with both hands.

What we ended up with was a hectare framed on four sides with an earthen mound. Silently, we looked at what we'd created. Each of us, me included, was probably trying to understand what this might mean.

Anastasia's voice rang out behind my back. "Ah! I've got it! How great! You've found a very unusual solution! Now, now I will attempt to understand, to guess your intention more precisely. There! I've got it! You decided to take the already existing fertile soil on the hectare and spread a nearly meter-high mound of fertile soil along the perimeter of the hectare. And to use a portion of the fertile layer as well as sand. Great! You've increased the thickness of the fertile layer.

"Around the perimeter of the entire plot, you decided to make two little walls of cob, four meters apart. There will be a lot of clay from digging the pond, and you can use it to construct these little walls. In this way, your mound will end up being inside a clay trench. Into this trench you will throw branches and rotting foliage from the forest, and then you will even out the earth on top of them. You will have a long, four-hundred-meter compost trench in which the elevated earth will be above the

regular level of the whole plot. The clay walls will prevent the fertile layer from sliding off when the spring rains fall.

“The elevated earth will warm up more quickly in the spring, and this will enable you to set out many plants two weeks earlier than usual. This means that you have correctly understood, that it makes less sense to make compost by digging a hole in earth where water stands on the surface for a long time, since the pit will fill with water, water which, in soil with much clay in it, will have nowhere to go, and if you plant fruit trees in it, their roots can rot.

“On this mound, already the first year, you will be able to plant corn and sunflowers, and along the external sides – flowers. By autumn, already in the very first year, the hectare will be framed not simply by a mound, but by a mound on which a two-meter high green fence will grow. Closer on to autumn you will cover it over, spread earth over it again, and by the next spring, this mound will grow more fertile still. When the earth firms up, you will be able to set out on it fruit trees, vegetables and flowers. Over time, the clay walls might settle, due to moisture, but even so, the settled clay will still retain the fertile layer, and the plants’ roots will keep it from sliding off.

“And those half-meter cob squares you will have built next to the pond – what are they for? Oh, don’t tell me! I’ve got it. You will fill them with fertile soil you’ve brought from the forest, and you’ll plant fruit trees in them, and around the trees – vegetables and flowers.

“It’s great, what a simple and original solution you’ve found. You decided to raise the fertile layer in the necessary spots, increasing it to half a meter. The roots will be warm and comfortable in a little hill like that. And after that, the trees that grow will themselves do what’s needed. Each autumn the trees will cast off their foliage, and it will all rot, increasing the fertile layer.

“It’s great. It’s as if you pushed a button and turned on a self-nurturing biological organism.”

I understood that Anastasia was laying out the solution *she* had found, but making it seem as if *we* had found it and all she was doing was figuring it out. This situation did not humiliate me in the least. I was thrilled with the solution she’d found. It was simple and beautiful and wouldn’t require large expenditures.

But Volodya was not at all thrilled. He was staring fixedly at the mock-up of the homestead without lifting his head. My heart even felt like it would break when I understood what might be going on in his soul at that moment. He felt awkward before me for having assured me that he could find a solution. And probably before himself as well, for not carrying out the task Anastasia had given him.

My son and I had grown closer over as we’d working on the design together over that day and a half, and I didn’t get offended at all any more at his stubbornness. I saw how Volodya was trying, sorting through all possible options for improving the soil’s

productivity. And now I felt sorry for him, and I even stopped listening to Anastasia. Really, you can't go and humiliate a child like that! It wasn't enough that the night before, I'd kept telling him, trying to prove he wouldn't be able to come up with anything – now Anastasia, too, with her ensuing criticism, had totally reduced our efforts to rubble. She shouldn't act that way. Or... It seemed to me that Anastasia was teasing our son on purpose, forcing him to rack his brains and speed up his thought.

“And so what does this square in the middle of your design represent?” Anastasia asked.

“It's the home,” I replied. “Volodya and I decided to situate the home right in the middle of the homestead. There are various farmyard structures around it. We've laid a road from the gates to the home, and flowers will be growing along the edges of the road.”

I was convinced that Anastasia would begin praising such a decision, which is why I said “Volodya and I,” although it had been my idea to situate the home in the middle of the homestead. I wanted to support my son in at least some way, but I'd ended up doing the opposite.

“Now, where is the entrance into your home?” Anastasia asked.

“On the driveway side, of course. You drive right straight up to the entrance, leave your car in the parking area right in front of it and go up to the veranda. There'll be a table there. We can drink tea with friends and admire the flowers.”

“As well as the driveway,” Anastasia added, her voice a bit needling.

“As well as the driveway,” I replied, “if the driveway is done in a pretty stone.”

“And what is situated behind the home?”

“Behind the home are the pond, the garden, and a vegetable garden of some kind.”

“That means your garden has ended up in the back yard. You're drinking tea on the veranda with your friends, admiring the flowers, and everything that's situated in the back yard is deprived of your attention. Vladimir, you know very well that all animals and plants need human attention. Without it, they are unable to fully fulfill their life's purpose.

“Plants can give a person the energies he needs, assuming they know precisely which energies he needs in the first place. But how will they learn about this if you limit your interaction with them? Vladimir, do you know what the purpose is of interacting with the plant world?”

“I do,” I replied, trying to hide my disappointment that – as it turned out – I hadn't been terribly successful in placing the home. Half the hectare, including the

garden, really had ended up in the back yard.

“And something else I don’t understand,” Anastasia continued, “is why you didn’t remove that huge hill on the bank of the pond. It weighs down the space.”

After hearing these words, Volodya couldn’t restrain himself any more. He stood up, bowed slightly to Anastasia as he’d done before, and said:

“Mama, please permit me to clarify this for you.”

“Please, dear son, clarify it.”

They were standing opposite each other, son and mother. But for some reason, I got the impression that they were two great wizards of the Universe standing opposite each other. Now they were going to enter into a duel. A duel of intelligence and man’s capabilities. My God, how beautiful Anastasia was! How enigmatic and extraordinary in her capabilities and thought was this woman who had become the person closest to me. One life, and even two, would not suffice for me to reach her level. And our son, whose facial features somewhat resembled Anastasia’s, was also handsome and statuesque, but a bit foolhardy or excessively self-confident. Why was he entering into the showdown? And in my presence, to boot. He himself has said that Anastasia’s capacities exceed his own. Probably, he’s proud and decisive, but a bit foolhardy. Even so, I was rooting for Volodya with all my heart – I wanted him to emerge victorious in this competition, whatever form it might take. And it began.

“This isn’t just a hill, Mama,” Volodya said.

“Then what in the world is it?” Anastasia inquired with a smile, her voice a bit needling.

“Well, how should I put it...”

Slowly, drawing out the words, clearly trying to think up some rational explanation for the hill, Volodya suddenly said:

“It’s the bath house, Mama.”

I even started, so surprisingly absurd was my son’s announcement, but, without knowing why myself, I affirmed this, with a kind of gravitas:

“Yes, it’s a normal contemporary bath house, a structure you really need on a homestead. If you don’t have a bath house, then where the heck are you going to wash and have a steam bath?” I tried to draw out the time every way I could, to give Volodya some way to get himself out of this fix and think of something. He would have been better off saying this mountain would be for skiing during the winter. He definitely was foolhardy. “And you can sleep in the bath house, too, before the home is ready,” I went on, continuing my line of reasoning. But now I didn’t know what to say next, and I fell silent.

“Strange. I see no resemblance between the mountain of clay and a bath house, and somehow, I see no entrance at all into this bath house,” Anastasia noted.

Well, that’s it, I figured – my son really put his foot in it with this bath house, and he’s lost. No more battle of the wizards. However, Volodya went on:

“This is just a mock-up, Mama. The hill that represents the clay – we’ve made it out of sand, and the sand slides off, and it’s difficult to show the entrance.” Just as before, Volodya spoke slowly, and clearly he was thinking about something very strenuously as he did so. And suddenly it was as if his face lit up, and he kept on talking, but precisely and confidently now: “When we do it out of clay, then right here, on the pond side, we’ll form a small entrance into an oval chamber with a cupola. The chamber’s diameter will be two or three meters. The height will be two meters and thirty centimeters. The walls of the structure might be as thick as a meter. There are ducts in the walls to let out the smoke and hot air, and they all come together in one big duct that you can then close off with a plug.

“There can be stones along the edges inside the oval chamber, and in the middle is where the fire will be lit.

“The interior walls of the space will heat up. You’ll be able to admire the fire from the pond side, and if you don’t want to admire it, you can cover the entrance over with a door. When the walls heat up and the fire goes out, a person can go inside the chamber. His body will be warmed from all sides, from below and from above. The clay will emit a very healthy and beneficial warmth for the person.”

“Yes, of course, that is a very healthy emission,” Anastasia said, now thoughtfully, “especially if you were to place a vessel there containing an infusion of medicinal herbs. Information about such a bath house did not exist in the Universe, and you could not have received it. This means you have added this information to the Universe, and now you...”

I looked at the little mountain of earth in the mock-up and imagined this bath house, and around it – flower beds, roses, and the bank of a beautiful pond. And even just from imagining it, some kind of most beneficial warmth really was spreading through my body. I intuitively understood that Volodya had thought up something that hadn’t previously existed. That made me extraordinarily joyful, as if my body and Soul were both rejoicing.

I began thinking once again about the overall homestead project, about how awesome and beautiful Anastasia was, both in body and mind. Naturally, she isn’t indifferent to this project and perhaps she deserved more credit than anyone for solving the problem of how to improve the soil productivity, a problem that we’d previously considered hopeless. Wow, what a thing to think of – raising a regular compost pit just above ground level and turning it into a living fence. That meant she’d agreed to help after all, her principles notwithstanding. To help in some discreet way. I walked up to Anastasia and softly whispered:

“You’re the one who thought all of this up. You found the solution. Thank you, Anastasia.”

“We thought it up together, Vladimir,” Anastasia said, also in a whisper, “and perhaps those three hundred families you spoke of deserve the most credit.”

“But *they* weren’t here while we were thinking.”

“Perhaps they weren’t here, but they were there, on their hectares, also contemplating the best steps to take. And just imagine, Vladimir, what if they didn’t exist at all? Would you have thrown the whole family into a tizzy? Would you really have racked your brains so and demanded with such agitation that we find a solution? If they did not exist, you might not have given this question the slightest of thoughts. Perhaps they, these three hundred families are the main figures behind this project.”

“Yes, I agree. We created it all together, and I thank you even more for that ‘together’, Anastasia.” And then I added, “And thank you, too, for the eternity you’ve given me. I was at the spot where you hid the empty bottle.”

Anastasia added, with slightly downcast eyes:

“And the stick.”

“And the stick,” I confirmed, and started laughing.

Anastasia also started laughing, a rolling, light-hearted laughter, and even little Nastenka began hopping around near the mock-up, swinging her little hands and laughing. Only Volodya, indifferent to what was going on, was still looking intently and thoughtfully at the mock-up.

And I suddenly felt unbearably sorry for my son. Despite the fact that he’d managed to think up the extraordinary bath house, he – naturally, of course – still considered that he hadn’t managed the task Anastasia had set for him.

And he probably felt uncomfortable before me, too, for not listening to me, for arguing that we’d get along without Anastasia. He really had tried, but ... I wanted to support him somehow, cheer him up. But how could I do that? I didn’t know.

Volodya was looking at the mock-up intently, most likely trying to come up with something else of his own in it. He didn’t understand that we’d already come up with what was most important.

Late in the evening, before going to sleep, I asked Anastasia:

“But where do Volodya and Nastenka sleep?”

“In various spots,” Anastasia replied. “Nastenka will sleep with me sometimes. Why are you inquiring about this, Vladimir?”

“Oh, no reason. I just wanted to talk with Volodya about something.”

“Then call him.”

“How do I call him? Do I shout, or what?”

“Just call him. He’ll hear.”

I called him. And a short time later, I saw our son coming in my direction. As before, he was intent as could be. When Volodya got closer to me, I asked him:

“Volodya, when did you come up with the mountain of clay being a bath house, and why didn’t you tell me about that earlier?”

“I decided to say that when Mama began criticizing our design and the clay mountain in our design. I decided to call it a bath house because you, Papa, told me, ‘First of all we need to build the outhouse and the bath house on the plot.’ The mountain was a bit too large to be an outhouse, and I decided to call it a bath house.”

“But then you began talking about how it would be arranged and used. Did you think that up on the fly, just like that, or maybe you’re able to use the Universal information after all, like Mama?”

“I can’t do it the way Mama does, Papa, but it’s possible that there’s some benefit in that, too. What I’m unable to receive information about – I try to quickly think that up on my own, and sometimes that works.”

“I’ll say! It works like a charm! You’re a real inventor. I can’t get your invention out of my mind. I’ve even decided to make up a working model when I get back. I’ll buy a clay pitcher, put a hole in its base and cover its mouth with a cover of some sort with a hole for a pipe. I’ll light a candle inside it and leave it for an hour or two – instead of a fire – so we can see how it’ll heat up. Only a pitcher’s walls are thin, so we won’t have a perfectly accurate model.”

“Papa, apply a layer of clay around the pitcher, and the model will be more accurate.”

“Perfect, I’ll apply a layer of clay. Now, Volodya, please forgive me, well, you know, for being so hot-headed and saying that you have nothing to think with. Don’t be angry with me.”

“I’ve never gotten angry at you, Papa,” he answered calmly.

“And I’m not angry at Mama. And of course you got it, that she was only pretending that we’d thought up that earthen mound along the hectare’s perimeter – actually, she and Nastenka gave us a hint.”

“Yes, Papa, I got all that.”

“But it’s not important, who thought it up. What’s important is that the problem with the soil has now been solved. Good for Anastasia, right, Volodya?”

“Mama challenged us to a duel, Papa.”

“A duel? She challenged us? I had that kind of feeling when you were standing opposite each other. Is that a kind of game, Volodya? To develop the mind, is that it?”

“You could say it’s a game, but to be more precise, it’s a duel.”

“That’s not a fair duel. Anastasia possesses information as broad as the Universe, but we don’t have that opportunity. How can we duel under those circumstances?”

Volodya heard out my arguments and replied, with calm confidence:

“I have accepted the challenge, Papa.”

“Well, there was no point in accepting it. The chances are a hundred percent you’ll lose! Then you’ll get upset, the way you got upset today. I saw the way you were sitting there all upset, hanging your head when Anastasia was talking about the earthen mound, about the home in the middle and the back yard. And here you’ll get even more upset.”

“I must not lose, Papa. If I lose, it will make Mama sad.”

“Well, then she should surrender to you in some non-obvious way, so that she herself won’t be sad afterwards.”

“Mama can’t surrender.”

“Oh, Volodya, Volodya – sometimes it seems to me you’re a bit foolhardy. Okay, what’s happened has happened. You go get some sleep, Volodya. I’ll go, too, and I’ll think about how best to situate the home on the hectare. Maybe I’ll think of something.”

“Yes, Papa, you need to get a good sleep. I wish you a serene sleep, Papa.”

My son and I went our separate ways, but I couldn’t go to sleep right away. I said to Anastasia:

“Don’t wait up for me. Go to sleep on your own, Anastasia. I need to think about something for a bit.”

I walked around by the entrance to the dug-out in the light of the white Siberian night, thinking about how to help Volodya. From time to time I’d look at the sleeping Anastasia. She was sleeping on her side, curled up into a ball with her palm beneath her head, and smiling a little about something in her sleep.

She's smiling like a child, the gentle beauty. But the day before – she sure had ripped our layout apart mercilessly! She'd called the spot where we'd put the home in the mock-up incorrect. Half the hectare had ended up as the back yard, she'd said. Of course, that really was the case. I needed to recall how homes were situated in the landscape design journals. Of course, Volodya wouldn't be able to solve the problem of where to situate the structures, since he didn't have the information. I'd have to think everything through. Otherwise, he'd lose all confidence in his own capabilities. I had such a strong desire to help my son that I sensed that I wouldn't fall asleep until I'd thought up something useful. I've seen lots of country homes with various structures on plots of land, so that meant it was up to me to find the correct solution. But it wasn't coming. Most of the houses I'd had occasion to see basically had their windows looking out over the driveway.

It was getting long past midnight, but I was still walking back and forth along the dug-out, sorting through various options for situating the home and farmyard structures.

And suddenly it came to me! It came to me just like that, somehow, as if it just erupted, and I really liked what came to me. Well, I'll give her an answer tomorrow! Yeah, I'll answer her!

I started imagining the way, the next day, I'd answer Anastasia's remark about the back yard. I'd start in an off-hand way: "Anastasia, you were saying something here yesterday about the spot where we put the home, about some kind of back yard."

"Yes," she'd say. "I was saying that half of your hectare has ended up in the back yard."

"That's not true, Anastasia. That's not the way it all is. You just failed to notice a little indentation on the mock-up. That's a veranda that goes around the whole home. When it's hot, we'll sit on the shady side with our friends, along the wall that's on the other side of the house from the entrance. We'll sit and admire the garden and the flower beds, and thus you don't have any back yard. An open veranda runs all around the house."

"Yes, that's true," Anastasia will say. "I didn't notice that."

I decided I'd come up with something good, and quietly, so as not to disturb her sleep, I laid down on the fragrant bed next to the sleeping beauty.

During the night I had a strange dream about the bath house. It was as if I was walking into it and closing the door behind me. And the bath house lifted up off the ground and was flying into the sky, picking up more and more speed.

THE FIERY BIRD

I woke up around eleven o'clock. Most likely I'd slept so long due to the two days of non-stop mental exertion. As soon as I woke up, I once again wanted to see my son and talk with him about the bath house. To tell him this wasn't simply a bath house. It was a multi-function structure. It could serve as an outdoor fireplace, where it would be great to sit with your friends or family. You could also dry clothing, mushrooms and many other things in it. You could bake bread and prepare tasty dishes in it. And it goes without saying that you could treat what ails you in it by warming your body with its extraordinary heat. I reflected this way as I walked to the spot where the homestead mock-up was, on the lakeshore. When I came out of the bushes, this is the picture that presented itself to me.

Alongside the mock-up of the homestead lay an exhausted she-wolf, her legs smeared with clay. About two meters from the she-wolf, a she-bear was shifting from foot to foot in a small pit – she was working the clay. Volodya, kneeling, was using the palms of his hands to smooth out the bath house he'd constructed of clay on the bank of the pond. But no! You'd be hard pressed to call what I saw there a bath house. Even my fear at the presence of the she-bear and she wolf took a back seat, and I went up closer.

The central part of what Volodya had constructed resembled the head and torso of some unusual kind of bird. At the base was a small opening – the entrance to the interior room. Extending out from the central part of the structure that resembled an unusual bird were its two wings. They were embracing the space. Beneath one of the wings sat a man and a woman who resembled Anastasia and me. A little girl was playing in the middle. It was a cloudy day – the sun would by turns shine brightly and hide behind the clouds. The shadows' play created the impression of a live bird that might lift off in flight as soon as the people went inside it.

I could hear Anastasia's voice – she had just come out onto the lakeshore, holding little Nastenka by the hand. "This is simply a hallucination of some kind. Since morning I have been thinking of nothing but your bath house. There's something extraordinary in it. I need to figure it out. I even..."

Anastasia stopped speaking, without finishing her sentence. She caught sight of what our son had constructed. Together with Nastenka, she went up closer, took a seat by the mock-up, put her arms around her little daughter and for a short while silently looked at the extraordinarily beautiful sculpture. And she began speaking, as if thinking aloud:

"Earth, fire, water, air, light rays, man. And all of it in one bird. And such an

extraordinary one – a bird resembling an eagle teaching its sons to fly.”

“This structure is multi-functional,” I remarked to Anastasia, pleased by her delight. “You can not only warm up with your friends in it, but bake bread, too, prepare good and dry mushrooms and other things, too.”

“Yes, you can. But you shouldn’t do that with friends. Only with close relatives, but more often on your own.”

“Why?”

“Vladimir, this apparatus might possibly function more effectively than a dolmen. You can meditate inside it.”

During our conversation, Nastenka went up to the mock-up and for some reason was diligently poking at it with her finger.

“Look, Anastasia, is our daughter Nastenka trying to destroy the mock-up?”

“I think she wants to show that we need to make some small round openings in the cupola, make little windows that look out onto the four sides of the world. Then in the day it will be light inside, and at night the stars will be visible.”

“And I planned to make a round window in the middle, too,” Volodya added.

Nastenka, as if she’d understood that everyone agreed with her, stopped boring holes in the clay with her finger and slowly – as if reflecting on some thoughts of her own – headed off in the direction of the forest.

“Anasta,” I said in her direction, without even understanding why myself.

Nastenka turned and looked at me intently. The breeze rearranged a lock of her hair and uncovered a birthmark on her forehead – it looked like a little star. The little girl smiled and continued her journey, whose goal was known to her alone.

Anastasia continued silently examining what Volodya had constructed. She was trying to comprehend something. Never before had I seen her so concentrated. Finally Anastasia began speaking, as if reasoning aloud:

“Five illuminated circles, and they will move in accord with the movement of the sun and of the moon. They will move across the walls and the floor of the interior oval or round chamber. That is very important. They will illuminate the person.”

“Tell me, Anastasia. What about the person who’s inside this structure – will he be able to restore his health, just the way he’d be able to in any bath house?”

“It will function more effectively than any bath house, or than all of them put together. The heated clay gives off rays that are very beneficial for a person. Blood will move more quickly through the veins, and the internal organs will warm and be

cleansed.”

“But specifically, what illnesses can be treated with a session in this structure?”

“A person will receive a healthy effect on his entire organism. Thus it follows that it will be easier for the organism to fight off any illness, but it is possible to focus the energies and direct them to a specific organ.”

“Well, take the kidneys, for example. How can you treat them? How can you direct the energies?”

“You need to pour clean sand into a wooden tub, roll the tub into the center of the oval chamber, and when the sand has heated up, bury yourself in it. Only your head should remain outside. Before this you should eat a good amount of watermelon. The sand is very good at absorbing sweat that comes out of the pores.”

“Well, sweat comes out of a person’s body even in a regular bath house. Why do you need to lie in the sand?”

“But Vladimir, look – in a regular bath house, where does the sweat which comes, for example, out of the upper pores on the back, or the chest or the shoulders flow away to?”

“What do you mean, where? It runs down.”

“Precisely. It runs down, along the other pores, thereby hindering them from perspiring. The dry, warmed sand is very good at absorbing moisture, and the sweat will flow out directly into the sand, rather than down along the person’s entire body. It is also good, when you’re in the sand bath, to drink a medicinal herbal infusion.”

“And what about the liver? How can you treat that?”

“Does this mean your liver is bothering you, too, Vladimir?”

“Yes, it bothers everybody.”

“Effective treatment of the liver in this structure can be carried out at three o’clock in the morning.”

“Why precisely at three?”

“At that time all the other organs help the liver cleanse itself of all the accumulated impurities within it. As well, if you place your palm on the spot where the liver is located and think of it with gratitude, and in your thoughts say to it ‘Thank you!’ then it will stir and begin to restore itself.”

“How can that be – restore itself? What, is it alive, or something?”

“Of course it’s alive, just as are all the organs of your body.”

“But why can you meditate well in this structure? You said it might possibly be more powerful than in a dolmen.”

“People who entered into a dolmen would go off into internal meditation. They were trying to transmit information to their descendants. The dolmen aided them in this. This unique apparatus is even more effective than a dolmen: it can help transmit information, but it can also, under certain conditions, receive information from the Universe and transmit it to the person inside, while hiding away deep within itself any negative information...”

Anastasia suddenly fell silent, looked at our son and asked him:

“Are you wanting to add something else to the homestead design, Volodya?”

“Yes, Mama. But first I want to be alone for a bit and think.”

“All right. We won’t hinder you.”

She took Nastenka by the hand, intending to leave. But Volodya said:

“Let Nastenka stay.”

And Nastenka, hearing her brother’s request, quickly slipped out of Anastasia’s arms and headed for the mock-up. Anastasia and I left.

DON'T JUDGE TOO HARSHLY

The next morning, Anastasia and I decided to go over to her grandfather's glade. I'd long been asking her to show me this spot, his glade, and besides that, I wanted to have a chat with him. According to what Anastasia has said, it would take no less than three hours to walk to her grandfather's glade. Consequently, such a hike might take up an entire day, but it stretched out to two days.

Even as we made our way through the taiga to her grandfather's glade, Anastasia and I spoke about homesteads.

"You know, Anastasia, many people who build family homesteads feel they shouldn't run electricity to their homestead or use all kinds of technology. Others do use it."

"And what do you think, Vladimir?"

"I think that at the beginning stage, you can't get along without technology and even without professional builders."

"You might possibly be right, Vladimir. Let the technical means that have accumulated over the centuries be used for good. A unity of opposites will result. But I think we must design life so that in the future we will gradually do without them."

For some time I walked silently behind Anastasia. I was stepping over the fallen trunks of old trees, skirting thickets of bushes along the invisible path and thinking my own thoughts, and maybe for that reason, I fell a bit behind. I even lost sight of her. But then, after I'd taken a few more steps, I heard Anastasia's voice.

"You must be tired, Vladimir. We can take a rest. Let's take a seat."

I agreed. "Let's. This isn't the easiest path. We've only been walking an hour, but it feels as if we've gone ten kilometers."

We sat down on a tree trunk. Anastasia held out a handful of currants to me that she'd collected along the way. I silently ate the delicious berries from the Siberian taiga and continued to think about my unpleasant situation. Then I decided to tell Anastasia about it.

"Anastasia, it so happens that for a number of years now I've been thinking about a situation I find unpleasant. In one of the books I told about the inception of Christianity in Rus and included historical facts and information from museums. And I ended up with negative information. This whole inception looked like a takeover of

Russia. It seemed as if I'd laid out all the accurate facts and conclusions, but now I have an unpleasant feeling in my heart, and for years, now, I've been tormented by doubts."

"Why unpleasant, Vladimir? Is it because certain representatives of the Church have been responding badly to you?"

"That's not it – I'm already used to that. It's something else I just can't figure out."

"What is it, Vladimir?"

"When I wrote about the baptism of Rus in such negative terms, then it ended up that I was saying something negative not about some specific person, but about everyone, all at once. Only afterwards did I get that no way I should have done that."

"And how did you come to that understanding, Vladimir?"

"I spent the best years of my childhood at my grandparents' place in the village of Kuznichi. I remember lots of details from living there. I remember that there, in the little Ukrainian hut, on a table in the corner, were Orthodox icons. My grandmother would decorate them with an embroidered towel and light a little lamp.

"I also remember the way my mom would attend church, even with her ailing legs. I often recall my spiritual father, Father Feodorit, the archpriest of Trinity-St. Sergius Lavra monastery. To this day, I still keep the Bible he gave me.

"And so it turns out that by speaking out negatively about Christianity, I was speaking out negatively about my grandparents, my mother and my spiritual father Feodorit. Well, and maybe about many good and worthy people, too. When I realized all this, then the first chance I got, I appeared on television, on Channel One, and apologized to the Church. But I didn't feel much better after I did that. What else do you think I need to do to expiate my guilt before the people close to me? And before myself, too, maybe."

"I think you need to fully comprehend everything and summon up a positive image that will eclipse the negative."

"Of course, it's easy to say 'comprehend everything' – I've been trying to do that for more than a year, and I'm not doing such a great job. But tell me, how do you feel about religions? Maybe you prefer some, and disavow or even reject some other, false ones?"

"Vladimir, I don't understand what meaning you assign to the word 'disavow,' but I will try to show you the links in your family chain. Take this twig here. That will serve as your sabre for severing those links of the chain that you disavow."

A depiction of a long chain of people holding hands arose in the space. The people of the first group wore crosses and little icons around their necks.

“Do you see, Vladimir? These are your relatives of the Orthodox faith. And those wearing turbans are Muslims. They also figure in your genealogy. And now here is a large group of people who today are called pagans. Next, holding hands, come your forbears from the Vedic period. Behind them come the blurred outlines of people of the first race, and we can also say of them that these are people from the first civilization on earth. They are blurry because information regarding them has not been articulated in the space, but your relatives are present there, too.

“The first person in this family chain was created by God, and he even now holds the hand of God. In all who follow also exists a particle of God. One day it will come to pass that the next person born of your line will come to know all and will sense everyone. He will also link hands with God. It may be that this will be you, or it may be your great-granddaughters. The circle will be formed. The circle – Alpha and Omega and Alpha once more.

“But now think and tell me, which of these groups of people would you like to remove from the chain?”

“I have to think about which one... Wait, Anastasia. Wait. But if I remove even one group of people, then, you know, the chain will be broken.”

“Of course, it will be broken.”

“And if it is broken, then the person who breaks it can never come to know God, link hands with him and form the circle.”

“I also think this, that he will be unable to do this.”

“So what does that mean? Should a person accept absolutely all religions?”

“Which religion to accept – that is the choice of each person, but I think we should disavow nothing from the path humanity has followed. It’s possible that all that occurred in the past is essential for today’s awareness. What you consider to be good is essential to accept. That which to your mind appears negative is essential simply to know, in order that it should not recur going forward. But not to be rejected.”

“But what about if you don’t know? Will it necessarily have to recur, and in the very same way?”

“Yes, it will recur. There will come a prophet who seems the bearer of the new. Those who have forgotten will hark unto him in delight, not knowing that in doing so they create nothing new.”

“But really, it’s impossible to know with precision everything that has happened to mankind since the time of creation. Historians distort even the most recent historical events to curry favor with those in power.”

“Within you, Vladimir, and within each person alive on Earth there exists a

particle containing all information of your family line, from creation up to the present day.”

“I understand – this information is stored in each person on the genetic level, but how can we learn to make use of it? That’s the question.”

“By not disavowing and not rejecting even a smidgen of your particle.”

“But nobody has the least intention of rejecting their own particle.”

“When you disavow information about the past that has come to you from outside, you at the same time reject that particle that is within you.”

“But what about if this information is false?”

“The particle with false information is also within you. It has been preserved so that you might gain insight into the lie.”

“But Anastasia, really, you were the one who showed me and told me about how the black monks killed the Vedic Russian family who didn’t want to betray their faith and their way of life. I wrote about that in a book. The image of the Vedic Russians turned out very powerfully – that’s what many people have said. And I often recall it. Especially the picture when the wounded Vedic Russian, the artist, is lying under the pine tree, clutching to his chest the figurine he’d carved of the woman he loved. He’d loved her his whole life, but she’d married another. He kept on loving her, hiding his love. Only, when he’d carve figurines, they’d always end up looking like her.

“He, an old elder, entered into battle with a whole enemy detachment, in order to lead them away from the family of the woman he loved, and he was wounded. And I wrote your words: ‘The Vedic Russian lay on the grass and did not moan. A small stream of blood flowed from his chest. The wooden pine tree did not know how to cry...’ Well, do you remember?”

“Yes, Vladimir, I remember this emotional scene.”

“Well, so after this picture, then how can I – or someone else – *not* reject the black monks?”

“Tell me, Vladimir who you feel yourself to be, that wounded Vedic Russian or the black monk?”

“Me? Who am I? That means that’s why you showed this... To determine... But what’s this got to do with me?”

“Back there, in the past, in that picture – your forbears were there. Who were they? What do you think, Vladimir?”

“I don’t know. I’d like it if they were the Vedic Russians. Of course they were

the Vedic Russians! Because the black monks came to Rus from a different state. Tell me, Anastasia, have I understood all this correctly? Tell me!”

“Vladimir, don’t get agitated. Take in the information calmly. Your ancestors really were Vedic Russians. But the screeching black monk, too, was your ancestor.

“Everything arose from the Whole, and this means all are brothers. Forgetting this, peoples fight amongst themselves, thereby destroying within their ‘opponent’ their own selves. It was this way, perhaps, for a reason. With the beginning of the new millennium, a new era has arrived as a new awareness of existence on Earth. The era of the beautiful transformation of the Earth.”

“It’s arrived? It’s already arrived? ... Basically, I have a feeling inside me, too, that something new is going on in the world, especially when I see the way people are setting up entire settlements of family homesteads in deserted spaces. Are they the ones who will lead the new era forward?”

“Their awareness and feelings represent something new for the world.”

“But on the other hand, you watch the news on television, and everything there is just the same as it’s been – right off the bat, they talk about who among the leaders met with whom, and how much oil costs, and how many years now have they been harping on about an economic crisis, but they don’t suggest anything of significant.”

“On television, Vladimir, you are seeing news of the past life. The Universe is already alive through different dimensions. Commit everything from the past to memory. Leave nothing out. Take with you your ancestors’ prayer-fed strength.”

“How am I to understand that? What does ‘prayer-fed strength’ mean? What does it look like?”

“From generation to generation, your ancestors would look upon an Orthodox icon each day, pray to it and dedicate to it their thoughts, their hopes and their requests. It would harken unto them and try to help, and with each day, the icon itself would grow stronger. It will help you, and has helped already. As well, esteem the rosary and the Koran that were given to you by the Grand Mufti of the Muslims. And the bible of your Father Feodorit. Remember with reverence the day when you appeared before people in the great Christ the Savior Cathedral. And the day when, in the most beautiful Lyalya Tyulpan Mosque, you sat before the people who had crowded into the hall, at a table, and alongside you were an Orthodox priest and a rabbi. You spoke of homesteads. Ecologists spoke in support of you. Do you recall that day?”

“Yes, I do recall. The Grand Mufti organized that event, and people of various faiths came to the mosque then, and they were all grateful to him. But I remember something different, too. I remember the slanderous articles in the press. I remember how there was an orchestrated attempt to ridicule me on television, on Channel One.”

“Perhaps it is necessary, this slander directed toward you?”

“Necessary? For what? What are you saying, Anastasia?”

“You enter into a palace and a temple. A hero? Yes! Only you were unable to bear up beneath the brass trumpets and the fanfare of speech. How can you be saved from your self? By means of yourself?”

“Come on, I have no self and no pridefulness. Only fatigue.”

“So that means that it was due to fatigue, Vladimir, that one day, when you appeared in hall packed with readers in the capital of Belarus, you began to eject the bishop from the church publicly. That was due to fatigue?”

“Oh, I wasn’t serious about that. They told me before my appearance, that he...”

“And the crowd applauded you. The collective thought was energized and took off.”

“And what’s up now with the bishop?”

“But we are speaking not about him right now, Vladimir, but rather, about you. You wanted to understand how you feel about religions, to get a feel for this and figure it out.”

“Yes.”

“You must do this only yourself, but I will tell you of future events. Perhaps the information concerning them will help you.

“It will happen before long, that more than a hundred and fifty leaders of various countries will come together. One question will they address, with scientists taking part: how to reduce the amount of harmful gases that are emitted into the atmosphere by human deeds. Gases that threaten the planet with disaster. But the hundred and fifty leaders of the Earth will be unable to make a decision that will save us, and they will go their separate ways. And the harmful gas created by mankind will continue to kill the planet.* What can you say about such a situation, Vladimir?”

“What can I possibly say here? Heads of state have come together numerous times to solve the question of how to improve the ecological situation, but to no end. Most people don’t pay any attention to these meetings any more.”

“Why is that?”

* **Author’s note:** In 2009, a climate summit of heads of state was held in Copenhagen from December 7-18, regarding capping and reducing emissions of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. Representatives of 192 countries participated in the summit.

“Well, because not a single state has announced any workable proposals. And if there aren’t any workable proposals on the agenda, then what’s the use of meeting? It only makes people laugh.”

“And what would you consider a workable proposal?”

“The kind of proposal where the majority of people on Earth will change their life’s priorities. The desire will arise to perfect one’s dwelling land, instead of working at harmful manufacturing plants to get money to subsist on. No ruler is in a position to stop these harmful manufacturing plants, because unemployment will arise and there will be riots, and his power will end up being threatened.”

“That means that heads of state are not in a position to stop a global disaster. But perhaps different authorities, spiritual authorities, are capable of doing this. The patriarchs of all the religions will come together, give their word before each other that they will call upon their congregations to perfect the earth’s dwelling land.”

“Yes! Exactly! They’d be able to deal with this question more effectively and have an effect on the people and the authorities at the same time.”

“And so that means that religions are important and needed. What do you think, Vladimir?”

“Turns out, they’re important and needed. And it would be great if they could all together direct their efforts toward perfecting both the spiritual and material dwelling land. But we need specifics here, too. Your plan, Anastasia, is unsurpassed in terms of specifics, and people’s hearts and souls everywhere are embracing it. But there *is* one circumstance that calls into question how viable it is.”

“What circumstance is that?”

“There’s no doubt that the way of life for a family on the family homestead that you’ve shown is greatly superior to today’s way of life for people in cities and rural areas. And even now, the number of families living this way – without any support whatsoever from the government – is growing steadily with each year. And there might come a time when the majority of the Earth’s population will want to have their own family homesteads and live on them. And at that point, there won’t be enough hectares for every family that wants one. Even now, people are talking about how a portion of the population needs to be eradicated due to the fact that there’s not enough living space and natural resources. According to these rumors, there should remain on Earth the so-called Golden Billion, plus two or three billion people who serve them. The Earth’s population is now six billion, and people are already raising the question of restricting births, like, say, China, where one billion, three hundred million people live in an area comprising 9.6 million square kilometers.

“If people’s way of life begins to change in accord with your plan, then people’s life expectancy will increase. It’s a completely obvious and undisputed fact, that the

life expectancy for a person living on a family homestead, assuming he has no harmful habits – here I'm talking about drinking, smoking and others – has an excellent diet, clean air and healthy water, will, on average, be twice as long.

“A family living on a family homestead will want to have children, and such families have a significantly greater desire to bear children than those living in modern cities. So it follows that before long, new families won't be able to get a hectare to build a family homestead.

“I understand that there must be some way out of this. When God was thinking of all that's beautiful, he can't have set up this kind of dead-end situation that would incite people to battle for living space. Your grandfather has said it's absurd and futile to explore outer space using current methods, and that there's another method – he calls it psychoteleportation. But no matter how much you think about it, it doesn't appear possible to understand it in a detailed way. Basically, people don't believe it exists, and science doesn't say anything about it.”

“I am also aware that the psychoteleportation method of exploring outer space and the planets of other galaxies does exist. But no one in my family line is privy to the details or mechanisms of this method. I hope that people who are now establishing family homesteads, or their children or grandchildren will discover and grasp what helps it function. And this will definitely come to pass.

“But I understand your anxiety, too, Vladimir. If a person already today cannot see at least a part of this mechanism, he will remain anxious, due to his uncertainty regarding his family line. It is essential for us to grasp at least a part of it.

“I have been thinking tirelessly about it and searching, but I am finding only more and more confirmations all the time of its existence. It is possible that it's essential for us to lay out the logical lines of reasoning, and to ask people who are familiar with science, with biology and programming, to think together. We must discover it all together.

“Vladimir, we've arrived,” announced Anastasia. “This is the home... This is Grandfather's space.”

THE FAMILY PARTY

Anastasia's grandfather had always been notable for his unusual behavior. Even when speaking about very serious things, he'd always use humor or try to trip you up. And this time, too, he remained true to himself. When we came out into his glade, we saw Anastasia's grandfather sitting beneath a cedar tree with his legs crossed, looking intently at a staff stuck into the ground before him. It was clear that he'd long since sensed we were on our way to him, and besides, he couldn't help but sense our presence, but he paid no attention to us whatsoever. And even when we walked practically right up to him, he still didn't turn in our direction and didn't greet us. We stood there silently for three or four minutes. Then I whispered to Anastasia:

"You try saying something to him. Otherwise, we're just going to keep standing here like this."

"All right, Vladimir. But I'm trying to grasp what he's up to here," Anastasia replied, also speaking softly.

Then, all the same, she addressed her grandfather, saying:

"We arrived quite a while ago, Grandfather."

And something totally odd happened next. Anastasia's grandfather, turning to the staff, suddenly said:

"Due to unforeseen circumstances, I announce a fifteen-minute break."

Then he stood up, led us off to the side and, completely serious, began explaining:

"I'm currently leading a party meeting of the Family Party. It will continue for another forty-five minutes or so, so you will have to wait."

"How's that, a party meeting?" I asked, surprised. "There's nobody here. And besides, the Family Party hasn't been constituted yet."

"Well, not by you, it hasn't been," Grandfather replied. "But I've constituted it for myself."

"How's that, you've constituted it? Who's joining it?"

"I'm joining it all on my own. And I'm preparing for the convention."

"What convention, if there's only you in the party membership?"

“For now there is only I, but perhaps someone else will come along and constitute their own Family Party. And then we’ll convene.”

“But how the heck is something like that possible?”

“Well, you yourself said that we need to come up with something new. And so I came up with the idea that each person can lead his own Family Party, so no one will use his authority and position to put pressure on the party rank and file. And at the conventions, everyone will be equal.”

“And what kind of agenda do you have here at this meeting?”

“The government’s report on the work it’s done in connection with perfecting the dwelling land.”

“Well, and who do you have giving reports?”

“Various people. After the break I’ll be hearing from the Minister of Railway Transport.”

“But he’s not here!”

“Not for you, but for me he is.”

“How about him, does he know you’ll be hearing from him?” I wondered.

“He doesn’t know. And really, why should I take him away from his work?”

“But when and where will your convention take place?”

“When the organizers set the date.”

“What organizers?”

“Other Family Party leaders.”

Really, in spite of how comical Grandfather’s display was, I do think the idea of creating a Family Party, in which all are equal, deserves attention. The usual way of organizing a party won’t get us anywhere, except to something resembling the CPSU. And this is where I can see some grains of truth. Each person is free to act in accordance with his own heart and soul, rather than orders or a universal charter. Different party members can initiate the best actions and endeavors and advances. It seems to me that in this case you’ll end up with a lively community of people that develops on its own, in which each individual really can express his own initiative. As we took our leave of Grandfather, I said, matching his tone, and trying to be serious:

“From this day forward I also constitute my own family party.”

Why go on and on about it? It’s time for each of us to take action.

Further developments connected to Anastasia's grandfather deserve a separate book, and I intend to tell about them at a later date.

EXPLORING VIRGIN PLANETS

On our way back, as Anastasia and I were returning from seeing Grandfather, our conversation once again turned to the possible existence of a biological way for a person on Earth to explore other planets and galaxies. I reminded Anastasia:

“Anastasia, you mentioned that you think tirelessly about a biological way to explore other planets, and that you’re finding logical confirmations of its existence. Can you lay out these logical lines of reasoning?”

“We can begin now, together, to analyze the situation. Further on you can continue on your own.”

“All right, Anastasia, but you go ahead and start us off.”

“First of all it’s essential to authoritatively establish the first fact. All that has been created in the technocratic world existed and exists in a biological and significantly more perfected form. Do you agree with this, Vladimir? Do you understand how important it is to establish this understanding?”

“Of course, I agree. I’m not the only one who knows this. Many other people do, too. Man used to be able to do calculations in his head a lot better and faster – each person had his own inner calculator. Well, and so on. You can cite a great many examples here.

“The example I like most is a person’s birth. It’s the clearest and most striking example, because two methods exist simultaneously in the world now – the technocratic and the biological.

“The technocratic method is when scientists in a specialized institute take sperm from a man and an egg from a woman, mix them together in a test tube that they keep inside a special apparatus. They keep it at the necessary temperature and humidity, and basically, it takes a lot of fuss and resources. Now, the biological method is a lot simpler and more effective. A man and a woman in a bed... They enjoy themselves, and soon afterwards a person is born.”

“A good example, Vladimir, only, please, take note of one very important detail. Even so, when a person is created, even if it is via a technocratic method, what lies at the heart of him is the biological material.”

“Yes, of course, that’s what lies at his heart. You can’t get anything without the sperm and the egg.”

“And the biological method has no need to adopt anything from the technocratic world.”

“Agreed. Not a thing. Well, except for a bed. Although you can get along without a bed, too. Basically, Anastasia, I totally agree, and I get it – the biological alternatives are significantly more perfected than the technocratic. When the technocratic man thinks up his so-called inventions and brainchildren, he’s replacing existing and perfected biological mechanisms with primitive, technocratic ones. That situation is completely anti-rational.”

“And nonetheless, time and time again, human civilizations, losing all memory of their natural capabilities, have replaced them with primitive, technocratic alternatives.

“We are unable to imagine now, how one can get to another planet using a natural method. And in this very same way, people of a different civilization were unable to imagine the birth of a child in a non-technocratic way.

“Many women today cannot imagine giving birth to a child without others’ help, without a maternity ward and technocratic equipment. If we continue further along these lines, then more and more children will be born using surrogate mothers.

“Something resembling farms will arise, where women who have been artificially inseminated will be concentrated. Their whole lives, they will bear children and give them up. They will be provided with food and lodging, but they themselves – each one of them will see herself as an incubator for a human embryo. This has already happened in history, in one human civilization.

“In this same civilization, the practice of cloning of people was also developed. As a result, a person in this civilization was unaware that it was possible to give birth to a person through biological means. Lacking awareness of this, lacking this thought, a woman had no possibility of conceiving a child, no matter how much she entered into intimate relations with a man. Now, if a woman did become pregnant by natural means after all, this was considered pathological, and the human embryo was immediately destroyed or was removed and grown artificially.

“Vladimir, do you agree with the assertion that any technocratic achievement is preceded by a person’s act of losing the memory of his biological capabilities?”

“I do.”

“But now, tell me, can a person use a technocratic method to transfer an image, a photograph of his family homestead, for example, from one point on Earth to another, or into outer space?”

“Of course, he can, using a computer and the Internet. All he needs to do is choose an electronic address, scan this image into his computer, go onto the Internet

and send it to the address he's chosen, and it will come up there on the computer. You can print it off the other computer using a printer. You can also send it into space, too, if you know the spaceship's electronic address. You can send it to the Moon, too, and you can send an image from the Moon to Earth. That's already been done."

"Good, Vladimir, very good. Only you have forgotten one very important detail. The most important."

"Which one?"

"Before the person does all these various operations on the computer, the thought was born in him to send off the image."

"I agree. I didn't mention the thought because that goes without saying."

"But now, tell me, can a person use a modern technocratic method to transfer not only an image, but an object, too, to all the points you named?"

"And object? I don't think it'll work with an object." I thought about it for a brief time and then added, "Anastasia, I remembered that there are lathes that carve various designs out of wood, little sculptures, for example, under the direction of computer programs, and if you send the computer program tasked with carving out the little sculptures to a different continent via an electronic address, or to the Moon, then another computer there, if it's hooked up to the same kind of lathe, will carve out very same little figure, and there will be two of them – one that my computer made and a second that the other computer will carve out. In that way, the little sculpture I have will be copied on a different continent, or on the Moon."

"So it follows, that one can use a modern technocratic method to transfer or copy and recreate an object, even on a different planet?"

"Yes, one can."

"But do you understand what this means, Vladimir?"

"What?"

"This means, that there exists a biological method for transferring an object from one planet to another, and this means it is a thousand times more perfected, simpler, and can be accessible to any person. The biological method requires the presence of no technology whatsoever. It is the human thought that is most important in it."

"Yes, I agree, and in the case of creating a child, the most important thing is the thought, but a man who's thought about creating a child needs a woman, too, and a woman who's thought about a child needs a man. Together they materialize what they've thought."

"Together they..."

“Vladimir, the possibility of creation and birthing of a person by a man and a woman is the highest achievement. This means that it is possible – all the more so – for a person to create life on another planet using a biological method. For now it is unclear what components are necessary in order to materialize him.”

“Yes, Anastasia, a tremendous discovery. It would turn out to be tremendous, if you or someone else could find or discover these biological components.”

“We need to think. It would be possible to comprehend and sense much, were we to encounter that knowledge possessed by the people of the first civilization on Earth.”

PEOPLE OF THE FIRST CIVILIZATION

“I infer, I surmise, and the logic of life confirms this, that they possessed potentials greater than did God Himself.”

“But who the heck are these mysterious ‘they’?”

“These are the children of God. People of the first earthly civilization.”

“The first civilization? Does that mean there were ones that came after? And how might the first civilization have differed from those that came after it?”

“In the direction of its development. Mankind, Vladimir, has not always followed the technocratic path into the dimension of anti-rationality, toward disaster. In the beginning was the first civilization, which developed in a different direction. We will call it the biological path. They made use of all that was originally created by God. A person of this civilization would study the divine creations and, with their help, would perfect his dwelling land. The divine creations are perfected, but each generation must be more rational than the preceding one. Such is the way God programmed it.

“It could be no other way. Were it another way, God could not be called God, and His creations, lacking the potential for becoming perfected, would represent the end of creation. Man is the beginning of the great creation.

“And now it is taxing for us to even imagine what the first civilization achieved, what heights, in its divine development, and how the planet looked during the period of their material life.

“Naturally, people of the first earthly civilization might also have looked different than contemporary man on the outside, too. They had an ideal body build, and their physical health enabled them to hold within themselves immeasurably more energy than contemporary man is able to hold. Their original knowledge of the biological divine world that came from God, enabled them to perfect it.

“All the scientific and technological achievements existing today in the technocratic world existed for them in a significantly more perfected, biological form.”

“Where’s the proof that this civilization and their achievements existed?”

“If you see a grown person, Vladimir, do you really need proof of the fact that this person was at first an infant and then a child?”

“No, I don’t. The person himself serves as proof that he used to be a child.”

“In just that way, today’s human civilization, too, serves as proof that there existed the first. And this first one could not be technocratic.”

“All right, maybe it couldn’t, but we can see from historical evidence and archaeological digs that people of ancient civilizations who lived a hundred thousand years ago ran around in animal skins with clubs and hunted animals, as we’re told, and that they had trouble finding food for themselves.”

“Archaeologists are finding people of the post-disaster period of technocratic civilizations.

“Imagine, Vladimir, that on the earth is living a technocratic civilization, that it is achieving great heights in so-called technocratic development. But any technocratic path rends the planet Earth, impairs the ecology and disturbs the biosphere, and large-scale technology-induced disaster ensues. Those in power, or the elite, always know of its approach beforehand and make preparations to save themselves. One of the civilizations, for example, constructed, in near earth orbit, an entire technological complex of a size equaling two ocean liners. On it they saved themselves from the disastrous changes that had befallen the earth. But this technological complex could not hold the people indefinitely, for it itself was mortal. The people who were saving themselves from the earthly disaster held out on it for around sixty years. Children were born to them. But there came a time, when life on the artificial complex became impossible. The people, its inhabitants, began dying, and then the decision was made to return to Earth, and they returned. They landed in groups, in special capsules. On the Earth, which was cooling now after the great fire, grass was already growing up anew, and the animal world was coming back to life. Not all the people managed to end up in this kind of oasis. Those who ended up in the desert or on red-hot lava perished. Those who managed to land on a plot of land where life had been partially preserved, rejoiced at their luck.

“Now I will show you.

“Look, there they are – there are but six of them – coming out of their red-hot capsule. They are rejoicing at the little green grass and the air they can breathe. Here are two children, a little boy and a little girl. They’re examining a currant bush and the bugs on it with interest. And here is an elderly man without any hair at all. He’s returning to the capsule, and before long he carries a box out of it. There is food inside it. The person sets the box on the ground, looks at the little boy and the little girl by the currant bush and walks up to their mother, who is standing nearby.

“‘It’s best for you to go far away from this place and take the children with you. We have enough food left for no more than a week. Your husband has died and I am your distant relative, but I have no intention of protecting you when the fight for food begins.’

“‘Give us at least a day’s worth of food.’

“‘Take it yourself, but try to do it so no one will notice you, and leave quickly.’

“The woman walked up to the box on the ground, bent over as if adjusting her shoe, and quickly took three little tubes of some substance and hid them beneath her jumpsuit. Then she quickly walked up to her children and, saying something about wanting to show them some even more interesting bushes, led them off far away from the craft lying on the ground.

“The people who had returned to earth possessed knowledge of the technocratic world. They could use computers and satellite telephones, operate an automobile or a spaceship, but their knowledge was now absolutely useless and even hazardous. All communications and the majority of machines on earth had been destroyed. Many of those that remained were radioactive and posed a mortal danger.

“The mother who left with her son and daughter carried on her family line. And once again, for millennia, mankind developed in the technocratic direction. Archaeologists excavated huge ancient cities. They excavated the graves of the forbears, finding in them crude hunting weapons, and concluded that they were seeing primitive people at the beginning of their civilization. But they were seeing people at the end of their civilization. Archaeologists would sometimes find cave drawings of people dressed in pressurized suits. The scientific world put forth hypotheses that mankind arose from extraterrestrial beings, that in antiquity mankind had received knowledge from extraterrestrials. But, just as before, they did not even want to entertain the thought that in the cave drawings of beings in pressurized suits... they were seeing people at the end of their civilization.”

“But then where is the first civilization now?”

“It has disappeared. It disappeared suddenly, for some mysterious reason. At the moment of their disappearance, the people of the first civilization erased all information about their achievements from the Universal database. They did this in some inconceivable fashion. Why they took such steps, one can only infer and surmise.”

“Well, so what do you infer, Anastasia?”

“I infer that, perceiving themselves as in control of the fates of Universal worlds, they also recognized within themselves the germs of the anti-world, anti-rationality virus and understood that they lacked within themselves sufficient immunity to it. And at that point, they detonated themselves psychologically, along with their achievements, leaving on earth those who were more infected with the virus of anti-rationality and anti-world than the others. So that they could follow it to its conclusion and come to fully know the dimension of anti-rationality. And now we, the descendants of the first civilization, will come to know conclusively the essence of anti-rationality, and one instant before the planetary disaster, we will bring rationality

and anti-rationality into balance within ourselves. All the achievements of the first earthly civilization will open up within us in a new and more perfected form.”

“But if, as you say, their knowledge will open up, does that mean they’re somewhere, that they exist?”

“They exist within each person.”

Anastasia suddenly broke off her tale and froze.

“What’s happened, Anastasia? Why did you stop talking and freeze?”

“Something has happened in the Universal space. I sense that, Vladimir. I sense the vibrations. Do you also?”

“I don’t sense a thing. Just some little breeze started to blow.”

“Yes, a breeze, but it’s variable.”

“Well, maybe it’s variable, but what of it? Did something bad happen, or something good?”

“I don’t know, Vladimir. Only one thing is clear: what has happened has disturbed the space.”

“But where did it happen?”

“On the shore of our lake, I think.”

“And what, are you saying the whole Universe reacted to this thing that happened?”

“It always reacts when interesting or unusual information appears.”

“Let’s run over to our lake as fast as we can, Anastasia.”

We set off walking at a fast clip. At times, when the taiga would allow me to, I tried to run. Only once did we sit down to rest, and then once again rushed toward the lake.

When we were already almost to the lake, I suddenly imagined what unpleasant things might be in store for our son, and I asked Anastasia to stop.

“Wait, Anastasia. Hear me out, try to understand. Volodya’s under the impression that you challenged us to a duel. Is that right?”

“Yes,” Anastasia replied calmly.

“I won’t going into it right now, about why it’s an unfair challenge. There’s no

time. But I'm asking you – please don't criticize what Volodya has done during the two days we've been gone.

"It's clear that he's been working on the mock-up from dawn to dusk. He's been trying. I know. I saw it when he and I were thinking over the design on our own. But he doesn't have enough information. If you start criticizing his creation, he'll be very upset. He's said to me, 'If I don't win the duel, it will make Mama sad.'

"Can you imagine? He'll try and try, so he doesn't make you sad."

"And you, too, Vladimir."

"Yes. And me, too. But you and I – we're grownups. We should understand that there's simply nothing else he can add to the homestead design. The earthen wall around the perimeter was a brilliant idea, but it's already been articulated, and the pond's been settled and you haven't rejected where we've put the home with the veranda all around it. What's left? Flower beds, raised vegetable beds – that's the small stuff. The technical construction details aren't significant. You need to understand, Anastasia, there's no room left there for creativity. I mean, you yourself have already done everything. You gave us a hint, and didn't leave anything for our son. At least praise him for trying."

"I cannot praise him just for trying. That would be humiliating praise."

"Humiliating? But putting a child in a position where there's no way out – that's not humiliation? No, that's not humiliation. It's mockery."

"Please believe me, Vladimir. I am not mocking our son, not at all. Within him are little parts of you and of me. Information and knowledge gathered by your ancestors and mine. He has been raised and taught by Grandfather and Great-grandfather. Our son's capabilities are yet to be revealed, but I am certain that they are great."

"Maybe they *are* great, but I'm trying to explain to you, that there's no area left for creativity, for him to display them. The homestead design has already been created."

"You feel it's been created. But for a long time now, I've been under the impression that even so, neither you nor I, nor the people who are creating homesteads are aware of some key purpose of theirs. Many sense it intuitively, and for this reason the thought to create a family homestead draws people in. This thought is on the level of feelings. They are not fully clear or grasped. Something very important for the future and for eternity has not been grasped."

"From the moment of man's creation and up to the present, within him has lain all that was created in the beginning, and they, the man-gods of the first civilization, are secreted away within each person, in the form of a small and perhaps microscopic

particle. It's possible that they can see or feel what is transpiring. When I excessively precipitously put our son in a difficult position in regard to you, it is possible that this particle responded, that it couldn't help it, and perhaps the time has come... It is possible that Volodya senses, feels the knowledge stored within him. His structure, this fiery bird, turned out too extraordinary in its beauty and function."

"Anastasia, please understand, you're asking the impossible. You want our son to explain something to you or to create something, but you yourself don't know what, exactly. You only feel some new potentials for the family homestead, but Volodya might not even know about your feelings."

"My feelings lie within our son, too, Vladimir."

I was walking behind Anastasia, fully aware that she wasn't going to pull any punches with our son or praise him for no good reason. And she might even start criticizing him, too. But I wasn't going to criticize him. I made a firm decision: I had to find some kind of words to say to cheer him up and praise him for trying.

I fell a bit behind Anastasia. When I came out of the taiga, I saw that she, standing by a cedar tree, was focused on peering from afar at what was transpiring on the shore. And on the sandy shore of the taiga lake, surrounded by centuries-old cedars, Volodya was making some kind of incomprehensible structure. It was a simple square or rectangle that framed the earthen mound and enclosed it on both sides with little clay walls. The little walls at the corners were white and higher than along the sides. On the square's inner edge was the pond, and next to it his unique bird, and in the middle of square, right on the sand, sat Nastenka. That was it. I understood that Anastasia wouldn't be praising Volodya. There was nothing to praise him for. He'd made the bird before, and he basically wasn't the one who'd come up with the earthen mound. Either he hadn't had time to construct the home and farmyard structures, or he didn't know where to situate them. To tell the truth, the square was a little bit strange. I turned to Anastasia and said:

"Volodya hasn't managed to do anything special, and since that's the case, there's nothing here to criticize."

But Anastasia gave me no answer and didn't even turn in my direction. It was as if she had lost track of everything and was focused on studying the square.

I set off in the direction of the square my son was fussing with, but here's where something incomprehensible happened. When I came to within a few steps of the homestead mock-up, I stopped. I didn't have the strength to move further. It was as if the space around me was suddenly transformed. On the outside, everything was still the same, but my sensations... Unbelievably pleasant sensations that seemed familiar, or as if they'd come from another lifetime, were enveloping the whole surrounding space and warming my body from within. I was afraid to move – I didn't want them to go away. I just stood there and looked at a corner of the square. At a corner that was

shaped like a little white home with a window and a door.

I'd begun to come to, when I heard the voice of Anastasia, who'd walked up. She addressed Volodya who, kneeling, was smoothing out the uneven parts of the outer wall with his hands.

"May I ask you something, my dear son?" Anastasia seemed agitated to me.

Volodya stood up, went up to Anastasia, gave her a slight bow and replied:

"I'm happy to listen to you, Mama."

"Have you found a new definition for the concept of a 'home'?"

"I've been trying to seek one out, Mama, and I decided that a person should simultaneously build a home for both himself and his hectare. Then they will be inseparably connected to each other and united in their space."

"Tell me about your mock-up, Volodya, and about how it is meant to function. Tell me about all its details."

"All right, Mama, I'll tell you."

And our son began to tell her. It was as if, through his telling, the conventional labels of the extraordinary family homestead came to life in the mock-up.

Volodya pointed to a depression in the wall. "This here is the entrance to the home, Mama. It's located not on the road side, but the forest side."

"You mean to say that this is the entrance to the territory of the family homestead," Anastasia clarified.

"The entire family homestead is the home," Volodya replied, "and for that reason I called it the entrance to the home. And the person should wipe his feet before he walks in, if something has stuck to them, and even if nothing has, he needs to do this mentally.

"Now this wall," Volodya said, pointing to the greenhouse running along the hectare's perimeter, "is the living wall of the home. The plants growing inside it will be warm and happy. This is a clay wall, heated by the rays of the sun that pass through glass – or the transparent plastic sheeting Papa has spoken of – from above. During the day, the clay wall will heat up, and during the night, when it's cool, it will begin giving off warmth to everything growing inside.

"There are rooms inside this wall. It's a place where various garden supplies and tools the person will use will be stored. And in this space, Mama," Volodya said, pointing to an oval extending out from the homestead's perimeter, "a person can sleep and eat in the winter.

“Next, there’s a compartment where the firewood is kept. The various domestic animals – chickens, swans, a goat, a pony, a hedgehog, peacocks and doves – are housed amongst the corners of the living wall that abuts the forest. There are two exits from their dwelling, one in the direction of the forest, the other into the home space. Papa has said that he often has to go away, and there won’t be anyone to look after the animals. Papa feels a person shouldn’t take on animals if he can’t give them enough attention and feed them at the right time. But I feel that animals shouldn’t have to depend on the person for food, that that demeans the animals. The person should create a comfortable dwelling land for the animals he likes, so that they can feed themselves independently and come to the person when he needs them. Many various wild animals live around our glade – our home – but there’s no need for us to feed them. On the contrary, they are happy to bring *us* food. I infer that we can create the very same conditions for animals on the family homestead, too, especially if it abuts a forest.”

“It’s possible,” Anastasia said thoughtfully, and continued asking our son questions. “Volodya, on the road side, at the corners, there are two little homes with small windows. What are they for?”

“Mama, I designed this for Papa. I know that Papa’s best childhood memories are connected to the time he spent living as a little boy with his grandmother and grandfather, in a little whitewashed clay hut with a straw roof. I built the little walls of this little village hut. I think it will be really good if Papa’s homestead has other elements, too, that will call up pleasant memories from his life.”

I quickly turned to the white... I began studying it. And I recognized it – my childhood home. I recognized the little whitewashed Ukrainian hut with a straw roof, with a little window and a door, and a little old bench beside it. I wanted to rush to my son and hug him, and then the pleasant sensations enveloped me anew and wouldn’t let me move from my spot. All I could do was to say:

“Thank you, my dear son. It all really does look like it – the little window and the little bench, and the door.”

“The door to your little childhood house opens, Papa. If you open it, you’ll immediately be inside the covered perimeter of your homestead, and you can pass through it, to wherever you want to go.

“And Papa, I’ve also arranged various plants on the homestead space and have composed the necessary symbols out of them.

“In the greenhouse, Papa, you can grow everything you like to eat in the spring and summer, but in addition to your favorite vegetables and fruits, it will be very good if you set up raised beds no more than eleven meters apart and with a diameter of no less than ninety centimeters. On these beds you’ll put in seedlings of, for example, currant and raspberry, and it would be good to put in at least one little cedar seedling on each side, along with grasses and flowers you’ve brought there from the taiga. And it’s desirable for them to come not from the edge of the taiga, but from deep inside it.”

“It will be extremely difficult for people to do that, Volodya. Now me – I can do that, but I’d like a lot of other people who are building family homesteads to have this option, too. A lot of them won’t be able to put in plants from deep inside the taiga.

“There are no roads in the taiga, you can’t use public transportation, and you can’t carry much out on our own, and then you still have to spend a long time hauling it back on public transportation. All of this will require no small financial expenditure. And when you add it all up, the plants you deliver from Siberia will cost significantly more than ones that are grown in nurseries and sold right on site or not far away. You know, there’s even a saying: ‘For a cow abroad you you’ll pay a penny, plus a hundred for her delivery.’ And besides that, can you explain why you should get plants from deep in the taiga, when you can dig them up in your local forest or get them from your nearest nursery?”

“But those will be different plants, Papa. After all, you yourself have told me about how, for example, the milk agaric mushrooms that grow here and that you can eat raw differ significantly from the milk agaric mushrooms that grow in the region of Russia you call the central region. The cowberries, too, differ. And Papa, the currants and raspberries differ, too. You yourself have written in your books, Papa, that scientists have spoken of this, too, such as the academician Pallas.”

“Tell me, Volodya, is the way they taste the only reason we need to fill these raised beds with plants from deep in the taiga?”

“That’s not the only reason, Papa. Taiga plants will not admit the anti-rational information of that world in which you have to live. When they’re set out along the perimeter, they will not let that information through onto the territory of the homestead. Local plants, which you call regionalized, have gotten used to it to a greater degree and will let it through. In particular, plants that do not produce seeds provide no barrier whatsoever to this information.”

“I know about that kind of plants. They’re called genetically modified.”

“Papa, it’s important for the perimeter of the homestead to be able to not let unnecessary, hostile information you don’t need through when it transports you to another spot.”

I didn’t understand what my son had said and began asking him to clarify:

“To what other spot? How can it transport me?”

Volodya didn’t have a chance to reply. Anastasia, who was having a hard time concealing her agitation, began to speak:

“You’ve come up with something very good, my dear son. It’s very important to concentrate positive emotions on the homestead. And, by wiping your feet when you enter, to not bring the negative onto it.”

THE BURNING BLOOD OF THE ANCESTORS

Anastasia took me by the hand. I felt the pleasant warmth of her tender palm. And I also felt how agitated she was, and I glanced at her face. Anastasia was looking into the center of the homestead mock-up. I also looked into its center. Nothing special there. Unless the little white sticks arranged in the center had caught her attention. Once again she asked our son a question.

“Tell me, my dear son, what does the white circle located in the center of the homestead represent?”

I began explaining, instead of my son. “It represents a small, round greenhouse. That’s what Volodya and I decided on. Our little white sticks represent some kind of transparent material – glass, for example, or polycarbonate, or plastic sheeting. For a long time we couldn’t stick it anywhere. It didn’t go with anything. But now that Volodya has placed a greenhouse along the whole perimeter of the homestead, I really like it. Here you get both a greenhouse and a fence at the same time, and various utility rooms, too. And I also like it that Volodya made a small, round greenhouse in the center, too. Now it fits. Now it even goes really well with the whole perimeter of the homestead.”

“I think that what we have in the center is not a greenhouse, Vladimir,” Anastasia said in a whisper, slightly agitated, as before.

Volodya heard her and calmly said, addressing me:

“Mama’s correct. The little white sticks in the center of the homestead do not represent a greenhouse.”

“They what do they represent?” I asked our son.

“In the center of the homestead, Papa, I have placed a circle of mirroring water.”

I asked him to clarify. “Is it a mirror, or what?”

“You can put it that way. A mirror with mirroring water,” Volodya calmly replied.

“Hmm. Very original, actually. You’ve situated a round mirror on a small rise in the center of the homestead. The clouds are reflected in it, and the sun and moon can admire themselves in it. And streaks of sunlight will fly off it and go dancing

throughout the whole homestead. There's nothing like it in any landscape design, and I've looked through a lot of them. Very original."

"You've stuck little red leaves around the mirror, Volodya. What do they represent?" Anastasia asked, speaking quickly.

"That's a flame burning, Mama."

"Where did the flame come from?"

"From oil and gas, Mama."

After this answer, Anastasia squeezed my hand a bit more strongly and asked our son the following question:

"Did they allow you to light their blood on fire, Volodya?"

"Yes. The Souls of our ancestors allowed me to light their earthly blood on fire, Mama. If they had not wanted this, then what came to me wouldn't have come to me."

Suddenly Anastasia's grandfather spoke, and I could sense agitation in his voice, too. "Perhaps that's enough of distracting a person from important business. After all, you haven't done all you're going to do with the mock-up yet, have you Volodya?"

"No, I haven't done all I'm going to do, Grandfather."

"Then go on and do all you're going to do, and no one will bother you."

"Yes, go on and do all you're going to do, Volodya. We'll get out of your way for now," Anastasia added and led me off to the side, away from the extraordinary family homestead design. When she'd sat herself down near the trunk of a large cedar, I asked:

"Anastasia, I can feel that you're agitated for some reason. Am I right?"

"Yes, Vladimir, I'm agitated. Much of what our son is doing does not exist on earth today. Nor is there information about it in the Universe, either. That, which he has created in the center of the homestead – you called it beautiful and original. But it is not those words, not only those words, that describe what has been created. The construction Volodya told us about is an apparatus, and the main component of the apparatus is of unheard-of power, a biological mechanism. I can sense this, but I can not find a precise word to describe its properties. Perhaps such a word does not yet exist. We can only speculate about this device's capacities, its unheard-of capabilities. But please, Vladimir, do not rush me. Allow me to gradually come to an understanding of what I have seen."

A GIFT FROM THE FIRST EARTHLY CIVILIZATION

“I surmise, that all the separate details in the homestead design, when taken together, form a unified whole. It is possible, that the homestead is a biological device or mechanism, or something else previously unimagined by consciousness. We have to think. We have to solve this riddle. The elongated oval of your hectare is framed with an earthen mound with clay edges. The mound is covered over with some sort of transparent material. Inside are various plants. There must be something significant in them.”

“Volodya said the plants can be ordinary ones, vegetables, for example, tomatoes, cucumbers, and various green, leafy plants. Basically, everything a person wants to eat. But you have to put in raised beds with a diameter of about ninety centimeters, spaced no less than eleven meters apart. On these beds you have to put out plants from deep in the taiga, because they won’t let the information of anti-rationality through. That’s what he was saying.”

“Yes, they won’t let it through. In this way, the perimeter functions as a membrane.”

“A membrane for what?”

“For everything located inside the membrane. The greenhouse situated along the perimeter, where all the areas a person requires for living and for his household needs have been incorporated, looks pretty and sensible. Within a few years, the need for the transparent dome will fall away. The most important thing remaining will be what is growing strong and firm beneath it. Our son has pursued quite an extraordinary goal. He has fenced the homestead space off from the pernicious influence of the anti-world and anti-rationality, using the most powerful fence you can possibly imagine. It is not the clay walls and the transparent dome that play the most important role in this fence, but the plants inside the structure. They will exert a psychological effect simply by being there, and they will help you immediately bring opposites into balance within you.”

“How will they help me bring opposites into balance within me? That’s some kind of mysticism, or magic.”

“There’s not a jot of mysticism or magic here, Vladimir. Rather, it’s science, the one you call psychology. Imagine: you drive up to your homestead, and from far off you can see the little white walls of the little home of your childhood, and this

immediately calls up positive emotions in you. Then you get out of the car and wipe off your feet, once more mentally cleansing yourself of negative information. The gates open wide before you, and your gaze takes in the living magnificence of your family homestead's space, which will never cease to amaze and delight you. Unlike a non-living picture, it will always be varied. New flowers have blossomed on the raised beds and trees, and the light playing in a new way, or the little flowers stirred by the breeze will enchant you each time. Then you will want to take a look at whatever might be transpiring inside the fence, and you'll go into it. Its beautiful living richness and its airs will completely draw you away from the negative information of the anti-world."

"Yes, it really is great. The homestead will also play the role of my personal psychologist, and an extremely effective one at that. You're right, Anastasia – each time I come back even to my country home after being gone for three or four days, each time it's interesting to look at what's changed in the garden, in the beds and in the greenhouse.

"Now, of course you can't compare a country home to the homestead you're talking about. Of course, it's much more effective. Look how much one bird on the bank of a pond means to us. Wow, to come up with something like that. It all started with an ordinary bath house, and it ended up with a magnificent and functional sculpture. Now I understand that it will also have a very strong psychological effect."

"It certainly will, Vladimir. The bird will greet you, both when you have only just crossed the threshold of the home, and when you light a fire, and then when you go inside the bird, so as to warm your body and soul."

"Tell me, Anastasia, but why did you take such notice, or get so frightened when Volodya started telling you about the mirroring structure in the center of the homestead?"

"The little walls of the little white hut from your childhood, the greenhouse along the perimeter with the living organism inside, the earthen bird with the burning heart who strives to carry a person off into the sky... It's possible that it is a more perfected analog... The mirror in the center, reflecting the heavenly bodies..."

Anastasia stood up and, pronouncing her words precisely, the way she always does when speaking of something significant, she said:

"Vladimir, our son has created a mock-up... He has constructed a biological interplanetary ship."

"What???" I was amazed. "Anastasia, are you sure?"

"Yes. I am sure. It's possible that we need to use a different word to name it. I don't know this word as of yet. But I am sure that the intended function of what we saw is to teleport the space along with the people located in it.

“A person who builds a family homestead using the elements of this design will, without a doubt, be able to build his own world on a different planet, and this world will be beautiful.

“In the center of the homestead is located part of the apparatus a person can use to transform (to psycho-teleport, to transfer) the space along with all its contents to other planets and other worlds. Part of... But then where... I’ve understood it, Vladimir. Before us is a mock-up of a beautiful family homestead, and at the same time, before us is a mock-up of a perfected interplanetary ship. It is capable of moving at the speed of thought. Of reaching, in one instant, the Moon, Mars, or Jupiter.

“Distance is basically of no consequence at all for it. It can cover a distance of one meter or a distance of a million light years in one and the same amount of time. It is capable of transferring people onto any planet in the solar system, and beyond its bounds.”

“But Anastasia, scientists have proven that there’s no life on planets, at least not the closest ones.”

“And that is why, Vladimir, I said it is capable of psycho-teleporting the space along with all its contents, including the dwelling land of all that lives in that space. In other words, this homestead can be transferred, or to express it more precisely, the given homestead can be copied and situated on a different planet.”

“How about the people who live on the homestead? Will they be transferred to the different planet, too?”

“The people, too, if they are located on the homestead at the moment of transfer.”

“But if there isn’t any fertile soil on the other planet, or if it’s three hundred degrees, or a hundred below zero?”

“When the space is teleported, something akin to an explosion takes place on the planet, and as a result, the existence of the new space is secured.”

TELEPORTING THE SPACE

“Unbelievable information, Anastasia. It’s even hard to imagine that such potentials exist in man. Perhaps you’re mistaken in your conjectures?”

“These are no longer conjectures, Vladimir, and I am not the tiniest bit mistaken. Previously this information did not exist in the Universe. Now it has appeared. But what is most important, is that the particle of mankind’s first civilization, which exists within me and within you, just as it does in each person as well, will allow this information in.”

“You know, Anastasia, I’m only just now starting to understand how mighty those four words of the Universal law are: PERFECT THE DWELLING LAND. Turns out a person can perfect his land to such a degree that he becomes a god. I mean, because when he moves to another planet that hasn’t yet been made habitable, man will begin creating life there, like God did on earth.”

“Man will never become a god, Vladimir. Each person is the son of God, or his daughter. And God, the creator and parent, wanted his children to be more perfected than he himself, and they most certainly will be, they *will* be! By bringing anti-rationality and Rationality into balance within themselves.”

We heard the voice of Anastasia’s grandfather, who had come up without us noticing him. “Now that is real scientific progress. He will open up a new era for mankind.”

Anastasia stood up. Her grandfather, an elder with graying hair, but an erect posture, stood there, leaning on his staff and looking thoughtfully at the shore of the taiga lake.

“Granddad, are you speaking of Volodya’s design?” Anastasia asked her grandfather.

“What can one possibly say when an epiphany comes? Throughout the millennia, he or they, – it’s unimportant, which– have turned the living teachings of messiahs and scientific luminaries into incoherent gobbledygook. *He* has shown the potentials of people living on the earth. He has created a new image of man. Or has brought back the man who was called the son of God. A man capable, like unto God, of creating on lifeless planets a life more beautiful than earthly life.”

“People will have a hard time believing something like that,” I remarked to Grandfather.

“Fine. Even if someone doesn’t believe, then what of it? What remains for an unbeliever who doesn’t believe in his might? To be born? Yes! But to what end, if the ensuing life is meaningless, if it is death? And then again the question: to what end was he born?”

“For millions of years, there has existed a multitude of teachings. And all about one and the same thing, that mankind should live in expectation of receiving something from someone. And mankind has done so, closing off its thought and rationality. It has not thought about why and to what end the Universe lights up the stars above man.”

“And now what? Will our son become a messiah?” Anastasia said bitterly. “He will have difficulty holding his ground in the face of pridefulness. What’s more, the anti-rationality will rush to seek him out.”

Everyone fell silent and, for some reason, simultaneously turned in the direction of the homestead mock-up. At the same time, Volodya was heading toward us, walking with a calm gait. He was carrying Nastenka. She was hugging him around the neck and pressing her cheek to his. Volodya stopped a few steps away from us and set Nastenka down on the ground. He bowed to us all and began to speak:

“Mama. Don’t worry, Mama. I know that if I become a messiah, then people will direct their thought to me, with hope. And that means that they will not be directing their thought fully to creating.”

“What have you decided to do, Volodya?” Anastasia asked our son.

“I need to go. I will dissolve, insignificant, in the human crowd.”

After these words, Volodya looked each of us, in turn, in the eye. The thought flashed in my mind that he was intending to leave forever. And as he was looking at me, I said:

“Thank you, dear son, for your extraordinary, marvelous family homestead design. This will be the very best gift for my sixtieth birthday. And, really, the very best gift I’ve received in the sixty years I’ve lived.”

“Papa, this design is a gift not just for you. I give it to all the readers of your books. Let them take from it all that they wish to take.”

“Let it be for all of them. That means, it’s for me, too.”

“I want to give you a separate gift, Papa.”

At these words, Volodya slipped his hand beneath his shirt, took something out and held his hand out to me. I watched as he slowly and carefully opened his fingers, uncovering the gift that lay in his hand. But when Volodya had fully opened his fingers, there was nothing on his palm. I looked at Grandfather, then at Anastasia, trying, with their help, to understand what my son’s gesture meant, and how I was

supposed to respond to it, but they said nothing.

“Papa, go ahead and take my gift to you,” Volodya repeated.

I kept standing there, not understanding how you can take what you can't see. Suddenly Nastenka walked up to me, took me by the hand and led me over to Volodya. When I came up to my son, I stretched my hand out toward his hand. He carefully placed something invisible into my palm.

It, this something invisible, was pulsating and slightly warming my hand. I closed my fingers and placed the gift beneath my shirt, in the same spot Volodya had kept it. A tender and extraordinary warmth enveloped my whole body.

“It will live in your home, Papa, and when you've built the homestead perimeter, ask it to fill the space.”

Volodya bowed deeply to everyone, then turned around and began moving away from us, his steps confident. Then he suddenly vanished beyond the bushes, or dissolved in the space. And we all stood there, as if spellbound, and both when he looked each of us in the eye and when he was walking off, all we all did was to silently follow him with our eyes. And then I said:

“Anastasia, I got the impression our son has left us forever.”

Hearing no reply, I turned toward Anastasia. She was looking in the direction in which Volodya had headed off. Her body was shaking. A thin stream of scarlet blood was flowing from her lower lip. She had bitten her lip, so as to not cry out. I understood. This meant the anti-rationality would hunt our son, and Anastasia and me, as well. I saw Anastasia's hands clenching into fists. The taiga froze. Some unknown sound resembling the rumbling of something huge was filling the space. I got the impression that the huge space was compressing and, when it opened back up, it might wipe everything from the face of the earth.

I had already witnessed this kind of phenomenon before, when I'd lost consciousness while trying to possess Anastasia against her will, and also when I'd tried to strike her with the stick because she wouldn't agree to give our son to me to raise. Each time it started, Anastasia would raise her hands upward, as if waving to someone in greeting, and everything would calm down, before any sound even appeared. But now the sound was growing louder and louder, and Anastasia was not raising her hand upward. And I didn't want her to raise it. On the contrary. I wanted this invisible and mighty thing to thunder and wipe from the earth all the filth that had accumulated on it.

But Anastasia raised her hand. The space began to calm down.

Before leaving the taiga glade, I went once more to the shore of the lake. I stood there alone and looked at the homestead mock-up our son had created, and I imagined

it actually existing on my hectare that for now was overgrown only with tall weeds. Here I am, driving up in my car. I see the two white walls with little windows from my happy childhood. The gates swing open automatically, revealing a living picture of the finery inside, and I drive toward the entrance to the home. Stop! What the heck am I doing? I'm driving through all this magnificence in a roaring car! Through my own home! Go back!

I leave my car at the entrance. The gates swing open, and I wipe my shoes, trying to wipe the filth of another world from my soles. Then I remove my shoes and leave them by the entrance and walk barefoot through my beautiful world to the pond, where there are swans swimming. My cat and dog are run alongside me. In the distance, a rooster crows in greeting from one corner, and in another, a little goat bleats. And by the pond, on the sand, my grandsons and granddaughters are constructing mock-ups of their own family homesteads. And the woman I love, her beauty never fading, comes out of the garden, smiles at me and waves her hand in greeting.

When it gets darker and the stars begin appearing in the sky, all the windows of the oval space will light up with a joyful light. Lamps will come on in the greenhouse and show the stars the living magnificence growing inside it. The stars will think, "There, on Earth, a very small point is glowing with an extraordinary luminosity. It is no bigger than one hectare, but its light caresses us." The stars are not yet aware that there will soon be more and more points like that on the earth. And the whole earth will start shining with a blessed light and will caress the expanses of the Universe with it.

I made a firm decision to make the homestead mock-up my son had created a reality. And perhaps it was a good thing that I'd gotten a hectare with unproductive soil, where the water takes a long time to run off in the spring. But I will take it and make its soil fertile, make it into the kind of soil trees will bloom on in the garden, and flowers. I will perfect the dwelling land in that spot.

A LETTER TO MY SON

Hello, Volodya.

I don't know where you are now, and so I decided to write you a letter through my book. I sometimes write you letters, but I have no idea where to send them. But something I publish in a book – I think you'll read that. A book makes its way into many countries. It's like a living thing. It can find various people all on its own, and perhaps it will find you, too.

In September of 2009 I set about creating my family homestead according to your design. I don't know who will live on it. Maybe you'll want to, or Nastenka, when she gets older. There should come a time soon, when the representatives of anti-rationality will not hinder people like you. Maybe my grandchildren will want to live here, or my great-grandchildren. The moment has come, when I feel an urgent need to bring what you designed to life.

I ploughed my hectare with a tractor and sowed winter rye on it. I sowed the seed by hand myself, and my neighbors helped me. I used an excavator to make the earthen mound all along the perimeter, a meter high and a meter and a half wide. I didn't have time to make the little clay walls this year – the rains and the cold weather set in. I'll start building them in the spring. But my hectare has been transformed even just from what I've done this year. It's the only one framed with an earthen mound, and the rye has grown up in place of the former weeds. It even seems to me that it's showing off a little bit before the neighboring hectares.

I also managed to dig the pond this year – about thirty meters in diameter, and it will fill with water in the spring.

I also bought up various fruit tree saplings. For now I've put them in on the grounds of my country home. I'm planning to move them to the homestead next fall.

During the winter I'm going to have to decide how to make your fiery bird. I don't think molding it out of clay should pose any particular problems, but how do I fire it then, so the rains don't wash it away? And besides, too, it's about three meters high, and in addition then you have the wingspan, which works out to about twelve meters. Then the thought came to me that I need to mold it out of clay, then saw it into sections and fire it at a factory. And after that I can reassemble the fiery bird on my homestead, on the bank of the pond.

I've shown your creation to my friends – I just drew them a clay capsule with a fire inside and explained how you can warm and heal yourself inside it, or just sit

outside in front of the fire with your friends the way you'd do with an inside fireplace. And they decided they want to build something like that at their places, too. Can you imagine how delighted they'll be when they find out it's not just a capsule you can warm your body and heal yourself in, but a beautiful bird, too, with a burning heart inside?

How in the world were you able to create such a miraculous thing?

Anastasia surmises that the people of the first earthly civilization are helping you. If that's the case, then why shouldn't they help everyone who's set about building their family homesteads? However, on the other hand, since you've given your design to all the readers, then they really *have* helped everyone.

Oh, and Volodya, your mama also said that your family homestead design is a great and beautiful missive to mankind from some civilization that's unknown to contemporary people. Whether it's on a different planet or in a different dimension – that's not important. It's entered into communication with contemporary people, and in the language of matter, too. And the contemporary society of people stands on the threshold of great and beautiful transformations.

When your mama said this, I didn't yet fully sense the significance of her words. But later on, when I was reflecting about them, I became convinced that she is totally correct. You know, Volodya, there's a lot of talk in society about UFOs, about visitors from other planets, and we have no small number of treatises, of all possible kinds, supposedly written by great teachers, but what concrete results do we have from them?

Nothing changes. People have been moving along their path, heading toward a sad end, and that's just the path they keep on following. A picture even came to me.

People are walking along a road and there's someone dressed very oddly standing on the side of the road. And, as if to underscore his strangeness, he's yelling:

"I'm a visitor from afar. I'm a visitor from afar, a representative of great powers."

"Well, so what?" people say to him. "What will you bestow on us? If you're a representative of great powers, then take drug addiction from the earth, and prostitution and wars, and take the various illnesses away, too."

"You don't understand. I'm a visitor from afar..."

But he couldn't pique people's interest. Only one person came up to him.

"If you're some great visitor from afar, then you probably won't have any trouble giving me a hundred rubles for a bottle of vodka."

And he got this answer:

“I’m a great visitor from afar. You need to listen to me, give me shelter and food, even make a great fuss over me.”

That’s more or less the back story with all the “great visitors from afar” who have come to earth.

But things are totally different in the case of your design, Volodya.

Without saying who he was, without asking for a thing, he simply offered: “Take a look, people, and if you like it, take it and be happy.”

And when you left, Volodya, Mama spent a long time looking over your homestead mock-up with great attention.

She said it’s extraordinary, lovely and multi-functional, but that it’s not a simple homestead. The details of its separate parts are closely interconnected, and all of them together are actually an interplanetary biological apparatus that is capable of moving a person – along with his dwelling land – to any planet, all in the space of one instant.

This apparatus’ ultrastrong biological membrane extends along the homestead’s perimeter. The fiery bird is programmed to cleanse one of viruses. The internal arrangement and selection of plants suggest an eternal life-support system for those living inside this apparatus. The object with the mirrored water is, pure and simple, a launch button that initiates the biological program.

The propulsion device of this apparatus is unsurpassed in terms of its generating capacity. It goes beyond the boundaries of specifications like rate of movement, for what lies at its core is unmediated human thought.

Anastasia also said that all technocratic inventions have a biological analog – or the other way around, to be more precise. And this biological analog is more perfected. Now, we, by using achievements in space exploration and in the sphere of computer technology as a launch point, can define the significance of those separate details of yours. I think that readers who happen to be programmers will comprehend more of what you have done.

But here’s what’s bothering me, Volodya. The perimeter is a membrane. The fiery bird is a cleansing, anti-viral program. The mirror in the center with the torches is a launch button. I’ll make all of this, and maybe somebody else will make it, too. But there aren’t any instructions for how everyone is supposed to use this. All devices always come with instructions, so people don’t break the devices or hurt themselves. And here we’ve got significant biological technology, and without instructions. A person might accidentally do something with the launch button, and his family will wake up on another planet, without even intending to do so. They’ll want to come back, but they’ll have no idea how.

I bought an octagonal mirror and torches. Out at my country home, in the

evening, I placed this mirror on the ground and lit the torches around it, and it turned out really beautiful. But, I think it's not totally safe to do that in your garden in the autumn. When the mirror poured out water, it felt like the trees were trying to come back to life. But deep in the autumn, they shouldn't come back to life.

I'm really sorry I didn't have a chance to talk a little more with you, Volodya and ask you to clarify the intended purpose of this apparatus, what it's for, and how we're supposed to use it. Maybe the readers will be able to figure it out, or it will come to me later on, once I get it in place on my hectare.

Now, I probably won't be able to build the greenhouse around the perimeter of the homestead next year. I don't have the money to do everything all at once. We're hardly getting any royalties at all from America.

Basically, I don't get what's going on over there – they're making some kind of changes to the books without my permission. The domain name “Ringing Cedars” in English belongs to somebody. And can you imagine – they even have the domain name “Vladimir Megre” there, and a site with that name, and it's being passed off as my official site. But I have no connection to it whatsoever. Polina's tried to register the trademark in my name, and they asked her to pay six thousand dollars.

I wouldn't really care, but I feel bad for the readers. What are they being told on these sites? What products are being sold using those trademarks and logo? How can I sort it out? Where can I find the time to sort things out?

But I decided that in my new book I'll give the name of a website where people can communicate directly with Polina. And to ask Polina to publish the new book in English, too. But so far I don't know how to get it published in the English-speaking countries.

And something else, Volodya – I have a problem. We have to come up with a comprehensible and concise appeal to those in power in various countries. The goal of the appeal is to encourage each one of them to take whatever forceful measures they can to perfect the dwelling land on the earth. I've put together various versions of this message, but it always seems to me I could do it in a simpler, shorter and more convincing fashion. Here's the latest version. Maybe it'll do? What do you think?

An Appeal

Dear Sirs:

I have written a series of books called “The Ringing Cedars of Russia.” Many of these books' readers – people of various ages, nationalities, religious faiths and social

statuses – are each acquiring one hectare of land for their families and are establishing family homesteads on them. Among them number doctoral students and PhDs, as well as simple workers. Ninety percent of these people have a college education and profound life experience. Each family on its own and everyone as a group – they are creating a dwelling land for themselves, their children and future generations that is more livable in all respects. In Russia and in the countries of the former Soviet Union, these people have already created more than fifteen hundred settlements made up of family homesteads, without any government support whatsoever. They include large settlements, with up to three hundred families, and small ones, formed by ten to fifteen families.

I do not know how many people are taking similar steps – whether united in small groups, or for the most part on their own – in other countries where my books in the “Ringing Cedars of Russia” series are being published. But they do exist, and their numbers are growing steadily.

Dear Sirs, people have talked a great deal in the world about the need to improve the ecological situation on the earth. In certain regions, this situation has already reached a critical stage, and a global disaster looms. For some time, now, conferences and symposia have been held at the governmental level with many countries, the UN and all possible NGOs. But, dear Sirs, where have we seen even the slightest result? The earth’s ecology continues to worsen.

The only people taking real steps are the people who are founding their own family homesteads, people focused on improving man’s dwelling land.

Dear Sirs, I am not asking you to discuss the merits or weaknesses of my books or me personally.

I am asking you to examine the actual idea, from the position of rational thought. And if you are unable, by drawing on contemporary science, to propose anything more effective than this idea, I ask you to recognize its essence and accept it.”

I don’t know to whom specifically I should address this appeal.

I’d also like to touch on another serious question. I often think about it. I try to find a solution. The thing is, Volodya, that given your approach to life and the way you understand the meaning of existence, it will be hard for you to find a bride, a girl who understands you.

You probably already know that from the time they’re little, many girls dream of becoming an actress or a model, or of marrying a wealthy man and going to resorts and having a maid at home. If you suddenly take a liking to that kind of girl, a girl who hasn’t read the books and hasn’t heard anything about family homesteads – after all, love is unpredictable – now, don’t go trying to tell her about the homestead right off the

bat. She won't get it. Now, when I've made my homestead according to your design, then you go ahead and bring this girl there and show her this homestead. When you're approaching it, you tell your girl that it's yours, and go inside the homestead with her. Go in through the door of the white hut. The key to the door will always be in the spot where Grandmother used to leave it. And show her everything that's there.

Anastasia has said that when a woman sees a more perfected dwelling land than the one she's previously been in, the desire to bear a child immediately awakens within her, along with an attraction to the man who's connected to this land.

Volodya, should you sense this kind of desire in your girl, then you can be certain that she will most certainly come to love you, and that her past, mindless inclinations will desert her.

And Volodya, your little sister Nastenka often visits your mock-up and plays in it, building little flowerbeds inside it. Anastasia says she has fervent thought. Anastasia has told me about Nastenka's past life, the one when her name was Anasta.

That's all for now. The letter has turned out kind of long, but I haven't said everything I wanted to say.

Be careful. Take care of yourself, Volodya.

With all greatest respect for you,

Your papa

AN APPEAL FROM VLADIMIR MEGRE TO HIS READERS

Several Internet websites now share ideas that are very similar to those of the main character, Anastasia, in the “Ringing Cedars of Russia” series.

Many of these websites purport to be official and use the name “Vladimir Megre.” They even answer letters in my name.

In this regard, I feel it is my duty to inform you, dear readers, of my decision to create an official international website, www.vmegre.com/en/ .

This will be the only official source for correspondence in all languages from my readers all over the world.

By registering at and subscribing to this website you will be eligible to receive information on the dates and locations of upcoming reader conferences, as well as other information.

Our unified website will keep you, dear readers, informed about the Ringing Cedars of Russia movement throughout the world.

Yours truly,

Vladimir Megre

© Vladimir Megre

Translation by: Susan Downing

For inquiries and suggestions please contact us at:

PO Box 44, 630121 Novosibirsk, Russia.

Phone.: +7 (913) 383 0575

Skype: rc.press



Anasta – the tenth volume, part two of the “Ringing Cedars of Russia” book series. The series consists of 10 volumes. The author continues working on the next book.

The author holds readers’ and press conferences in Russia and other countries.

The most active readers of the “Ringing Cedars of Russia” book series unite into public organizations, one of the aims of which is the creation of Kin’s domains (homesteads). In 2010 another book *Anasta* was issued. The author plans to write a scenario on the basis of his books.

Throughout 1996-2006 nine books were written by Vladimir Megre (The “Ringing Cedars of Russia” Series: *Anastasia*, *Ringing Cedars of Russia*, *The Dimension of Love*, *Co-Creation*, *Who Are We?*, *The Family Book*, *The Energy of Life*, *The New Civilization*, *The New Civilization II: Rites of Love*). More than 11 million copies of the books translated into 20 languages have been sold worldwide. In 1999 Vladimir Megre established the Anastasia Foundation for the cultural support of Anastasia’s philosophy and launched the site www.Anastasia.ru

The author: *Vladimir Megre*

Original language: *Russian*

Volume I *Anastasia*

Volume II *Ringing Cedars of Russia*

Volume III *The Dimension of Love*

Volume IV *Co-creation*

Volume V *Who Are We?*

Volume VI *The Family Book*

Volume VII *The Energy of Life*

Volume VIII (Part I) *The New Civilization*

Volume VIII (Part II) *The New Civilization II: Rites of Love*

Volume X *Anasta*

According to the author’s idea, the 9th volume is being written by his readers. These are the Family Books, kin annals.

www.vmegre.com The official site of the author

www.Anastasia.ru An international portal

www.megrellc.com The “Ringing Cedars” company presents products, self-manufactured in the taiga as well as products of Kin’s domains.